

This is an article I wrote and read in Prayer Meeting Wednesday evening. It is a follow up to comments I made in church the previous Sunday about the massacre in Charleston. At First Baptist in Frankfort, we continue to pray for the families of the victims and pray our country seizes this opportunity to move in new directions.

Last week, we saw evil in its rawest form. A 21 year-old man went to a church with the intent to kill innocent people he had never met.

After sitting in a Bible study with the pastor and some of the members of the church, this young man pulled a weapon out of his pocket and started shooting. Nine people were killed.

The response, both local and national, was what you would expect. "How could this happen?" bewildered citizens asked.

As time passed, though, I sensed the response to this tragedy was taking a different course than most. Powerful people from all walks of life were looking behind this heinous act to discover the reason for it.

Leaders began talking about the toxic elements which led to this massacre and denouncing them. People who disagree on many issues began identifying the same evil philosophy, mentality and lifestyle which led to this behavior by saying, "No, this is not who we are or want to be. This evil way of thinking, believing, living and treating our neighbors is unacceptable."

I was intrigued by what one resident of Charleston said. "This young man picked the wrong city." It did not take me long to understand what he meant.

The city of Charleston, for the most part, came together in solidarity to support the families of the victims and to denounce evil. They stood up to people who have spent decades spreading hate.

No more, they said to these bigoted bullies. No more.

Charleston's response, led by the example of the family members who addressed this young man two days after he killed their loved ones, has captured the attention of the world.

They have embodied the words of the 8th century BCE prophet, Micah, when he wrote, "God has showed you, O man, **a better way...**" (Micah 6:8)

Well, so has Charleston. So have these families. Finally, so have some of our politicians.

It is a start. I pray we don't grow weary in well doing and turn back.

Bob Browning