

Debating is Over: Time to Act Boldly.
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*"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven."
(Ecclesiastes 3:1).*

Now is the time to change gun laws and to end gun violence. Now is the time to act and fight against the NRA; referring to the NRA leaders and lobby in Washington D.C, not NRA members who support solutions to end gun violence including universal background checks, high-capacity clips and assault weapons. One week after the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre, the chief executive of NRA, Wayne Lapierre said: "The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun...." As I was hearing this statement, I was frustrated, sick, and angry. It is ethically wrong, theologically ill informed and dangerous. Mayor Michael Bloomberg pointed out "The NRA is only powerful if you and I let them be powerful." Following the prophetic tradition of Judeo Christianity, I boldly claim that as God-intoxicated people we must fight against the Gun-intoxicated NRA here and now.

In this essay I propose a consciousness and perception alternative to the consciousness and perception of the NRA. Let it be noted I have borrowed Marcus J. Borg's threefold pattern as the format for this essay: Indictment, Threat, and Call to Change.

Indictment:

When Columbine High School shootings happened in 1999, we were shocked and mourned. We said that we should do something to stop and to end this kind of unnecessary gun violence. Now, fourteen years later, nothing has been changed. After Virginia Tech massacre happened in 2007 we were shocked and mourned again and said exactly same. Now, six years later, nothing has been done. When a gunman killed 12 people and injured 60 people in Aurora movie theater in 2012, we were shocked and mourned again, and once again said the same. Nothing has been changed. Then Sandy Hook Elementary school massacre happened during advent season on Friday December 14, 2012. A gunman killed 20 innocent elementary school children and 6 adults including the gunman's mother. We were shocked and mourned as a nation.

Congress is set to deal with gun laws including President Obama's proposal: universal background checks, high-capacity clips and assault-weapons sales ban. Sadly and unfortunately we are hearing rumors that Congress will pass the first proposal; universal background checks, and will not pass two other proposals; high-capacity clips and assault-weapons sales ban. Why? Because of NRA's strong opposition to gun control.

The majority of US citizens think that something must be done to protect innocent citizens. For example, according to TIME/CNN poll in the *Times* special report (January 28, 2013), to

the question “Would you favor the following proposals to reduce gun violence?” 69% said yes to requiring gun registration; 58% to a ban on high-capacity clips; 56% to a ban on assault weapons; and 52% to restrict the amount and type of ammunition purchases. To the question, “Do you favor or oppose stricter gun-control laws?” 55% favored and 44% opposed.

What should Christians, who believe in a God of justice and peace do in this conversation? In regard to the NRA, which has long been known as one of the most powerful lobbies of the Washington, what should we do? I believe first of all we must change our assumption that NRA is almighty powerful. We should overcome fear of NRA. Second, we must delete the image of Charlton H. Weston who performed the role of Moses in the Hollywood movie from our memory. Americans have identified Charlton H. Weston with Moses in the Bible and then he became the mediagenic head of the NRA.

Threat:

As the prophets and Jesus warned the people and their society of imminent judgment by God, we must warn NRA leaders in Washington D.C.; NRA must stop listening voices of the American citizens and have blood on it's hand.

When I saw a protester who said that NRA had blood on its hand during Wayne Lapierre's response, the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis chapter 4 came to mind. I didn't know why, and then I said Amen! Amen! Cain responded to the LORD who asked to him, “Where is your brother Abel?” Cain's response was “ I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?” Then the LORD said, “What have you done? Listen. Your brothers' blood is crying out to me from the ground!”

NRA! Remember the first of the Ten Commandments: “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.” (Exodus 20:2). This is the absolutism we Christians believe in and trust, not guns! NRA has made for themselves an idol, guns and serve guns as their god. NRA bows down to guns and worshipped guns.

Call to Change:

Hear the prophetic message of Amos. “Seek the Lord and live! Seek good, and not evil, that you may live!” (Amos 5:6).

Hear the voice of Jesus, “ I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life.” (John 8:12). Choose the light of life not the life in the darkness! “What has come into being in him was life and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it.” (John 1:4-5). Jesus is the light of the world and we follow Jesus. We are children of the light not of darkness and death. We must fight this battle with Jesus and win because we follow Jesus, the light of the world.

Ellie Wiesel in *Night* shared the following story:

How many devout Jews endured such a death? On that most horrible day, even among all those other bad days, when the child witnessed the hanging (yes!) of another child who, he tells us, had the face of a sad angel, he heard someone behind him groan:

“For God’s sake, where is God?” And from within me, I heard a voice answer: Where He is? This is where – hanging here from this gallows.”

As I watched the first funeral service of Sandy Hook Elementary School students, like many of you, I mourned. I prayed, “Where is God?” “What are you doing God?” Then, I heard a voice, “God is with the 20 children and 6 adults, and with their grieving families. And with you Jung Sun!”

Action:

1. Advocate the change of gun laws and address this issue in your church and community.
2. Sign, “End the NRA’s Dangerous Idolatry of Guns” in *Sojourners* website.
3. Call your representatives of the Congress and the Senate