

Pastor: This Was a 'Mission of Satan'

As the investigation continues into the mass shooting in Las Vegas last night, and as Americans continue to wait for word on family members visiting the popular location, leaders from the American Pastors Network (APN,) are considering the tragedy from a biblical perspective.

"The mass shooting that took place last night at the Mandalay Bay Hotel in Las Vegas is, above everything else, a clear indication of the spiritual depravity of mankind," said APN leader Gary Dull, who also serves as executive director of the Pennsylvania Pastors Network (PPN,). "How a 64-year-old man who, according to his brother, never really had an interest in guns was able to randomly shoot at the distance of over 300 yards and kill at least 58 people and injure more than 500 others is truly in accordance with what Jesus Christ teaches about the mission of Satan in John 10:10—to 'steal, kill and destroy.'

"Yes, this event that is stated to be the deadliest shooting in American history is truly devilish and from the pit of hell," Dull continued. "There are still many unanswered questions about the background of the shooter, but the fact remains that this was a terrible massacre as innocent people were shot at random by a depraved individual. Many officials have yet been willing to call this an act of terror, but in reality, it was a terrorist action. We know that Satan is the chief terrorist of the ages and will do all that he can to bring fear into the hearts and minds of us all. Are we to give into that fear? Not at all. The Bible tells us in 2 Timothy 1:7 that 'God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love and of a sound mind.' Therefore, we should determine to not live in fear but live by faith."

Dull added that as the world watches the facts develop from this tragedy in the days to come, pastors across America will consider how to bring the event into a biblical perspective for their congregations. Dull says that consideration will include several concepts:

1. It is the total depravity of mankind born into sin that leads to this type of action of killing and injuring so many.
2. Christian citizens should not live in fear but fully trust in the Lord to face such events with courage and strength.
3. Churches and pastors must be about the ministry of evangelizing the lost, as this tragedy would not have occurred if the shooter had known Christ as his personal Savior.
4. Events like this are a part of the "perilous times" that 2 Timothy 3:1 states will come and will continue to increase in the "last days" before the return of Jesus Christ.
5. All must be ready to meet the Lord by knowing Him as a personal Savior and serving Him according to His will.
6. Believers must encourage one another with biblical truth in light of such events, so as to be able to properly represent Christ to the world that struggles to find answers in times like these.
7. Americans must pray for one another, for the citizens of our nation, for the families of those who were killed or wounded in the attack, for our political leaders and law enforcement officials as they deal with the situation, and for the church of Jesus Christ to stand tall as the "pillar and the ground of the truth" in times such as these.
8. Christians should ask God if there are further spiritual lessons to learn in light of this terrible event and order our lives accordingly.

Along with APN President Sam Rohrer and North Carolina Pastors Network (NCPN,) Dave Kistler, Dull is a co-host of APN's radio ministry, "Stand in the Gap Today," where the Las Vegas tragedy will be discussed this week on 425 stations nationwide.