

CRAWFORD
BROADCASTING
COMPANY



Executive Offices ■ P.O. Box 3003 ■ Blue Bell, PA 19422-0735 ■ (215) 628-3500

Monday, October 16, 2006
Donald B. Crawford, President

THE STAND FORGIVENESS

“He said he hated God, but yet he must have realized that God was going to decide his future, and that the girls had a link to God, so he asked them to pray for him.”

The last words of a vile, evil, deranged human being to ten innocent, pristine flowering girls in an Amish schoolhouse. Charles Carl Roberts, IV then opened fire on these ten innocent maidens and took five lives. Five more faced death from the shootings. Some will die. Others will need a lifetime for recovery. How easy it is to hate, passionately hate a sick, evil human being like Roberts, who hated God.

But not the Amish. Said one:

“I haven’t seen anyone lash out in anger. We have to forgive just like Christ forgave us.”

Unbelievable. But, then again, maybe it is perfectly believable because of the Amish love for Christ. Christ, they say, forgave them, so it is their responsibility to forgive others. Even a satanic, evil murderer like Roberts. Perhaps, especially, a murderer like Roberts.

The Amish, said one of another faith, feel very strongly that unless you forgive, you won’t be forgiven. It is a commandment, a way of life for them to forgive and even love an enemy, even if that enemy is a murderer. They believe that everything that happens is a result of God’s will and they are not to judge.

“We think it was God’s plan. A funeral to us is a much more important thing than the day of birth because we believe in the hereafter. The children our better off than their survivors.” The words of an Amish woodworker. He went on to say that the Christian faith of the Amish would sustain everyone, including and especially the families of the victims. You could surely say that is faith at work, in practice, for real.

Another parent of one of the victims said that faith, family, fellowship and forgiveness will see them through this incredible ordeal. Their faith in Christ. The love, succor and support of family, the fellowship of friends and loved ones. And the joy of forgiveness. The joy felt by actually and fully forgiving a mass murderer who took the life of a precious daughter. I wonder if you or I could truly forgive and offer love to someone who murdered our daughter. Could you?

The support and fellowship were so real. There was hugging, and crying, and words of comfort everywhere. Dozens paid visits to the families, both Amish and non-Amish, as the entire community of Lancaster County, and well beyond, rose up with an outpouring of love and support. Many of the Amish visited the family of the killer. They reached out to the Roberts family and offered them love and forgiveness. The Amish prayed for the Roberts family and offered any help needed. Some suggested, even demanded, that the Roberts family leave the

community. An Amish man who heard such discussions said: "We need them (the Roberts family) here. We need them to be here so we can hug them and take care of them."

Unbelievable! But, then again, believable because of their incredible and real Christian faith. Their faith was alive, doing unto others, forgiving and loving others, as they would want others to do for them. The head of the Roberts family killed their daughters and the families of the victims "need to take care of the Roberts family". What an absolutely marvelous and incredible testimony.

When Roberts indicated he intended to shoot-kill the ten girls, the older girls in the school were trying to save the younger girls, thinking that if they offered themselves, maybe the gunman would spare the lives of the younger girls. They asked to be shot first. Said one Amish lady:

"I think it was just an amazing display of courage. God really had to be present in that schoolhouse to give them that courage. "

And HE surely was present, not only in the schoolhouse, but deep in the soul, the heart, the consciousness of those dear and irreplaceable little girls. What incredible faith they must have had. What a loss to their parents, Lancaster County, the Amish and all of us.

As the funeral processions and services went on, one non-Amish pastor said of the events:

"It was deeply moving. It was a display of Christ's love as I've never seen it."

So God, in infinite wisdom, turns a slaughter, senseless, horrific killings into love at work. Witness and testimony for Christian love from the Amish who suffered the horror and pain. The Amish are otherwise ignored by the world, and especially by the liberal media. They are mocked, ridiculed, often viewed as eccentric and other-worldly. But they showed the world, the Amish did, what love is all about. Said yet another:

"The love expressed by this community is uncommon. The most moving thing was to see the love and grace extended by the Amish."

The shootings said one, may have a positive effect. That is, a reminder to hug your children, appreciate what you have, live your life right. Amen and Amen.

Thank God for the Amish, their witness and testimony, and for making this chapter in human history a display of love which the world will never forget. As the funeral services ended, one Amish man quoted Abraham Lincoln, saying:

"And in the end, its not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years!"

When it all happened, there was sorrow and sadness, but no panic, no hysteria, the parents knew that their children were either safe on earth or:

IN THE ARMS OF JESUS!

God bless the Amish!