**Parkland, Florida**

Yesterday\* tragedy struck once again our nation. This time it was Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. The number of dead is reported to be seventeen. The call for stricter gun laws is once again being raised. But stricter gun laws won’t work. Focusing in on keeping guns away from those who are deemed mentally ill won’t work either. These won’t work because such violence, or lawlessness as the Bible would define it, is a heart issue which no man can solve.

The Apostle Paul wrote about the struggles he faced with his own flesh and its sinful passions. St. Paul knew the Law of God and loved it. Nevertheless, his love for the Law did nothing in the way of enabling him to overcome the sin which dwelled within him. He also knew that if he continued to serve sin it would lead to his death. What was he to do? In what seems to be a cry of utter frustration, Paul wrote these words of Romans 7:24, “O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” Who will deliver any of us from sin?

Thankfully, Paul didn’t conclude his letter at this point. No, he provides us with the answer we need. In what seems to be his very next breath, Paul wrote, “I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!” Romans 7:25. What Paul learned through his own personal struggle was this: though he could do nothing to overcome the sin within him, the Spirit of God could enable him to do what he couldn’t do. Nothing is impossible with God; not one single thing. What we learn from studying God’s Word is this: It is God’s desire to work within us to enable us to overcome sin and every evil desire which might cross our minds.

The living God, the One who is revealed in the Bible, is who America needs. Unfortunately, this nation has been throwing God under the proverbial bus for years! We have been systematically removing God from every cultural sphere there is: home/family, schools, communities, the government, the military, the courts, arts/entertainment, the media, and work places. What has this gotten us? It’s gotten us into a whole lot of trouble. We’ve reaped what we’ve sown. When in years past America was considered a law-abiding nation, lawlessness and violence are becoming the better descriptor. This ought not to be so!

The problem of lawlessness and violence will continue to increase until America grabs hold of the only actual solution there is. We have got to return to God. This would necessitate our acknowledging the very obvious fact that we’ve brought the troubles around us upon ourselves. This mess is the result of our showing God the door and shoving Him to the cultural margins. We must confess that we are unable to govern ourselves. For this nation to do this, we’d have to swallow our huge pride and confess that we actually need God. God already knows that we need Him, but we need to realize this. My prayer is that we will come to our senses and confess this fact and turn to God through Jesus His Son. Until then, I will keep praying for the victims and their families and for everyone affect by these horrendous tragedies.

\* *This article was printed in the Alice Echo Journal immediately following the shooting.*

*Kathleen*