

A Flood of Violence

The first man and woman were especially created in the image of God for a right relationship with God and each other. But after sin entered the human race through Adam and Eve it was only nine generations until God's heart became so filled with pain with man's wickedness that God said to Noah, "I will wipe mankind whom I have created, from the face of the earth ... for the earth is filled with violence because of them" (Genesis 6:7,13). Then came the Flood.

Australian communities are built on the ideals of giving everyone a fair go and support for the battler. Here, bushfires, floods and cyclones are always met by an outpouring of communal solidarity, fellow feeling and practical support. Even so our communities are witnessing a rapidly rising flood of violence. Here are some indicators.

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence refers to acts of violence that occur between people who have, or have had, an intimate relationship in domestic settings. Domestic violence is most commonly perpetrated by males against their female partners. About one in three Australian women have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime. The most likely scenario for the homicide of an Australian woman is at home at the hands of an intimate partner.

In Victoria family violence cases had increased by 70.2% between 2010 and 2014 with the police minister describing it as "the biggest law and order challenge facing Victoria". Victims are reporting more frequently, but women's services say the actual rate of domestic violence is also increasing, as is the severity of the physical attacks. At Queensland's domestic violence hotline, the volume of calls has risen so dramatically, sometimes over 300 calls in a

day, that counsellors are being forced to leave calls in the queue.

Ambulance Paramedics Face Rising Violence

Our Ambos are experiencing more and more violence directed at them. In 2015 SA Ambulance reported a 74 per cent rise in such incidents in the past three years with hundreds of incidents every year. Ambos often have to deal with anxious, intoxicated or deliberately confrontational members of the public, who at times resort to unacceptable behaviour such as spitting, verbal abuse, threats and physical assault. Every interruption an ambo has to deal with prevents them from helping save someone's life.



Coward Punch

Once glorified as the 'King hit' this completely unexpected and very hard punch, usually to the head, is viewed by most as an act of cowardice. Over 100 lives have been lost in the last 15 years in Australia with many more victims debilitated. Australians are asking what more can be done to put to an end such senseless violence? The problem is accentuated by the ice epidemic and increased use of steroids which often produce uncontrollable and violent behaviour in users.

Road Rage

It's no secret that road rage is an issue on our roads. Statistics show that not only is the rate of road rage on Australian roads on the rise, but its severity is getting worse as well. It is alarming that nearly three out of four drivers claim to have suffered from it. Rude gestures, tailgating and verbal abuse are the most common forms. Approximately one in ten drivers have been forced off the road during a road rage incident one in twenty experienced damage to the car and one in fifty physically assaulted.

Schoolyard Bullying

An Australian survey of over 25,000 students in 1997 found that in the course of any one year as many as half of all school students experience painful and unjustified aggression from individuals or groups of students. About one in seven experienced bullying weekly or more often. Findings from a study in 2009 indicated that there had been a substantial increase in bullying in subsequent years. It was reported that bullying was spiralling out of control in the nation's schools. Now with insidious cyberbullying the problem has greatly compounded.

Response of Society

These problems are not new but for some reason they are rapidly getting worse. In response there have been more awareness campaigns, tougher laws, surveillance cameras and naming and shaming. But the Bible warns "do not be like the horse and mule which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you" (Psalm 32:9).

What we have witnessed for decades in Australia is the deterioration of civil society. The result? Increased crime. Why despite all that is being done is the flood of violence continuing to rise? Moral relativism in our culture has steadily eroded our

Judeo-Christian value system. People are without a moral compass.

So what can we do? Even under the violently cruel Roman Emperor Nero Paul urged that *“requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. (1Timothy 2:14).*

Father in Heaven, We thank You that You created man in Your own image that we might have a right relationship with You. We bring before You the rising flood of violence in our Australian communities. We pray for wisdom for our leaders in how to lawfully deal with the perpetrators of Community violence. But more importantly we pray for a flood and an outpouring of Your Holy Spirit on our society that men women and children will no longer be lovers of themselves but lovers of You. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

About ‘Image of God’ Leaflets

In the Bible we read that God *“created man in His own image” (Genesis 1:27)*. Many maintain that all human history revolves around this truth. The Judeo-Christian belief in the unique dignity of human beings is at the very foundation of Western civilisation.

The 2010 Canberra Declaration therefore states:

“We believe that all human life, being made in the image of God, has intrinsic and equal value from conception to life’s natural end.”

‘Image of God’ leaflets relate the doctrine of man as created in the image of God to various issues we face in Australia today.

The 21 leaflets in SERIES ONE are dedicated to Sophie Scholl who was martyred at the age of 21 in World War II for writing and distributing leaflets.

You can download other ‘Image of God’ leaflets at The Canberra Declaration website.

Please:

READ & SIGN

**The Canberra Declaration
to Protect**

- ***Religious Freedom***
- ***Marriage and Family and***
- ***Human Life***
in Australia

Website: www.canberradeclaration.org.au

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SERIES ONE

Leaflet 5

Community Violence



and the Image of God