

Articles and Sermons :: Newtown: Time to operate on a 'need to know' basis**Newtown: Time to operate on a 'need to know' basis - posted by davym (), on: 2012/12/17 18:38**

NEWTOWN: TIME TO OPERATE ON A "NEED TO KNOW" BASIS Dec 17, 2012 • By David Murray •

If Friday had happened a hundred years ago, most of America would probably still not have heard of Newtown. A limited narrative of facts would eventually have trickled out across the country, and maybe even reach a few other parts of the world. Perhaps there might have been a brief paragraph in *The London Times* and a few other significant international newspapers.

Horrific specifics

What a difference a hundred years makes. Within seconds we know not only what happened in general but all the horrific specifics. Within minutes we have eyewitness accounts. Within hours we have photos and video. By the end of the day we have hundreds, maybe thousands of reporters swarming over the town. Press conferences are carried live; interviews with bereaved families and spared families fill the non-stop news cycle; the perpetrator's evil mind and twisted past are dredged; amateur psychologists opine on the ravings and ranting of evil. Old and new media are drowning us in a deluge of frightful information and fearful images.

For most of us, it's time to pull the plug and avert our gaze.

It is neither necessary nor wise for most of us to know all this horrifying information. What good purpose does it serve to hear or read exactly how the murderer went about his vile business, what was heard or seen in the classrooms and offices, how victims tried to defend themselves and others, etc? It is deeply damaging to our short and long-term mental, emotional, and spiritual health to expose ourselves to such bloodcurdling details.

Self-inflicted trauma

I'm not saying we ignore what happened, nor that we shouldn't sympathize deeply with the families and the community. I'm saying most of us need only know enough to pray intelligently for the needs of the survivors, their families, and the community. But most of us know way, way more than that by now, darkening our waking hours and disturbing our sleeping hours. I don't think most of us realize the deep and damaging trauma we are inflicting upon ourselves.

Some Christians probably should know more, especially those whom God has specially called to interpret and explain these monstrous actions to the public and the church. But most of us don't need to glue ourselves to TV and Internet news. Instead, we should actively shield ourselves and our families from much of it. If we wouldn't read books or watch films that gave such details, why do it with real-life events?

Not necessary or wise

I'm at the stage where I'm reading some headlines, and maybe the first paragraph of some reports. But that's where I'm now drawing the line. For most of us it is not necessary or wise to watch the multiple funerals and memorial services, to read the latest insights into this evil mind, to watch crime scene reconstructions, or to listen to harrowing interviews with teachers and parents. It's time to operate on a "need to know" basis.

And we shouldn't feel guilty about it.

But we must pray. Indeed, we must pray for Newtown and the nation as we've never prayed before.

<http://headhearhand.org/blog/2012/12/17/newtown-time-to-operate-on-a-need-to-know-basis/>