

Megachurch Pastor: There's Only One Thing to Do After a Mass Shooting

Twenty-six shot to death by a deranged gunman whose in-laws attended the church. It's more than half the congregation wiped out in mere minutes. Among the victims were children, elderly and a pastor's daughter.

Fellow Texas Baptist pastor Jack Graham's heart broke for the wound in the body of Christ.

"When you face such evil and tragedy as we are facing once again in our country, this extreme kind of violence, things that cannot be explained, things that certainly break our hearts, there's only one thing to do," the Prestonwood Baptist Church pastor says. "And that is to cry out to God, run to Jesus. It is Jesus who said, 'In this world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.'"

Graham isn't the only one clinging to the Lord during this hardship. Here's what some other people are saying:

Michael Brown, radio personality and cultural commentator

This is a time to mourn and weep, not to get into political debates. Let's focus first and foremost on the agony of this small community, going to God on their behalf. And then let's intercede for our nation. We are very sick and in desperate need of the Lord.

Daniel Norris, traveling evangelist

From the massacre in Las Vegas, to the terror attack New York, and now to assault in the small town of Southerland

Springs we see that evil knows no bounds and we are all at risk. Our nation descends deeper by the day.

This was not my reality as I grew up, yet I find myself raising kids for which it is. I'm saddened. I am angry. I grieve. I hurt.

Today I see shouts from many that say, "Enough with your thoughts and prayers. Obviously, your prayers are not enough!"

No, prayer alone is not enough. Prayer is where we must all begin. And we have yet to do that. We must fall to our knees in true prayer and then we need much action from the pew. Our world hurts around us, because it remains a healed. It remains healed because we have withheld its healing. No more!

Today is not the day to secure ourselves within the church house, but to secure our cities through much prayer and a true display of the gospel. It remains our only hope!

Pat and Karen Schatzline, authors of *Rebuilding the Altar*

Our hearts were so deeply broken by the horrific shooting that took place at First Baptist Church, Sutherland Springs, Texas. The lives that were lost at the hands of a demon-possessed man gained a greater reward called heaven, and we know according to Romans 8:28 that only Jesus can turn this horrible tragedy into "good." Satan foolishly thinks he won a victory, but we know that Jesus reigns (1 Tim. 1:17). We know that God is our strong tower (Prov. 18:10), and that God will bring perfect peace to the precious families (Is. 26:3). Now is time for the church to be the church. Let us not allow this terrible tragedy to just become a part of the 24-hour news cycle. Instead, the bride of Christ must cry aloud and spare not (Is. 58:1). We must come together and lock arms for a spiritual awakening in our nation. We must

draw near to God and He will draw near to us (James 4:8). In these last days the vigilance of the church will be that we must keep our light shining and the gospel message ablaze. Our prayer is that souls will be saved in the coming day. Lastly, let us not forget as we hold our families close each day that through Jesus we have won the victory! Fear has no hold on the children of God!

Gary G. Dull, executive director of the PA Pastors Network

As a pastor, my heart goes out to pastor Frank Pomeroy, who has a very heavy burden in trying to support, strengthen and rebuild his broken congregation. We must all pray for him, as well as for the rest of his congregation, the church leadership, family members of the victims, the entire Sutherland Springs community and churches across America. In time, God will heal the broken hearts of those involved as Psalm 34:18 teaches: "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart."

I offer the following suggestions in light of the shooting in Texas:

- *Christians across America must pray earnestly for the First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, Texas and their leadership as they work to recover from this tragedy and endeavor to strengthen the congregation.*
- *Every church must make efforts to have qualified security teams prepared to protect the congregation that gathers to worship, no matter the size of the congregation.*
- *We all must recognize we are in a spiritual battle and are not just facing flesh and blood but the evil forces of Satan that desire to bring fear and destruction into the hearts of all people.*
- *We must remember that God is in control and will always work to perform His perfect will and purpose in our*

lives as we trust Him to provide for us.

- *We should acknowledge that Christians will suffer persecution, which will become even more intense as we draw closer to the return of Christ, according to 2 Timothy 3:12.*
- *We must all be vigilant and alert as to what is going on around us and be prepared for anything that may come our way, according to 1 Peter 5:8.*

Pray for pastor Frank Pomeroy and the congregation of the First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, Texas.

Doug Grane, co founder of Serviam

Evil is evil. Whenever. Wherever. For a mass shooting to occur in a house of worship is beyond words. Prayers for the victims, their families and the community. The culture in our nation must improve. Life is sacred.