

# Wake-Up Call and Vigilance Out of Louisville Hate Crime

Following the mass shooting targeting a Christian school in Nashville, church security expert and consultant Michael Mann had this to say:

“In the United States we’ve been fortunate to not have to worry about the persecution of Christians for a long time. But as the recent events in Nashville have shown, the unfortunate reality is that most churches are soft targets for people who hate Christians. As believers we put our faith in the Lord’s protection, but it’s our responsibility to ensure our communities can worship safely—especially our children.”

It’s a fact that most churches are considered soft targets by:

- Radicals, including transgender activists
- ISIS and terrorists
- Political or race haters
- Mentally deranged or drugged individuals
- Those with a grudge against the pastor or a member

Churches are at greater risk of harm than ever before. For churches, meeting times are posted and anyone is welcome. Most church buildings have multiple points of access. Few churches have security personnel or policies in place.

Some congregations resist employing security guards, worrying that they will frighten children and distract them from worship. But the church’s duty is to protect everyone.

## **The Persecution of Christians Should Not Be a Surprise**

Did you know the same week as the Nashville shooting, hundreds of Christians around the globe—including North Korea, the Middle East and Egypt, India and Nigeria—are being persecuted?

Worldwide, one Christian is killed every 30 minutes.

Christians are persecuted the world over, yet when it happens here at home, it shocks us into reality.

Pastor Clay Stauffer shared, through tears and a shaky voice, the story of Evelyn Dieckhaus. Evelyn, a victim of the shooting, was a third grader at Covenant School in Nashville.

Her sister, a fifth grader, is a member of the Disciples class at Woodmont with plans of being baptized in a couple of weeks.

Evelyn's sister cried as she said, "I don't want to be an only child."

"We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed," said Stauffer. "Perplexed, but not driven to despair. Persecuted, but not forsaken. Struck down, but not destroyed" (2 Cor. 4:8-9, NASB).

Other Scriptures that remind us that following Christ is not without its perils:

"All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Tim. 3:12, ESV).

"Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you" (1 John 3:13, ESV).

### **Why the Hate?**

It is because Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and there is no other way to salvation and heaven but through Him.

And Satan knows it. He also knows his time is coming to an end. It's time the world knew it, too.

Yes, as Christians we face persecution, but we are not to lose heart in the face of this adversity. Not only will good always overcome evil, but we live on a promise Jesus gave us:

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:10, ESV).

Love overcomes hate. As Christians, we are told to:

“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matt. 5:44, ESV).

“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you” (Luke 6:27-28, ESV).

### **The Nashville Christian Hate Crime Is a Wake-up Call**

Christian schools and churches are vulnerable and need to step up security. They need to have security plans in place at each church... with armed and trained members there to protect the innocent.

As one security analyst said, the pro-socialists believe you can legislate evil out of people’s hearts, but you can’t. Don’t be sheep. Be vigilant. We are commanded to defend ourselves.

“When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe,” (Luke 11:21, NIV).

 “Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked,” (Psalm 82:4, NIV).

Do not be afraid to go to a Christian school or church again. Don’t let demonic attacks impact church or school attendance. We gain strength through fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ. As Psalms 46:1-2 (NIV) reminds us:

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea.” {eoas}

Bring *Charisma* magazine home with a subscription today!

**Craig Huey** *is a contributor to Charisma News.*