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Why the Parkland School Shooting: The Shocking Story You Have Not Heard

Understand the shameful truth of what led up to this tragedy, and you will better see how you can protect yourself from being the next victim.

- Joel Hilliker
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Today marks one month since the deadly mass murder took place at a Florida high school. And today, students across America are staging walkouts. Why? These young people have been convinced that if they put pressure like this on lawmakers, lawmakers will ban more firearms, require more background checks, and prevent future school shootings.

These students have been sorely deceived.

You may think you have heard everything there is to hear about the Parkland shooting, but here is some important information that could change your view of that tragedy.

Listen to the full story here on *Trumpet Hour* ...

There is an extremely valuable lesson we can take from this. It is a principle we need to apply as a society, and that each of us must apply as individuals, in order to be protected from tragedies like this.

This is not just another opinion. This is what the Bible specifically and repeatedly says about the matter. This is *God's* view on this subject.

The senseless murders Nikolas Cruz committed at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School were pure evil. Anybody can recognize that.

The fundamental yet controversial question is, how do we deal with evil? What is our attitude toward it, and what actions do we take against it?

The tragedy in Parkland happened because we got the answer to that question dangerously and fatally *wrong*.

We make this mistake at our peril. *You* may be making this mistake without even realizing it.

‘Education Not Incarceration’

This story begins several years ago in Miami-Dade County, Florida.

We start with a press release from Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Feb. 15, 2012: “Miami-Dade Schools Police Reduces Juvenile Delinquency by 60 Percent.”

Miami-Dade Schools Police (m-dspd) was recently commended by the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice for dramatically decreasing school-related delinquency in Miami-Dade County public schools.

m-dspd has the distinction of decreasing school-related juvenile delinquency by an impressive 60 percent for the last six months of 2011, which was the largest decline in any school district in the state.

The Miami-Dade Public School System has its own police force, including sheriff’s deputies called “school resource officers.” Its police chief is appointed by and reports to the school board and superintendent, not the municipal police.

Then chief of schools police, Charles Hurley, said in the press release: “Three years ago we set out to create and maintain a police department focused on redefining our role and reaffirming our values through prevention, intervention, enforcement and education. *Our mantra is education not incarceration*”(emphasis added throughout).

This press release says that administrators and school police took a *‘student-centered approach to law enforcement* by engaging and helping students and their families.”

This sounds good and noble. But what are the effects? Six years ago, when Miami-Dade Public Schools faced the question, *How do we deal with evil?* their answer was to excuse criminal behavior among students.

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Trayvon Martin, a young man who was killed by a neighborhood watch volunteer, became the poster child of how supposedly endemic racism within American society was indiscriminately killing young black men. (Kena Betancur/Getty Images)

Case Study: Trayvon Martin

One Miami-Dade School District student was a young man named Trayvon Martin. He was exactly the kind of kid this education-not-incarceration program was intended to keep out of jail.

A respected blog website called Conservative Treehouse documents Martin’s school career. This can all be verified by copies of the original documents, press releases, police reports, court transcripts and affidavits.

In October 2011, Trayvon was searched at his high school by school resource officer Darryl Dunn, who found a cache of ladies’ jewelry, a man’s watch, and a flathead screwdriver he described in his report as “a burglary tool.”

An internal affairs investigation by the Miami-Dade Schools Police revealed that these items had been stolen in a burglary a few blocks from Trayvon’s high school.

But Officer Dunn never filed a criminal report or opened a criminal investigation on the matter. [Conservative Treehouse reported](#), “Instead, and as a result of pressure from m-dspd Chief Hurley to avoid criminal reports for black male students, Dunn wrote up the jewelry as ‘found items,’ and transferred them, along with the burglary tool, to the Miami-Dade Police property room where they sat on a shelf unassigned to anyone for investigation.”

The school system simply chose not to treat *burglary* as a crime.

School administrators and school police also covered up Trayvon’s possessions of marijuana and falsified the incident reports. This kept him out of the criminal justice system—and improved their statistics.

The school district also implemented a policy “forbidding the sharing of Miami-Dade School Police reports to outside agencies without redaction. Officers had to send any and all requests through the public information officer” (ibid). This policy could have no purpose other than ensuring that nobody found out how they were manipulating the numbers.

They went to extraordinary lengths to *improve their statistics*.

Well—the statistics improved. All you have to do to achieve “an impressive 60 percent” decline in delinquency is *to stop considering burglary and marijuana possession as criminal acts*.

Miami-Dade administrators answered *How do we deal with evil?* with this “student-centered approach to law enforcement.” Rather than *stopping* evil, they *accommodated* it, and they got to issue that self-congratulatory press release for the world to see.

So how did this policy affect Trayvon Martin’s behavior? In his junior and senior years, his text messages indicate he was smoking marijuana, getting into fistfights, and interested in buying a pistol.

Eleven days after that press release—and *only three days* after he was caught with marijuana again and was simply *suspended from school* rather than being referred to police—he was wandering the streets with enough *thc* in him to impair his body and mind, he got into an altercation with someone trying to protect his neighborhood, and he was shot and killed!

That “student-centered approach to law enforcement” did keep Trayvon out of jail—but it certainly did not help his character or put his life on a better path. It may well have played a significant role in his appalling, premature death.

Redefining Criminality

The statistical decline in juvenile delinquency in Miami-Dade was hailed as a terrific success. The Broward County School district decided to follow suit.

The Broward County School Board and its district superintendent made a deal with Broward County law enforcement officials to stop arresting students for crimes.

Broward, the seventh-largest school district in the country, had the highest number of school-related arrests in the state during the 2011–2012 school year. District officials wanted to improve their statistics like Miami-Dade had. (This would make them eligible for additional state and federal grant money.)

The Associated Press reported, “One of the nation’s largest school districts has reached an agreement with law enforcement agencies and the naacp to reduce the number of students being charged with crimes for minor offenses” (Nov. 5, 2013).

Why was the naacp, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, involved in a law-enforcement decision? Because the real intent of the policy was to reduce arrests of *young black men*. The Associated Press report cited Department of Education data showing that nationwide, over 70 percent of students involved in school-related arrests or law enforcement referrals are black or Hispanic.

This language was included as the reason for [the agreement between school officials, law enforcement and the naacp](#): “Whereas, across the country, students of color, students with disabilities, and lgbtq students are disproportionately impacted by school-based arrests *for the same behavior as their peers....*”

That is a dramatic condemnation: When students *commit the same crime*, schools are deciding whether or not to have them arrested based on their race, sexual orientation or physical handicap! Can you imagine *any evidence* of schools disproportionately cracking down on misbehavior from *handicapped students*? The use of such language exposes the nakedly *political* nature of this agreement, based on an explicit accusation of outright racism and bigotry.

“The agreement with Broward County Public Schools ... is one of the first comprehensive plans bringing together district officials, police and the state attorney’s office to create an alternative to the zero-tolerance policies prevalent in many schools,” the Associated Press continued. “The move is designed to cut down on what has become known as the ‘school-to-prison pipeline,’ where students accused of offenses like disrupting class or loitering are suspended, arrested and charged with crimes.”

Farcically, this article also refers to an Obama-era “Justice Department lawsuit that claims there is a ‘school-to-prison pipeline’ in part of the state that locks up students for minor infractions like flatulence or vulgar language.” As if students who passed gas in class were going to prison for it. As if the real problem isn’t the offenses committed by the young people, but rather bigoted and racist school officials overeager to criminalize students.

The plan, therefore, was to handle more student misbehavior *within the school*. The Associated Press reported that for “non-violent misdemeanors”—including possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia—“administrators are instructed to try and resolve the situation without an arrest.” It describes the use of “graduated levels of school-based interventions. After

a *fifth incident*, students are referred to law enforcement.” It takes a student getting caught *five times* before teachers and administrators can call the police. AP reported:

The policy went into effect at the beginning of the current school year [2013], and Broward Superintendent Robert Runcie said the district has already seen a 41 percent decline in the number of school-related arrests.

Another success story, brought to you by a simple change in policy: *Just stop arresting criminals*. To ensure that fewer students will be arrested, black or otherwise, just allow more crimes. Just avoid holding young people accountable.

Is this going to make a school safer? Is it going to help the other students? Is it even going to help *these young people*? Is overlooking crimes going to make students less inclined to commit crimes?

If you know anything about human nature, you can easily foresee where this type of thinking will lead.

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Broward Schools Superintendent Robert Runcie speaks to the media after students attended classes at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School for the first time since the February 14 shooting. (Joe Raedle/Getty Images)

Growing Deceit

“The primary problem was the *policy* conflicted with *laws*; and over time the policy began to create outcomes where illegal behavior by students was essentially unchecked by law enforcement,” Conservative Treehouse reported. “Initially the police were excusing misdemeanor behaviors. However, it didn’t take long until felonies, even violent felonies (armed robberies, assaults and worse) were being excused. The need to continue lowering the arrests year-over-year meant that increasingly more severe unlawful behavior had to be ignored. Over time even the most severe of unlawful conduct was being filtered by responding police. We found out about it, when six cops blew the whistle on severe criminal conduct they were being instructed to hide.”

It was these whistleblowers who exposed the truth about Trayvon Martin. These police officers were told to hide recovered evidence of robberies and burglaries in order to keep students from getting arrested. Conservative Treehouse continued:

The sheriff and police chiefs were telling street cops and school cops to ignore ever worsening criminal conduct. ... The police would take the stolen merchandise and intentionally falsify police records to record stolen merchandise *as if* they just found it on the side of the road. They put drugs and stolen merchandise in bags, and sent it to storage rooms in the police department. Never assigning the recovery to criminal conduct. Stolen merchandise was just sitting in storage rooms gathering dust. They couldn’t get the stuff back to the victim because that would mean the police would have to explain how they took custody of it. So they just hid it.

That is a tremendous amount of deceit. Here is a general rule: If you think you are going to help people through lying and deceit, *you are deceiving yourself*.

Everything about this policy has a foul stench. Think of these school district officials, the sheriff and police chiefs issuing these orders. Think of the school resource officers carrying out these terrible policies, filing deceitful reports, permitting these crimes to go on. They weren’t thinking about the *victims* of the crimes, whose stolen valuables were collecting dust on a shelf, or who were suffering from assaults. They weren’t even thinking about the welfare of the *students committing the crimes*. Nobody in his right mind would believe that letting a student get away with burglary or armed robbery or assault was actually doing that student a favor!

The only thing these officials were thinking about was *those statistics*—and the political and financial benefits it would bring them to create the appearance of the success of their progressive, enlightened approach to juvenile crime. In defiance of the truth, and of all contrary evidence, they wanted to “prove” that the reason for high incarceration rates among young black men was merely racist policing. They wanted to prove that everything will work out if you just take a “student-centered approach” and let a budding criminal off the hook with a warning—two, three, four or five times.

It is no surprise that the criminality did not vanish—it *flourished*. Conservative Treehouse reported:

From 2012 though 2018 it only got worse. In Broward and Miami-Dade it is almost impossible for a student to get arrested. The staff within the upper levels of [law enforcement officers] keep track of arrests and when a certain number is reached all else is excused. Well it didn't take long for criminal gangs in Broward and Miami-Dade to realize the benefit of using students for their criminal activities. After all, the kids would be let go ... so organized crime became easier to get away with if they enlisted high-school kids. As criminals became more adept at the timing within the offices of the officials, they timed their biggest crimes to happen after the monthly maximum arrest quota was made. The most serious of armed robberies etc were timed for later in the month or quarter. The really serious crimes were timed in the latter phases of the data collection periods. This way the student criminals were almost guaranteed to get away with it.

Think again about those 17 people murdered at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. *This* is the shocking, shameful backdrop of that disaster.

These officials' job was to *protect these kids*. Instead, they *sacrificed* these kids in order to *protect their twisted ideology*.

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Thousands gather in Parkland, Florida, to remember those who were killed and injured at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. (Carolyn Cole/Los Angeles Times via Getty Images)

Ignoring the Warnings

What happens when you don't deal forcibly with bad behavior? What happens when you create a system more interested in statistics than in students?

The *Miami Herald* reported this on February 20 about one Broward County Public School District student:

At times, Nikolas Cruz's behavior could be a school administrator's nightmare: Teachers and other students said he kicked doors, cursed at teachers, fought with and threatened classmates, and brought a backpack with bullets to school. He collected a string of discipline for profanity, disobedience, insubordination and disruption.

In 2014, administrators transferred Cruz to an alternative school for children with emotional and behavioral disabilities—only to change course two years later and return him to a traditional neighborhood school, Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. Cruz was banished from Douglas a year later for other disciplinary violations—then toggled between three other alternative placements

This ineffective serial school hopping was basically the only option the school district had left itself after stripping away its ability to actually *discipline students*. Many people knew how crazy this student was, but they were helpless to do anything.

The *Miami Herald* reported on March 9:

Nearly four years [ago], [Cruz] confided in a therapist that he saw himself in a dream drenched in human blood. A May 3, 2014, notation in a Broward County schools psychiatric file said Cruz "reported [a dream] last week of him killing people and covered in blood." Again and again, authorities were warned about the teen's explosive tendencies and lack of impulse control. *Again and again, authorities ignored the warnings.* ...

The fbi failed to act on two tips about Cruz, one of which involved Cruz posting online that he planned to become a "professional school shooter." The Broward Sheriff's Office was also warned about the teen, and had received a report that he "planned to shoot up the school."

Besides being handicapped by policies that prevented them from decisively confronting the threat of a student like Cruz, these schools were being patrolled by school resource officers who were routinely covering up student criminality in order to shield them from the police.

In 2014, guess who won the award for School Resource Officer of the Year given by the Broward County Crime Commission? Scot Peterson. They credited him with handling issues “with tact and judgment,” and said he was “active in mentoring and counseling students.” He was a faithful adherent to the “education not incarceration” motto.

Miami Herald reported on February 22:

In November [2017], a tipster called [the Broward Sheriff’s Office] to say Cruz “could be a school shooter in the making,” but deputies did not write up a report on that warning. It came just weeks after a relative called urging bso to seize his weapons. Two years ago, according to a newly released timeline of interactions with Cruz’s family, a deputy investigated a report that Cruz “planned to shoot up the school”—intelligence that was forwarded to the school’s resource officer, with no apparent result.

Who was this resource officer? Scot Peterson. And why didn’t Officer Peterson do anything? Because *he was doing his job* as instructed. He was demonstrating his award-winning “tact and judgment.” He was following the school district’s protocols, doing his part to keep this Hispanic student out of the “school-to-prison pipeline” and to minimize the number of arrests—especially of minority students.

He was doing *exactly* what the program directed him to do.

And *this* was the sheriff’s deputy on duty the day that Nikolas Cruz took a semi-automatic rifle and shot 34 people, leaving 17 lying dead. When shots sounded, the 2014 Parkland School Resource Officer of the Year came onto the scene in his bulletproof vest, sidearm in hand, ran to the side of the building, set up in a defensive position, then waited for four minutes.

Until the gunfire stopped.

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Nikolas Cruz appears in court before Broward Circuit Judge Elizabeth Scherer on February 19 in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Cruz faces 17 charges of premeditated murder in the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. (Mike Stocker-Pool/Getty Images)

We Are in a War

How do we deal with evil? The real lesson of the Parkland tragedy is this: If you do not confront evil, it will end up destroying you.

Failure to confront evil and eliminate it—both within our society and within ourselves—has devastating consequences.

The people behind these terrible policies that accommodate criminality and evil have done a masterful job of diverting the blame away from themselves and pinning all of it on *guns*. But the 17 people who died in Parkland didn’t die because of too few gun laws. They died because of a dangerous, wrong-headed approach to dealing with evil.

The nature of evil is to spread. Bad habits lead to addictions. Destructive cultural forces like vulgarity, violence and family breakdown multiply and worsen. Political tyrants keep conquering territory and people until some stronger force intervenes to stop them.

Our society profoundly denies this plain fact. You see it in parents who do not bridle their children. You see it in judges who protect criminals rather than their victims. You see it in politicians who insist that our enemies will vanish if we just negotiate with them. If we won’t identify evil as something to be fought, we are helpless to resist it.

The failure to deal with Nikolas Cruz is just one illustration of *awhole culture* dangerously tolerant of evil.

Evil is real in our world. And whether we realize it or not, we are in *awar* against it. Many people want to accommodate it, negotiate over it, understand, explain it. Those people will succumb to it.

Because we are not fighting evil with enough *force*, it is forcefully overcoming us! The wrong-headed “tolerance” in Florida is happening in various forms all over society—and it will happen in *our families, our marriages and our minds* if we do not actively resist and conquer evil.

How Does God Deal With Evil?

The God of the Bible is a God of love. He is extremely merciful and forgiving. He is “The Lord, The Lord God, *merciful and gracious, longsuffering*, and abundant in goodness and truth, *keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin ...*” (Exodus 34:6-7). But notice what He says next: “and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.”

By no means does God clear the guilty who do not repent of their evil. He does not extend mercy to people who are actively committing crimes! He says in Exodus 23:7, “I will not justify the wicked.”

“The Lord trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest” (Psalm 11:5-6). “The Lord revengeth, and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him” (Nahum 1:2-3, 6).

And the New Testament says that God “will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil” (Romans 2:6-9). And Hebrews 12:29 says that “our God is a consuming fire.”

Look at the way God dealt with evil within His chosen nation, Israel. Study the punishments He commanded for crimes. You will see how He focused on protecting the victims of crime, not the criminals. And He ensured that punishments were enforced in a way to *deter future criminals!* The punishment was tough, and it was executed speedily—to protect the people and strike fear into those inclined toward crime. As long as such a system is used, crime is minimized.

The same principle applies to God’s instruction to parents in raising their children. God says that where you see evil in a child, *confront* it and *drive it out!* That is what Trayvon Martin and Nikolas Cruz desperately needed.

Proverbs 13:24 says if you spare the rod, you *hate* your son, but if you love him, you will chasten him promptly. The parent who loves his child *springs into action* when he sees evil. We should not excuse it or ignore it—or we are bringing curses into our children’s lives! Proverbs 29:15 tells us, “The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.” The Parkland tragedy is bitter proof.

Look at the way God dealt with evil and sin in the New Testament, within His people! He commands over and over, if someone isn’t going the right way, to put that person out! (Romans 16:17; 2 John 10; 1 Corinthians 5:11).

In Romans 13, the Apostle Paul says that God puts the authorities of this world into positions of power in order to *terrorize criminals!* It says that the law enforcer “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.”

Look what happens when law enforcement *doesn’t do that job*—when it tries to *accommodate crime* rather than executing wrath upon it!

Do You Hate Evil Enough?

Think about what happened in Parkland! That was a result of trying to handle evil our own “more enlightened,” “more tolerant” way—rather than God’s way. People think they know the way to fairness, equality and righteousness. But if you are not looking to God’s definition of righteousness—it is *self-righteousness!* That is very dangerous. Look at the results!

“There is a way which *seemeth right* unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Proverbs 14:12; 16:25).

Are you willing to accept *God’s view* on this subject? “Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil” (Proverbs 3:7). “Ye that love the Lord, hate evil” (Psalm 97:10). “Hate the evil, and love the good” (Amos 5:15). Abhor that which is evil; *cleave* to that which is good” (Romans 12:9).

As a society, we simply do not hate evil enough!

A lot of people hate a lot of things, yet we do not hate evil as God defines evil! We do not confront sin as God defines sin!

God confronts evil. He saw how it all started: when the archangel Lucifer, whom God created, started harboring vain thoughts that ultimately drove him to try to usurp God's throne (read Ezekiel 28:14-18). God responded with violent force, kicking His adversary, and all his demons, out of heaven and casting them down to Earth. Read Revelation 12:7-12.

These schools want to avoid "exclusionary practices." Like expulsion. God is not afraid of expulsion! He kicks evil out!

The passage in Revelation 12 concludes with a chilling warning: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth ... for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Yes, the devil is right here among us—even, in some respects, within us. Do you recognize him?

Why would God curse us with Satan's presence? Because He wants us to learn to confront evil. And He wants us to witness firsthand the devastating consequences of failing to do so. Anywhere we fail to confront evil—among nations, within communities and schools, in our families, within ourselves—it will spread.

God's Rule

When God establishes His rule, He is going to put down evil! Rule with a rod of iron! That is the only way to deal with entrenched rebellion. You cannot reason—negotiate!—accommodate! It must be forcibly put down!

And because He is going to do that, He will turn Earth into a peaceful paradise!

The Bible is full of prophecies of the peace and prosperity this world will enjoy—very soon! But that is only possible because God will eliminate evil!

And that is what He expects us to be doing in our lives today.

Learn this lesson. Understand this principle. Witness the problems in our society for *failing* to apply it—and be sure you are applying it in your own life! If you do, then you can enjoy the peace that comes as a result—just as surely as it will be experienced all over the Earth very soon!

*Confronting evil and overcoming sin requires a warrior mindset. It demands wholehearted dedication to the three-pronged battle against Satan the devil, our evil society and our own sinful human nature. Gerald Flurry's booklet **How to Be an Overcomer—Win Your War Against Sin** serves as a type of soldier's field manual for the Christian fight. It shows you how to search out the sin in your life and destroy it. It shows you how to understand the supreme sacrifice of Jesus Christ, how to strategize spiritually, and how to go on the attack. It explains, from your Bible, how to become the victorious Christian soldier your Father and your Captain have commissioned you to be. Request a free copy today of [How to Be an Overcomer](#), and reap these blessings that come from confronting and conquering sin—and winning this war! ■*

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