

Saving Carlie

The newspaper said that at 1:00 a.m. the body of eleven year old Carlie Brucia had been found. The macabre video of Carlie being abducted by a tattooed man in a carwash video sent chills down the spine of every caring parent in America. Then to awaken with the news Friday morning that one's worst suspicions were confirmed was heartbreaking. We who have children will experience hurt and anger even though we did not personally know the young lady or her family. Along with these emotions, we experience an insatiable desire to prevent these kinds of things from happening in repeated performance.

Please understand, what I am about to say is not an accusation toward anyone. It is an introspective moment for us to re-evaluate our values, our teaching and ask ourselves in the society in which we live, what can we do as parents, educators and spiritual instructors to (with God's help and wisdom) keep the atmosphere of such wicked crime from happening. My mission in this Pastor's Word is to save the future Carlies. How can we save the Carlies?

I. Let crime be dealt with thoroughly and quickly.

Solomon, the wise man said, "*Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil*" (Ecclesiastes 8:11). The wise man is saying that when we do not pass and carry out a sentence against an evil work, the criminals develop a sense of security and their hearts are hardened to do more evil because they did not pay in a timely fashion for the wrong they did.

America has a great justice system and we do believe that a person is presumed innocent until proven guilty. We should continue to stand behind this good system. May I simply speculate? Joseph Smith, whom evidence is now piling high against his innocence has been arrested thirteen times in Florida. In 1993 he was arrested for kidnapping a lady in the same way Carlie was abducted. The lady was older and struggled until she freed herself and was rescued by a nearby motorist. One year later in 1998, he was acquitted. We are not saying he is the man. My sister, who has won victim's advocate of the year and spends many of her days counseling with victims and their families, will tell you in the Indian River County district of Florida, many a victim is taken advantage of by repeat performers. She, among many other conscientious citizens, tries to push legislation that will deal firmly with criminals, especially those who murder, rape and abuse.

God's Word says, "*For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil*" (Romans 13:3, 4). The Word of God tells us clearly that those in power are to bring their "terror" to evil workers. They are designed to bring terror to the terrorists! Furthermore, God declares the enforcer of good as a "minister of God" and he is not to "bear the sword in vain," meaning he is to bring it down upon the wicked to protect the innocent.

II. Let's keep wholesomeness before the public.

The newspaper today quoted one of her friends saying that young Carlie loved watching Jennifer Lopez. Less than a week ago, it is now estimated that 14 million kids saw Janet Jackson's immoral stunt at the half-time, prime time Super Bowl event. Again, this article is not attempting to blame or say this crime was committed because of any of these reasons; we do not know those reasons. We do know however, that our youth could sure use better heroes or heroines. Role models who have a righteous standard, not role models who sing and dance so suggestively that even a lost world that does not profess to know Christ is outraged by lyrics, moves, and the amount of flesh exposed. In America our girls are literally growing up faster. The rate of puberty is now happening one year earlier than the previous generation. How our young girls need role models that will encourage them to save themselves

for marriage, not become so sensual that early sexual activity is not only approved, it is applauded in their music and movies!

In a different application, we know from documented evidence that predators, as a rule are people given over to pornography. In this hour America is sold out to porn. Call it soft or hard; America cannot (will not) even advertise soap or deodorant without sexually suggestive material! True, there are some perverts who would not behave right if America were baptized in old fashion puritanical ways. But it is time that we consider there are many who could be influenced to do the wrong thing by the incredible baptism of filth that is presently in our land. There are some who, if decency were applauded, and indecency reprimanded, would be restrained.

The wise man speaking of the entrapment that took a young person into the throes of immorality said: *"And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart"* (Proverbs 7:10). We are correct to presume if there is attire that a fallen woman wears, there must be an attire that a modest woman wears. The Bible says, *"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel..."* (I Timothy 2:9).

III. Let's place the value of human life back to God's standard.

In 1973 when Roe versus Wade was passed, most of America did not have any idea of the danger zone we had placed ourselves! Now over one million, precious, unborn babies have their lives taken every year through abortion in our land of the free. *"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee..."* (Jeremiah 1:5). God clearly states in Scripture that before Jeremiah was formed, God had plans for his life. It needs to be emphasized again and again that life is in God's hands, not mine or yours. It is not ours to take any more than it is ours to give.

I am amazed when America becomes outraged that partial birth abortion becomes an agenda that is seriously considered. You see, the only difference is a few inches. I agree with Dr. Seuss, "A person is a person, not matter how small (*Horton Hears a Who*). There are even some who are pushing infanticide, i.e. by giving the parents a window of a few weeks, or months to decide if they want to keep their baby. It is hard to believe (or is it really that hard to believe in our present atmosphere) that one of the Democratic national contenders for President of the United States said that a baby is life when its mother says it is life! May God have mercy on us if others begin to hold to this heathen view! We must face up to the fact that these irrational statements come from the de-valuing of life. There is absolutely, no doubt in my mind that violence and the random taking of life in America, at least to some degree, is attributable to our national acceptance to the taking of life of our weakest. May God deliver us from the law of the jungle which says, "Kill or be killed." Sadly our "survival" games that entertain America are lived out in the criminal world.

IV. Let's be in God's house on the Lord's day.

As I read today that Carlie was abducted at 6:20 p.m. on Sunday evening as she was taking a short cut from her friend's house, I could not help but think about all the churches in the country that have services starting at 6:00 p.m. When I read further that she was found in a church parking lot, it intensified the pain. As I see the smiling face of Carlie before me while I write these words, let us all remind ourselves to make an effort to evangelize the Carlies and the parents of the Carlies and get them into God's house. "I need my daughter home," Carlie's mother, Susan Schorpen, had said Thursday. "She's a very, very important part of this family and community." Indeed, she was. We need to find them and bring them home to God's house, as well. May the words of our Lord Jesus convict us to follow through, *"And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled"* (Luke 14:23).

In this world that we live in, we are not promised that life on earth will continue (James 4:14,

Proverbs 27:1), but are promised that “...*whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*” (Romans 10:13). There is the promise that no matter what happens, when a child of God dies, they are saved! That can never be taken, abducted, or stolen from you. What a blessing! There are a lot of Carlies, Susans, Carries, Ambers, Sarahs, Rachael's, Johns, Billys, Ryans, Craigs, Joshuas, and Tommys that need to be saved. God help us to see to it that our youth and their families come under the protecting canopy of God's grace!

- Pastor Pope -

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