



What Do We Say to These Things?

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My deepest condolences to the families of the victims of gun violence. I must admit my frustration and disappointment in a government that at a stroke of a pen can release trillions of dollars, declare a war, and send aid to other countries in their time of need, but can't take actions to protect her own citizens from domestic terrorists and those who may lack the capacity to make healthy decisions.

I'm grateful for the outpourings of care and concern that we have shown as a community. I'm grateful for the prayers and prayer vigils that many of us have hosted or performed to sooth the sting. These things are good. However, in order to create real change, in order to obliterate the problem, ACTION around gun law regulations and reform must take place.

Today the unspoken elephants in the room: white fragility, racism, xenophobia, and mental health issues. These have been the starting place for many of the recent mass shootings. Easy access to guns, especially assault weapons that were not created for the intent and purpose of basic self-defense, has been the catalyst for these mass shootings. Evils and even untreated mental health challenges are given the fuel to produce major atrocities like mass shootings because of the lack of gun control regulations. To shift this, either we arm all US citizens with weapons to protect themselves or we put stronger measures in place to screen those that seek to possess guns. This screening should include limitations on the number of weapons and type of weapons that can be purchased, background checks, and red-flag laws. These efforts would aid in countering the use of guns to advance evil agendas.

Mass shootings are happening more frequently. American gun violence is no longer surprising; however, it is always shocking. As David Leonhardt writes: "On an average day in the United States, more than 35 people are murdered with a gun. No other affluent country in the world has a gun homicide rate nearly as high" ([David Leonhardt, "19 Murdered Children," The New York Times, May 25, 2022](#)).

As I reflect on the tragic losses over the last month alone—19 lives at the Robb

Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas (most children) and 10 African Americans shopping for groceries in Buffalo, NY—words cannot express my sympathies for the families who lost loved ones and my profound outrage at leaders who have long failed to act on the pressing issue of gun violence.

“Enough is enough,” Vice President Kamala Harris said during an event in Washington. “As a nation, we have to have the courage to take action.”

In light of Vice President Harris’s statement, I’m reminded of Romans 8:31 (NRSVUE). In this passage, Paul poses a rhetorical question to his readers after reflecting on the suffering of the present time and the weakness we experienced during these moments of suffering. The question he proposes still rings out loudly today: What then are we to say about these things?

What are we to say about these things that don’t make sense? What are we to say about what happens after moments of tragedy and terrorism like this? What do we say to the unspoken evils that fuel destruction? Paul suggests that we reflect on these words: If God be for us, who can be against us?

I agree with Paul that this should be our mantra as we stand up to speak truth to power: If God be for us, who can be against us? As we proclaim to those who lead this country that gun law reform must happen for the safety of all Americans, we must say: If God be for us, who can be against us? God is for us and God is with us and in this we must step into our power and work to create the change that we’re looking to see!

Enough is enough. It’s time to get up and do something about what’s happening. Let’s pray and protest, let’s fast and write our representatives, let’s step up and step out to do something bold and daring, because: If God be for us, who can be against us?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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