



A Heart of Darkness

By Mr. Alexander S. Brown, Minister

AT MIDNIGHT on July 20th, James Holmes walked into the Century 16 movie theater in Aurora, Colorado and opened fire on the packed auditorium. It was an act that shocked the nation.

Like the massacre at Virginia Tech in 2007, and the attack on the Twin Towers in 2001, and the shooting at Columbine High School in 1999, it sent the nation reeling, asking how could someone do this?

Over the past week the how and the why of Holmes' killing spree has been asked again and again. Some have said that the problem was not enough gun control, while others have said that it was because there was too much gun control.

Some have blamed the movie industry for producing films which glorify violence, and many have simply written Holmes off as mentally unstable, perhaps even demonic.

But to the how and why questions, the Bible gives a simple, and sobering answer – James Holmes did not do what he did because he was deranged, but because, at the core, he was perfectly normal.

Our society has a fairly positive view of humanity. If you were to ask the man on the street whether people were basically good, he would probably agree.

It is the premise that underlies so much of popular culture – we see it in movies, in television shows, in books, and even in a great deal of public policy.

If only you give a person an opportunity to flourish, their inner goodness will come out. It is a comforting worldview, but it is one which ultimately cannot account for atrocities like the one in Aurora.

THE BIBLE, however, has a very different way of understanding the human condition. The Bible says that far from being basically good, humanity is rotten to the core.

As Jesus said, so starkly, “out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander.” (Matt. 15:19) Sin has so twisted and corrupted our hearts that we are full of evil and the most terrible of crimes.

And we all are.

If one thing was made clear in the Sermon on the Mount, it was that sin runs a lot deeper and darker than we would want to believe:

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his

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August Calendar

Sundays

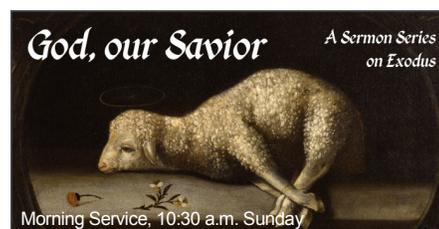
9:30 a.m. Sunday School
The Gospel and Life

10:30 a.m. Morning Worship
Exodus: God, our Savior

6:00 p.m. Evening Worship
*Jeremiah:
Judgment and Restoration*

Children's Church,
Nursery available

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- Sun 8/5 Communion, AM Worship
 - Tue 8/7 Stated Session Meeting (5:00 p.m.)
 - Wed 8/8 Mission Team Meeting (6:30 p.m., Huddlestons)
 - Thu 8/9 CE Committee Meeting



Morning Service, 10:30 a.m. Sunday

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A Heart of Darkness

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brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire." (Matt. 5:21-22)

Following this, the Westminster Divines listed "sinful anger, hatred, envy, desire of revenge" as being some of the sins forbidden in the 6th Commandment, *You shall not murder*.

BUT WONDERFULLY the Gospel does not leave us there, to descend into a fatalism that is resigned to a life of fear and violence.

The Gospel comes to us in the deep darkness of our natural condition, and it says to us that there is hope. As wicked as our hearts naturally are, the Gospel comes with the wonderful promise of Jesus,

"Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" (John 7:38)

The Gospel promises heart-renewal – taking that sin-deadened heart and replacing it with a new and living heart.

WHAT LAY at the root of this terrible shooting is rebellion against God, and the remedy for that is not ultimately more legislation or psychoanalysis or different movies, but a new heart, which can only come from the Holy Spirit.

In the wake of the Columbine shootings John Piper wrote,

"Since rebellion against God was at the root of this act of murder, let us all fear such rebellion in our own hearts, and turn from it, and embrace the grace of God in Christ, and renounce the very impulses that caused this tragedy."

May that be our response, and how we pray for our nation in the wake of this tragedy. ☩

Building and Grounds

July activity: The tree stumps remaining from several uprooted trees were removed. The conduit for the parking lot lights, damaged by one of the uprooted trees, was repaired; additional improvements to the lights are in the planning stages.

Please thank the Lord for His continued provision for our facility needs.

Finance Committee

GIPC Monthly Update— Loan Balance

Loan Balance 1/1/12	\$840,102
Principal Paid YTD	\$ 18,363
Loan Balance	\$821,739
August Payment:	
Interest	\$ 2,820
Principal	\$ 2,429
Total Payment	\$ 5,249

Significant Sessional Actions

The next Stated Session Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 7th at 5:00 p.m. (The Session did not meet in July.)

CareNet Change-for-Life Update



To-date, CareNet of Coastal Georgia has collected \$44,959 toward the goal of \$57,500 through the Baby Bottle "Change-for-Life" campaign. Thank you for your support! Please continue to pray that all needed funds will be received. To learn more about our local CareNet ministry, go [here](http://www.carenet.org).



Adult Sunday School Class Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Learn how the Gospel is to be lived out in all of life, beginning with your heart, then in your community, and into the world.

Based on a study by Timothy Keller, Senior Pastor, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, Manhattan. Led by Mr. Brown.

"In the Soviet Union. . .an official investigation into rising Christian influence produced four conclusions. First, Christians are often trustworthy workers and are given positions of high responsibility. Second, the alcoholism that plagues the Soviet Union is a problem that Christians seem to have overcome among themselves. Third, they maintain peace in their family relations and are even instruments of peace among families in their neighborhoods. Finally, Christians let no one die without consolation, and their conduct is a powerful witness." (David Wells, *God the Evangelist*)

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AUGUST

"Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears." (I Samuel 3:10)

Family Worship

Old Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>Judges</i>	15	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		17	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		18	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		19	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		20	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		21	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	<i>Ruth</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		3,4	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	<i>I Samuel</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		5,6	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		7,8	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		14	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		17	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		18	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		19	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		20	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		21,22	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		23	<input type="checkbox"/>
31		24	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Family Worship

New Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>Acts</i>	19	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		20	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		21	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		22	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		23	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		24	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		25	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		26	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		27	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		28	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	<i>Romans</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		14	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
27	<i>I Corinthians</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
31		5	<input type="checkbox"/>

AUGUST

"Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears." (I Samuel 3:10)

Private

Old Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>Jeremiah</i>	28	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		29	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		30,31	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		32	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		33	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		34	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		35	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		36,45	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		37	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		38	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		39	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		40	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		41	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		42	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		43	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		44	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		46	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		47	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		48	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		49	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		50	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		51	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		52	<input type="checkbox"/>
24	<i>Lamentations</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
29	<i>Ezekiel</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
31		3	<input type="checkbox"/>

AUGUST

"Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears." (I Samuel 3:10)

Private

New Testament & Psalms

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>Mark</i>	14	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<i>Psalms</i>	1,2	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		3,4	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		5,6	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		7,8	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		11,12	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		13,14	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		15,16	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		17	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		18	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		19	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		20,21	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		22	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		23,24	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		25	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		26,27	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		28,29	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		30	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		31	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		32	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		33	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		34	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		35	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		36	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		37	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		38	<input type="checkbox"/>
31		39	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Week beginning
JULY 29**

Psalms 91:7-10

A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. You will only look with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked. Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place—the Most High, who is my refuge—no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent.

**Week beginning
AUGUST 5**

Psalms 91:11-13

For He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone. You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot.

**Week beginning
AUGUST 12**

Psalms 91:14-16

Because he holds fast to Me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows My name. When he calls to Me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him My salvation.

**Week beginning
AUGUST 19**

Psalms 94:14

For the LORD will not forsake His people; He will not abandon His heritage.

**Week beginning
AUGUST 26**

John 3:36

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God remains on him.