

Praying the Headlines

by Dr. Julie W. Chambliss (8-3-2014)

What are two of the greatest sources of evil that are preying upon our teens? You may already know the answer.

- 1) What the federal government terms ATOD, Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs
- 2) Teenage Gangs

The Newnan Times-Herald is doing a series on the first one. Today's headlines proclaim:

"Resources Scarce for Teen Addicts." Perhaps this is not a surprise to you.

"No one wants to touch a juvenile addict," Coweta County Juvenile Court judge, Joe Wyant said. "With heroin and opiates, there is a real possibility of an addict going through suicidal ideations (thoughts) during withdrawal. Insurance companies and facilities are scared of a 16-year-old killing themselves under their watch." And rehabilitation isn't cheap. Private facilities available for teenagers can cost up to \$10,000 per month and insurance companies won't pay for them.

In a related article published by the Newnan Times-Herald this week, there was a report on a gang-related incident.

According to Investigator Ryan Foles with the Coweta County Sheriff's Office who assisted in the investigation, there was a recent incident where two men and a juvenile performed a drive-by shooting to incite terror in others – which is what gang members do, he said. This occurred on Mitchell Street, which is known as territory for a gang known as the Bloods. The two adults and the juvenile were identified as members of 8-Tre, a part of the Crips, a rival gang of the Bloods.

In his report, another police officer wrote, "Just like terrorists, gang members thrive on fear and respect. When disrespected, they use retaliation as a tool to earn it back. The more fear they can instill in a community, the greater the freedom they enjoy."

The root cause of these problems is fatherlessness; these are teenagers trying to enter adulthood with no one willing to lay their life down for them the way a father should; no one to protect and provide for them, and serve as a daily role model for how to be a godly man or a woman. So they turn to alcohol and drugs to block the pain, and they turn to gangs to have a family. It's really that simple.

These 2 sources of evil are the gates of hell in our community for teenagers struggling their way into adulthood.

So as school begins this week, let's bring the battering ram of united prayer of the people of God against these two gates of hell in Coweta County.

Let's praise our great and mighty God who has the power to set each one free. Then, let's loose the Holy Spirit to bring each of our teenagers into a relationship with their Heavenly Father through the sacrifice of His only Son, who loves each of them so much that He died for them so that they might be free.

In Jesus' holy name, let's use the authority Jesus gave us to batter the gates of hell and to bind the spirits of alcoholism, drug use, and gang affiliation.

This is our job, beloved, our holy calling as the body of God's Son!