

Church's \$700 Tip Shocks Pizza Delivery Driver

Jeff Louis had to go to work early. The pizza deliveryman was called in to take a Sunday morning order to Life Point Church in Mentor, Ohio. He had no idea what would happen when he arrived. Neither did the church.

It started with Pastor Ken Wright, who had an idea: "Let's tip him \$100. It's the holiday season." But others in the congregation joined in, giving over \$700. Shocked, Louis later made a YouTube video in which he said, "It truly amazes me that people who don't even know me just wanted to help me out that much." The story has now made national headlines.

It's nice to share the good news when others promote the bad.

CNN is reporting that the alleged gunman in the Colorado Springs shooting uttered "no more baby parts" during his arrest, indicating that his horrific actions were related to the recent furor over the selling of fetal body parts. A Planned Parenthood official quickly blamed critics of their organization for the tragedy: "It's not enough to denounce the tragedy without also denouncing the poisonous rhetoric that fueled it."

Valerie Tarico, known for her anti-Christian blogs, went further: "After months of verbal assault against Planned Parenthood and against women more broadly, Republican Christianists have gotten what they were asking for—bloodshed." According to her, "Republican members of the Religious Right incited violence as predictably as if they had issued a call for Christian abortion foes to take up arms."

However, pro-life supporter and presidential candidate Mike Huckabee was clear: "What he did is absolutely abominable, especially to those of us in the pro-life movement. ... There's

no excuse for killing other people.” Other Republican candidates also condemned the attack. And the organization that produced the fetal body parts videos stated yesterday that it “condemns the barbaric killing spree in Colorado Springs by a violent madman.”

As we learn more about this tragedy, we can expect rhetorical attacks on pro-life supporters to continue. This development comes as no surprise to sociologist George Yancey. In *Hostile Environment: Understanding and Responding to Anti-Christian Bias*, he documents the rising prejudice against conservative Christians in the U.S.

For instance, his research indicates that nearly half of all American academics are less willing to hire a candidate for an academic job if that person is a conservative Protestant. Yancey cites *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd’s description of evangelicals in Washington, D.C. after George W. Bush’s reelection: “I’m getting more the feel of a vengeful mob, revved up by rectitude, running around with torches and hatchets after heathens and pagans and infidels.” Yancey notes, “If she had used the same biting words for blacks, Jews or members of the LGBT community, she might well have lost her job.”

How should Christians respond when our faith and integrity are impugned?

One: Be sure you are being “persecuted for righteousness’ sake” (Matthew 5:10). Our critics are not always wrong. As the saying goes, “Christians aren’t perfect—just forgiven.” If your critics are right, admit your mistake with honesty and humility.

Two: Defend your Lord and your faith with courage and grace. I often quote Ephesians 4:15, which calls us to speak “the truth in love.” Each requires the other.

Three: Look for ways to prove God’s grace in yours. What Life

Point Church did was a more powerful apologetic for biblical faith than anything they could have said. As Pastor Wright told reporters after the story broke, "We can change the world one life at a time."

How boldly will you stand for biblical truth today? How graciously will you serve the next person you meet?