

## **WE CAN LEARN A THING OR TWO FROM THE AMISH ABOUT ‘FORGIVENESS’!**

by

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Recently, we have all been shocked [if this is at all possible in today’s secular world dominated by the devil’s doings] by the binding and shooting of the Pennsylvania Amish school girls, which resulted in five deaths. It seems that somewhat copycat killings are plaguing the American school grounds. It shouldn’t be *that* surprising considering the sexual depravity and sadistic violence served up nightly on television as a matter of course to the American public and our loss of discipline over ourselves and our institutions.

The movies are full of outright filth and otherwise morally degrading examples of humans at their very worst. The recording industry is deluged with soft [or otherwise sometimes] porn in not only CDs but videos. Even the country videos are sometimes explicitly suggestive, leaving almost nothing to the imagination. Hip hop ‘singers’ grab their crotches on national television, and some entertainers of note have what is quaintly labeled “wardrobe malfunctions”. [Another ‘problem’ with us recently is our inability to simply tell the truth. We delude ourselves to think that things are not black and white. Oh, yes, they are!]

At the same time, almost inexplicably, Americans demonstrate over and over again their confusion about priorities. Graphic violence, its extent unheard of in better times past, dominates both movie and television screens. You would think we are all going to end up becoming forensic evidence experts dealing in the gruesome and macabre, which on television and the big screen has become ‘old hat,’ commonplace.

Almost nothing seems to be out of bounds insofar as violence is concerned; yet, on some shows relatively minor swear words are bleeped out. Still, explicit sexual scenes or innuendoes are everywhere. And, in line with the continuing media onslaught against moral standards, marriage is continually deprecated; and, of course, now, no situation comedy or other type of show can possibly be put on without the ‘resident homosexual’ (or two). Usually, this relationship is portrayed as part of the American norm. I have almost worn out the “muting” button on our remote trying to oust as much of this as possible from our home.

You would think we were *all* obsessed with sex and violence. But we know this is not the actual case. Query: do you know anyone who acts like the creeps on American television ‘comedies’? Do you begin your conversations with others using somewhat graphic sexual comments and/or gestures as one might see on national TV at times? I doubt it. If you are female, do you dress the way the ‘hot chic’ lawyers do on Boston Legal? I doubt it.

Our enemies have a great ally in their propaganda campaigns against the American “infidels”. They can simply run our afternoon talk shows over and over again on their television outlets.. You know the ones I mean - where the depraved of the country are paraded as if they and their activities were the ‘norm’ in this country. You and I know this is far from the truth. Most Americans are decent law-abiding citizens. We have just lost our capacity to govern and *discipline* ourselves.

We should ask ourselves what has happened to us during the last 30 to 50 years. I am old enough to remember the relative innocence of the 1950s. Do you remember when actress Ingrid Bergman was literally run out of this country for the consequences of her affair with a married man? Ever watch “Happy Days”? Well, they were. Not only were they innocent, but the 50s were honourable. Wrongdoing had consequences. The hero accepted responsibilities for whatever happened on his watch. Heroines were resolute, never flinching in the wake of severe adversity. The best of our moral qualities were sometimes displayed in our American Westerns.

What happened to *that* America? Well, we have temporarily (we pray) lost our faith in God and started believing the lie that everything is relative with its corollary that nothing is *either* right or wrong.

Not all about us, however, is stark and barren of hope. Every now and then spiritual rays of God’s love and light shine through even in the darkest of circumstances and spiritually remind us that all is not lost as long as we have faith. A shining example is the behaviour of the Amish in the midst of their recent suffering and pain. How would you and I respond to the dead killer and his family had the unspeakable Amish tragedy happened to us? It is plausible to suggest we might be prone to understandable hostility and hatred.. This would be a quite human response. It would be a reaction which is of *this* world. But we need to remember that an unforgiving posture is against Christ’s teachings. We should keep in mind that our Christian responsibility is to forgive others, even our enemies.

The Amish rose to the pure Christian occasion. As they drove their wagons during the funerals for their dead loved ones, their drivers nodded to those in front of the dead killer’s house. Many Amish attended the funeral of that man. Imagine that! If a stranger brutally killed our children, could we turn the other cheek? Could we nod respectfully to the family of the killer and even attend his funeral?

Just think about this point. In the midst of their grief and suffering for their loved ones, they still forgave the transgressor. Their code of living knows that forgiveness is integral to salvation. We have none other than Christ’s words to attest to the critical importance of forgiving others. If we do not forgive them, He will not forgive us:

*And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any:  
that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your  
trespasses*

*But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.*

[St. Mark 11:25-26]

The Amish live within themselves as a community. They have in effect walled themselves off from *this* world. They live in their own kind of catacombs. Yet, though they shun the modern world and its trinkets, they still love its sinners. An example to all of us.

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.