

What Can the Texas Shooting Teach Us About Guns and Churches?

The recent mass murder at the Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas has reignited the national debate on gun violence. It has also highlighted the question of guns and churches.

One thing which has become abundantly clear is that no one can count on the government for protection against a madman. Our existing gun laws could have prevented the tragedy, but government officials failed to report the killer's family abuse conviction. Even so, it seems that criminals can find ways to obtain guns. In addition, the police cannot arrive in time to prevent loss of life. Something more is needed.

Many believe that banning guns from churches or other public gatherings is the answer. The problem with this approach is that only the law-abiding citizens will leave their guns at home. We must remember that those mass killers are cowards looking for helpless victims. A gun-free zone is an open invitation to killers and an encouragement to gun violence. Only when confronted by armed opponents do the cowards stop killing innocents and try to run away or just commit suicide to avoid a fight.

Some believe that taking a gun to church is a violation of the peace of God which is present in the church. But we know from Scripture that the Temple guards were armed, and even the Levites carried swords when necessary (See 2 Chron. 23:6-10). Apparently, God has no problem with weapons in His presence, and neither should we.

In Texas, as in many other states, citizens can pass a background test and a firearm training course to receive a license to carry a concealed hand gun. Most of those people

are willing to use their firearms to defend themselves, their families, their neighbors, and their church families. It was such an armed citizen who stopped the Sutherland Springs shooter before he could take more lives. Sadly, no one in the church was armed, and many lives were lost.

We urge the pastors and churches to welcome those legally licensed to carry guns so that they can fulfill the calling on their lives to protect their church family. And don't keep it a secret. Call a "Carry your gun to church Sunday" so the cowardly killers in your community will know they can't turn your church into a shooting gallery.

We should continue to pray for God's protection and ask Him to send His guardian angels to our churches. But let's not turn away the guardian angels who have concealed hand gun permits.
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