

News and Current Events :: Amish Funerals Opportunity to Demonstrate Power of Forgiveness

Amish Funerals Opportunity to Demonstrate Power of Forgiveness - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2006/10/5 14:41

I got the following in my email and thought ya'll might find it interesting..

ginnyrose

Amish Funerals Opportunity to Demonstrate Power of Forgiveness

Minister Who Has Private Contact with Mourning Amish Available for Comment During Funerals

MEDIA ADVISORY, Oct. 5 /Christian Newswire/ -- National Clergy Council president Rev. Rob Schenck traveled from Washington, DC, this week to minister to families of Amish school shooting victims as well as the family of shooter Charles Roberts. The Evangelical minister was one of only two non-Amish invited to the very private mourning ritual for one victim and watched as her mother prepared her daughter's body for burial. He said the funerals which will occur today and tomorrow are opportunities to understand what is at the heart of Amish culture.

Rev. Schenck said, "It was while the family and community stood watching this mother tenderly care for her little girl's brutally damaged body that they spoke to me at length of forgiving the shooter. It was the most moving thing I've seen or heard in my 25 years as a minister of the Gospel. It was a living sermon on the power of God's mercy."

One Amish religious leader explained to Schenck, "We forgive because God has forgiven us. God extends his forgiveness to us in Christ, then, we must receive it. Once we do, we must share it with others."

Schenck said the Amish base their ethic of forgiveness on the Sermon on the Mount in which Jesus said, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."

Schenck said one of the most impressive parts of his visit with Shooter Charles Roberts' family was their reception of forgiveness from the families of their son's victims.

"Out of guilt and shame, the Roberts family could have rejected that generous offer of forgiveness, but they instead accepted it. I don't think there's a better illustration of the Christian message in the Gospel. As the Amish say, God extends his forgiveness to us for our sins, but we must receive it. That's the essence of salvation. Only then can we pass that forgiveness on."

Schenck, who returned to Washington last night, will return to Lancaster today to visit with more families during funerals today and tomorrow. He is available for further comment.

Schenck, who served as a chaplain at Ground Zero in New York after 9/11 and visited New Orleans church leaders in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, said this experience was for him on the same level of emotional trauma of those two tragedies.

Christian Newswire

Re: Amish Funerals Opportunity to Demonstrate Power of Forgiveness, on: 2006/10/5 15:53

From what I saw on the news about this event, I think that the Amish are really demonstrating the love and forgiveness of Jesus. It's really inspiring how they are handling the situation.

Now, I believe that the killer has already experienced the justice of God and is burning in hell, sadly. But I am really impressed with the Amish and how they were quick to forgive and to pray for the family of the killer.

They have a real Christ-like attitude and spirit.

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2006/10/5 17:21

This is a terrible tragedy indeed. We really need to pray for them. My heart goes out to them.

Re: Amish Funerals Opportunity to Demonstrate Power of Forgiveness - posted by Yodi (), on: 2006/10/5 18:29

Yes! I saw this on the news on 2 different stations last night! I'm so glad you posted this. I had been praying, since hearing this news the other day, that God would make good come out of this tragedy. What the enemy meant for evil, God was able to redeem! What a great witness to all, even Christians. How many Christians these days apply the Bible to their lives? Well the Amish certainly have in this area of forgiveness. I'm not saying that the Amish are the most perfect example of Biblical Christianity, but I have respected for some time now the way they have chosen to live their lives in many different ways. Oh praise be to God for His conquering love! May we learn to love like that with the help of God!

And I agree with RobertW, that we need to continue to pray that God would comfort the Amish and bring healing to them, especially the children. But God is faithful, as we've seen thus far.

Re: Amish Funerals Opportunity to Demonstrate Power of Forgiveness - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2006/10/5 19:34

Here is a link to World Net Daily you may find fascinating AND a blessing.

http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=52296

I cannot help but be pleased with the contrast one reads of how the Amish are responding to the violence done to them in contrast to the needless fighting going on elsewhere in the world. If you scroll through the listings of articles on WND and then read the ones about the Amish...it's like seeing a bright light in the midst of utter darkness....

May God be praised!

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by JoeA (), on: 2006/10/5 21:01

Their testimony and steadfastness in Christ during this time is no less than amazing.

"This is possible if you have Christ in your heart" -one of the Amish women

Re: Why? - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2006/10/6 9:43

Many people will now engage the question of "Why?" did this happen. Many say the increase of violence in schools is a result of taking God out of the schools, and no doubt that has played an important role. Some will cite the increase of violent TV programming as inciting violence. The fact is that the sanctity of life is held in low regard by many, but what causes this?

As we look at the murder-suicide of Charles Carl Roberts IV we see there were so many things that were right in his upbringing: He came from a Christian home; was homeschooled by his Christian mother; married to a Christian lady. Now what induced him to commit such a horrific crime?

Seems to me God may use this to teach us a very important lesson and that is the potential of overt evil resides in each one of us and all it takes is allowing resentment of God to fester and grow in our hearts. (Mr Roberts said that he resented God for allowing his daughter to die 9 years ago soon after birth.) And at some point in time it will come to fruition, perhaps not as violent as in this case, but it will be acted out in some form or another. Does this not behoove us to allow the Spirit of God to teach us how we need to be tender towards Him/God? When we harden our hearts we potentially become capable of any and all sin, even gross sin.

Years ago I worked with a Presbyterian lady at the CPC and she cured me from psycho-analyzing people's sinful behavior. She used to say "Sandra, it is because of sin!" And she is right!

These are the thoughts that have been running through my mind the last few days and just thought I would share them for whatever it is worth..

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by Yodi (), on: 2006/10/6 13:32

My fiancé is really into the Answers in Genesis ministry on the web and found an article with their answers to this violence. It is an interesting view.

[Image: <http://i26.photobucket.com/albums/c113/YDiehl/youmatter.jpg>]

Article Link: (<http://www.answersingenesis.org/get-answers/features/you-matter-to-god>) If You Don't Matter...

Video Link: Make sure to check out the "Dig Deeper" video link of Ken Ham's teaching on the need for cultural reform, helping us see that the Bible is really the key to what the world desperately needs.

Reply to ginnyrose: Your recent comment reminded me of something I wrote in a reply to a friend yesterday over MySpace who thought that the guy deserved to be put in prison and tortured to death, if he hadn't committed suicide. I agree with you that sin is the root issue, and so I thought I'd share my similar thoughts.

"...It's understandable to want revenge to be paid on this man, but that's not the way God has called us to be. Through Him we can pray for the souls and salvation of sinners. Like the Amish said, 'If I don't forgive others, Jesus can't forgive me.' It would be hypocritical to expect God to forgive us for murdering Jesus through all the sins we'll commit in our lifetime, and then not forgive this guy.

I'm mostly mad at Satan. We're weak human beings and I could judge that guy and question, 'How could he do something like that?' But you know, I have a sin nature too, and if it weren't for God lovingly intervening in my life and changing me from the inside out, who knows, maybe I would become a murderer too. Besides, Jesus judges the motives of the heart more than outward actions. We could judge this guy because on the outside, he committed murder. But Jesus set the standard higher than that and said if we hate someone we've committed murder in our heart. So then we're just the same as that guy. If we think he should be tortured, then we should too for our sins..."

Re: Amish Funerals Opportunity to Demonstrate Power of Forgiveness - posted by NLONG (), on: 2006/10/6 14:44

O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever. Psalms 118 what a testimony of God's rich mercy!

I have been absolutely riveted by this tragic story. I have such a deep pity in my heart for this man, and yet deeper for his family. God be praised for the Amish response! Finally, someone willing to forgive the hostilities and evil of men. What a challenge for those who bear the name of Christ in this day. What an appropriate response to violence. What a shame this man committed suicide. It makes me wonder how this forgiveness would have affected him. Imagine the testimony of a converted life in the wake of such wickedness. What a shame that this man will never know the richness of God's glory and bountiful mercy.

Weep - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/10/6 16:41

Quote:

-----"They were just little people," he said of the victims. "They never got a chance to do anything."

Quote:

-----"I just think at this point mostly these families want to be left alone in their grief and we ought to respect that,"

(<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/10/06/national/main2070256.shtml>) Another Dreary Day For The Amish

Am a bit at odds with something seemingly missing at least vocally here ... the cost of this forgiveness, these families and their time of tremendous grief ...

Weeping with those who weep.

Re: Weep - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2006/10/6 17:47

Mike wrote:

Quote:
-----Am abit at odds with something seemingly missing at least vocally here ... the cost of this forgiveness, these families and their time of tremendous grief

Mike, there are many who wept when they heard this news, including me..not gut wrenching, but the tears came. Yet, when I read the news about what this man was intending to do to these girls, I am somehow thankful they did not live to experience the more horrible thing he was planning to do to them.

The parents/church have a wonderful attitude about death and to that I can relate. While I miss our DD (who has gone to be with the LORD) I am glad she made it home. It was not what we would have chosen, but God said no to our prayers and knowing he did that, I know he knows what is best. Just think: she does NOT have to experience all this wickedness that is increasing every day!! Praise the LORD!

Do you know that dying is not the worst thing that can happen to a believer? Believing this with your whole being will make a world of difference on how you view death! Let me assure you that to hasten it by suicide is not an option for the Christian - that is murder. But when death does come to the person ready to go it is wonderful - except to the loved ones left behind. Then there is grief because you will miss him or her. And that is fine to grieve. Cry and cry some more. I have made peace with tears and am not ashamed when something will trigger its flow. Grief, sadness, joy - yes, it is possible to experience all of them but they go by turns, some more frequent than another. And its frequency will change as time goes on. In the meantime we must use the comfort God gave us to comfort the hurting. 2 Corinthians 1:3-7.

And do you know what is worse to a parent than losing a child to death? It is when a child apostasizes, turns away from God and lives for the flesh. Now that is living with a living death! And it stinks, similar to decaying flesh....

Blessings,
ginnyrose

Re: Weep - posted by Yodi (), on: 2006/10/6 18:44

crsschk

Did you read RobertW's comment? Did you read my reply to his comment? Though the mood in this discussion is predominantly praise, we haven't failed to mention the prayers and comfort the Amish need during this time.

This particular discussion about the news of the Amish school shooting was, it seems, intended to emphasize the witness the Amish people have been through this, not so much the pain and grief they're suffering through. But I see where you're coming from, I think, where it maybe seems that the way we're talking is as if it's really easy for the Amish to be forgiving. Thanks for the link to the article. It does put things more in proper perspective.

And I personally feel though it may seem easy for some of the Amish to be forgiving, it is also a part of their religion and maybe some are trying to obey as best as possible, but may be struggling in their heart, you know? So I have been praying according to these thoughts and sensitivities.

Re: - posted by Dougmore, on: 2006/10/6 21:21

Hi ginnyrose,

Quote:

-----Do you know that dying is not the worst thing that can happen to a believer? Believing this with your whole being will make a world of difference on how you view death!

Amen sister. I often feared death but now God has given a peace about it that comforts me. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord!!!

Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/10/7 0:18

Hi Yodi,

Quote:
-----But I see where you're coming from, I think, where it maybe seems that the way we're talking is as if it's really easy for the Amish to be forgiving. Thanks for the link to the article. It does put things more in proper perspective.

Yes, that was all, not an either/or ... There is some carry over from MC's thought's elsewhere;

I know we hate the thought but how else can we explain the tolerance for injustice that goes on daily in our current lives. Maybe it's a coping mechanism. Maybe our fragile minds cannot handle the reality of the world we live in.

(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id12474&forum48#98320) Judge Roy Moore, one of God's brave men.

Difficult to put it this way, but the sentiment isn't so much the injustice aspect as the 'coping mechanism' reality. In other words, these are real, life altering, deeply personal and even attempting to describe what this must be in terms of anguish for these families ... Yes, it is really too easy to in effect talk past these things at this time, it just seems de-personalized, as if they were something of a conversation piece to extol our comments upon.

All these other things mentioned have their place, but it also seems they have their time.