Contemporary Comments on the Adult Sabbath School Lesson

[Title] Good Thinking
[Use] February 5, 2011

What was she thinking?

People across the United States are shocked at the horrific story blazing across the media of a mother who shot and killed her 13-year-old son (Beau) and 16-year-old daughter (Calyx) for being "mouthy." Tampa Bay, Florida police responded to a call from the mother of Julie Schenecker, who killed her children last Friday. Julie’s mother was concerned about her daughter's behavior and emails which stated, "It will soon be all over."

The shooting happened after a previous investigation by police of abuse. Several incidents had been reported of her slapping and backhanding her daughter.1 Police investigated the incident at their home but felt it was a typical parent-teen conflict between a mother and daughter and certainly didn't warrant concern over the mother murdering her children.

What was she thinking?

Some reports speak of "drug impairment", "psychiatric evaluation", "depression" and "more doctor examinations in the future."2 "She did tell us that they talked back, that they were mouthy," Tampa police spokeswoman Laura McElroy told WTSP at the time. "But I don't think that will ever serve as an explanation to the rest of us of how you could take a child's life."3 Reactions on blogs and posted comments range all over the board from "put a bullet in her head" to "antidepressants can lead to this." Some express no pity for this mother, others feel sorry for her. Schenecker appeared in court last Monday and was denied bond. Her husband is in the Army stationed in Qatar and made immediate plans to return home when hearing about the shooting.

Students at Calyx's high school were having a difficult time processing all this. Even students who did not know Calyx were shaken. Akeila Dell, 16, said her mother told her the news and insisted that they watch the television report together. Kendrick Anderson, 15, hearing it after the Gasparilla parade Saturday, wondered, "How can a mother do that to a child?" Nicholas Berrios, 15, said, "It was very sad. A lot of parents have problems. But she didn't have to take it to that extent. She (Calyx) didn't deserve this, or her brother. They had their whole life ahead of them."4

Our Sabbath school lesson this week focuses on good thinking. Might the thinking of a depressed mother play a key role in her violent acts? Surely. Our lesson begins, "As one of the most utilized forms of mental health intervention today, cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) is based on the assumption that most psychological problems are improved by identifying and changing inaccurate and dysfunctional perceptions, thoughts, and behaviors. People with depression tend to interpret facts negatively; people with anxiety tend to look at the future with apprehension; and those with low self-esteem maximize others' success and minimize their own. CBT, therefore, trains people to identify and change their unhealthy thinking habits into better alternatives that promote desirable behavior and eliminate unwanted ones."

Unwanted behavior. That sums up Julie Schenecker's choices this last week.

~cr
1. ABC News
2. CF News
3. CNN
4. Tampa Bay

Paul Richardson,
Director Center for Creative Ministry
Center For Creative Ministry
800.272.4664

This message was sent to ahc@andrews.edu from Center for Creative Ministry, P.O. Box 23200, Lincoln, NE 68542-3200.
Edit profile / unsubscribe - Forward to a friend

Spam
Not spam
Forget previous vote