

## "Hair on Fire?" Pt 3

*Hair on Fire?*

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All right, let's pray.

*Well, God in heaven, we are so grateful for the temperate weather this past week and rain that we've received. We thank you, Lord, for you smiling on us and preserving us. We thank you for health. Thank you for being with Moose. We pray for him this week and then bouncing back and, Lord, there are others we've been praying for. We continue to pray for them. We pray, Lord, that you would be with us as we continue this class and help us give us wisdom and discernment, give his eyes to see clearly and ears to hear well, and we pray, Lord, that we would be a reasonable people and show our reasonableness to everyone. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

All right, we are doing this series that was only supposed to be two Sundays and it's going to be probably at least four, maybe five Sundays, which is okay, that's been great, and all I can tell you is if you're on the side, if you need to be able to see better, you may want to go a little bit further that way to be able to see. I don't have any videos this time so I know that's disappointing for some of you, but you know. It's a joke. It's okay. And now we can start. Who would like to do the closing prayer? Oh, right.

All right, so we're doing "Hair on Fire?" Let me go through just very quickly kind of a recap of the last two weeks, just some of the principles we gained as we worked through this. So suspend judgment is the first one. I think that's very important. It's not just on reference to the media itself at times, but also specifically what the media is reporting on. And by the way, all of these principles can be used in your personal interactions with people, okay? But you suspend judgment until you have more evidence, more facts, so that you know what's going on as best you can. Also assume innocence because that's where we're at, we are innocent till proven guilty, okay? I mean, that's the biblical concept and that's where we're supposed to be. But also, accusation does not mean guilt. Just last week I was looking at, I saw a news piece come up and Wes was sitting with me, this news piece came up on one of the Duggars or Duggars, however you pronounce their name, was arrested and charged with something, and I and I was going, "Oh my goodness," and then I stopped and looked at Wes and said, "That's right, accusation does not mean guilt." You have to let the trial happen, whatever else, right? So you can't just...there you go, accusation does not mean guilt, and I think keeping that in mind is huge for a lot of people, okay? Accusation does not mean guilt. Also, Hanlon's razor

which I'll quote here in just a minute but basically don't attribute to malice what could be reasonably explained as incompetence, and that will probably help you with voting and other things as well besides the media but that's besides the point. So Hanlon's razor. Reporters are human. The question that, one of the questions to ask ourselves is are there other reasonable explanations? There's lots of explanations, whatever you're reading or hearing, some of them not so reasonable. If you look for what are the reasonable explanations, are there other reasonable explanations? Okay, sometimes the news reporter goes one way, sometimes blogs or your commentators will go another way and you have to stop and say, "Now wait a minute, are there other reasonable explanations?" Okay, just a simple basic deal. You probably had to do that a lot with child-raising, by the way. Sometimes I know you knew those kids could do bad things, but sometimes you have to stop it go, "You know, there might be another reasonable explanation than just what my heart tells me at this moment," or whatever, right? What?

["Just need a beating."]

Just need a beating, right, okay. And also, I want to come back to this briefly in just a minute, but that was all last week basically what's the media angle, and I'll explain that again for those of you who weren't here very quickly. And here's Hanlon razor: never ascribe to malice that which is adequately explained by incompetence, and I think that's very, very helpful. So the two basic, the tag line or the premise is validate before you palpitate, authenticate before you propagate, okay? So validate and authenticate before you have a heart attack or before you go spread it around. And in fact, I even gave you an example last week where even USA Today was saying, "You know, this is out on social media now and this never happened." You know, it was one of the shootings or something, and so it's just important for us to validate and authenticate.

So last week we looked at media angle and those of you who were here will remember this or if you listen to it online, hopefully you heard some of this, by media angle what we were referring to had to do with that short snippet from Francis Schaeffer's "How Should We Then Live" where he has the same exact scene being broadcast from two different angles, right? There was the angle on the side of the rioters coming from behind the rioters and actually showing, you know, all these things, and then there was the camera angle coming from the side of the police. And then there were other things and we teased that out. We talked about what did you see and notice as we were doing that, and some of you pointed out the lighting was different on one side than the other. It made the police look really mean and ugly. And then the lighting when you turned it around made the rioters look mean and ugly. There was another aspect that the rioters that showed the cops hauling away a girl and she was screaming and it was supposed to pull, you know, kind of pull your heartstrings, but then when it went to the other side, the wounded police officer was pulled out by another officer and sat by his car and was comforted by the other officer. All those things were just little aspects of the same event. It had a lot to do with the angle of the camera, right? And that's what we're looking at. And so Francis Schaeffer, if you remember, said there's really no need to even think about conspiracies or anything like that, what you have is a reigning mindset. So in his day especially was humanism, we could go on with secularism, postmodernism and all

those things, this reigning mindset of the elites, those who are leading and that is the filter that most things get seen through.

So the media angle, the placement of cameras and lighting and all that, and then right after that, we watched the video about the monkey business. You remember that? The unintentional blindness, the guy with the gorilla suit that came on and, you know, several of you didn't see that because you're supposed to be counting how many times the ball was being passed. And then a lot of you didn't see the fact that one of the players wearing a black shirt went off the stage and almost nobody saw the curtain's color change in the back, that unintentional blindness, okay? And just realizing that impacts the way that we begin to have to suspend judgment. We look at angles of photographs and cameras and even the reporting itself, that can be unintentional blindness, okay? And so we talked about that some last week.

And then, so one of the places we went was discerning phone videos, right, the place of the problem with phone videos, taking shots of what's going on. What were some of the things we decided as we talked about that? What's missing when you're doing a phone video?

[unintelligible]

Yeah, the bigger picture, the context. Okay, you don't know what else is going on. They're just showing you this and you don't know what happened before, you don't know what happens after, you just have this snippet. Now it may be legitimate, some of them have proven to be legitimate because there's been other corroborating evidence. What we have to do is we have to stop because when we see a video like that that gets put out on social media and news as proof that there's something really sinister happening, we have to stop and go we don't know that because we don't know what the rest of the story is. All we see is one video, and as Francis Schaeffer pointed out, is that what we see with our eyes and video and camera we think is more real than the real world around us. It's really an oddity of human, for us as humans, and that you hear this quite often. "Well, I saw the pictures. I know it's true. I saw the video. I know it happened." But we have to stop and suspend judgment looking for what other testimony is there that actually says yes or no to this, okay? So we just used that as example.

That was some of what we talked about last week. Any last-minute questions or anything before we move on because I've got a ton of slides here. All right, so today we're moving to media influence and this is going to go maybe not where you expected but it's going to go no matter what. But here I think before we talk about media influence, we need to begin with scripture. Okay, what we've been doing with all the classes, we start with scripture. We need to begin with scripture. We need to go to Philippians 4:4 to 9. I'm going to read it, and I want you to look at what Paul says we should be doing. "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in

Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me--practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you."

So what are some of the things that Paul reminds us that we're supposed to be doing?

[unintelligible]

Rejoicing in the Lord always. Okay, what's another one?

[unintelligible]

That's right. Exactly. What?

[unintelligible]

Reasonable. This is interesting, by the way, this Greek word translated in the ESV as reasonableness, if you're looking at the King James, I think it says, I don't know what it says but some other translations, like the NIV and others, talk about being kind, let your kindness or gentleness be known, because it's a very fluid Greek word. But I think it encompasses all of that, but it is interesting "let your reasonableness in a sense especially of kindness and graciousness be known to everyone." So that's a requirement, something we're supposed to be doing, we're supposed to be reasonable people, and is knowable, and that reasonableness, there's a graciousness to it, and the reason why is because the Lord is at hand. Never forget, whether Paul means the second coming or not, which I don't think he did, it does mean the Lord is at hand, okay? So Alan is at hand. He's just right here. The Lord is right here. Sometimes we're in a panic mode because we don't think Jesus is right here in this situation, but he is.

The Lord is at hand. That's why Paul goes on to say the next thing what are we not to do and to do? Don't be anxious, but, huh?

[unintelligible]

Yeah, we're to be vigilant, right? We're not being anxious, but what? Prayer, supplication with thanksgiving and the reason why? Because you know because the Lord is at hand, then you know that the peace of God that passes all understanding will guard, that Greek word is garrison, it will set up a garrison in your heart and your mind in Christ Jesus, okay?

What else did he say we're to be doing? What else did he say we're supposed to be doing? It's right here.

[unintelligible]

We are. We're done. We're done with the first paragraph, we've moved to the second paragraph. What else do we need to be doing?

[unintelligible]

Yeah, what things? Yeah, the things listed, very good, John. John, mister economy of words. I love it, yes. John read a report that the denomination put out two years ago and he came back to me, it was about 60 pages, but he came back and said, "What's wrong with these people? Do they think they get paid by the word?" It was great. It was a great statement.

So yeah, these things, we're to be thinking on these things, whatever is true, honorable, just, such and so forth, praiseworthy, and so on. And then the promise at the end, "and the God of peace will be with you." That's funny, the peace of God that surpasses understanding will guard your hearts and the God of peace will be with you, okay? That's where we should be and what we should be focusing on, what scripture says.

[unintelligible]

Yeah, you're right. Right. So do you remember what's his name, ???. What's his first name? He wrote...yeah, yeah. "Universe Next Door, James Sire was a big Francis Schaefferite, wrote a great set of books on apologetics. One of the things he emphasizes is watch what you set your mind on. You need installing this passage right here. Watch out what you set your mind on because what you set your mind on is your trajectory. Or, as Proverbs puts it, guard your heart for out of its spring the issues of life. But I tell this all the time to young teenagers and young folks getting married but all of us need to hear it, we need to guard our hearts because out of it springs the issues of life. If our hearts are attracted to dark things and evil things, that's the way we flow, okay? And that's what James Sire points out because he's going from this passage.

[unintelligible]

No Twitter. Yeah, yes. Movie.

[unintelligible]

Okay, so we're going to stay with media influence, okay, but hold on a minute, hold on, but the anxiousness is not letting it control you, right? Don't be anxious. Don't let it control you. I know it happens. Paul himself is anxious. 2 Corinthians 8 he says, "I'm anxious for the well-being of all the churches under my care." So but this is the trajectory. Think about it as this is the direction we're supposed to get.

[unintelligible]

Hold your thought. Let me get into the class. Let me get into the class. Hold on. Okay, go ahead.

[unintelligible]

Right. Sure. Yes. Mark?

[unintelligible]

Right. So what we're going to talk about this morning is over reporting, okay, and why I think this is extremely important. You'll see why specifically, the effects over, this is media influence, the over reporting on suicide, the effect it has on suicide clusters, mass shootings and terrorism and we're going to talk about a few other things and we're going to come back to fear.

Anybody know what suicide clusters are?

[unintelligible]

Yeah, chain effect of suicides, sometimes they're called copycat suicide attempts or suicides and things like that, okay, and I have some experience with this because of I'll tell you when we get into the story. It's very interesting though, and I've got some of these articles. I didn't prepare a whole bunch of these consistent, I mean, you know, like books, but there's a couple of copies and one of these I'm going to pass out in just a minute for you, just a one-sheeter. But there's quite a bit of study going on out there in reference to suicide clusters and what I'm calling over reporting. So here's one example from this particular report right here, "Preventing and responding to suicide clusters in American Indian and Alaskan native communities." And this is from the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration. Here's one of the things they say, you know, referring to a report and they're coming out and saying this is 2016. "Gould provides evidence that extensive," notice that over reporting, "extensive newspaper coverage of suicide is associated with a significant increase in the rate of suicide with the magnitude of the increase proportional to the amount, duration, and prominence of media coverage." The more it's covered, the more you begin to see it. "Young people appear to be particularly susceptible to heightened risk brought about by certain types of media reporting of suicide. A retrospective," and I'm cutting out basically just the references just because I wanted to save space, but it's all in that report, "A retrospective case control study of suicide clusters in young people in the United States between 1988 and 1996 indicated an association between certain kinds of newspaper reports about suicide and the beginning of clusters," and it just goes on from there. And so there are agencies and groups pointing out that over reporting on these and the way it's reported actually ends up exacerbating suicides. It actually seems to help increase those suicides, okay?

Here's another one and this one is, "Suicide clusters in young people definition, epidemiology and prevention," and you can find this one online. That's the title of it down here. "Literature indicates that various risk factors for cluster suicides, including exposure

to suicide, perceptions that suicidal behavior is more common than it actually is, already considering suicide and the speed at which information about a suicide can be shared. The use of Internet and social media is important as technology has been found to have a negative impact in spreading information around suicide occurring among populations." I thought this was interesting to state a perception that suicide behavior is more common than it actually is. The more it's reported, the more it looks like it's pretty normal, and that that begins to feed someone who maybe is thinking about it think, "Well, everybody is doing it, or lots of people are doing it." But this exacerbate, it fuels the situation. Yes?

[unintelligible]

I believe it was this article that goes on and talks about that particular show later on. But notice that right here, the Internet and social media is important technology because there there's no accountability whatsoever and it gets put out even faster. And that's where most young folks are going to get their information is Internet and social media.

So let me give you a story, two stories. Can I give you a few stories, personal stories? All right, thank you. If you had said no, I was going to do it anyway. So when I was at Homestead Air Force Base in Florida, I ran a correctional facility and got some suicide training, and I'll get to this book in just a minute, but I had one of my residents, her name was AIC is Airman First Class. Airman First Class, I'll just say W. We're just looking at W. She became, she began to show suicidal ideations and if you were talking to her, I couldn't get the base psychologist, for whatever reason, to realize that she was suicidal. I mean, we took her over there three or four times and she kept sending her back to me. I didn't have a facility that was suicide proof. I mean, there was all kinds of ways for her to do it. And so asking, "Well, what made you think about this?" She's talking about TV. This is 1988 or something like that. No Internet, but she's talking about TV, she watched a show on TV that helped her decide how to do it, and how to send letters to her family. And of course, the magic moment is the scary moment is when all of a sudden she goes from being anxious to being happy or being content. She already made the commitment. She was ready to do it. I mean, I was in panic mode because I had no way to take care of her and knowing that this was going to happen.

So but that was interesting in the fact that she on her own brought up the media that she watched and how it did it. But on the same base at Homestead Air Force Base, we had a little, we had a cluster of suicides that went on before I got there, and it went on the whole time I was there. It would be about three to four months between suicides but they would happen in cycles. And so after my episode with this and getting some training, I went and this is what had just come out the year before, "Suicide Clusters," it's still, I guess a standard in the field. I found it pretty easy online. He goes through and he talks about what suicide clusters are and everything, but he also pointed out in there the power, the potency the media has in actually seeming to help fuel some of those, the way things are reported.

Well, it just so happened that my boss was the group commander. He was a frustrated pilot now flying a desk. I thought they would appreciate that, yeah. And so, but he was

just, I mean he was just, his heart was breaking over these suicides we were having on base. And we were doing all kinds of publicity. We'd be announcing there would be a memorial service for them and all this stuff. It was very large, it wasn't a huge major media source, it was the base intermedia, okay? You have to understand the base system. So the commander and I were talking. I told him about this book, "Have you read this book?" He goes, "Oh, tell me about it. I don't have time to read it but tell me about it." So I began to walk him through the book and when I came to the media part, he started asking all kinds of questions and so I was surprised, I think he was a staff sergeant at the time, I was surprised he even listened to me. The very next suicide, which happened just two weeks later, it was almost not reported at all. It was just a small blurb. It was just this happened, there will be a memorial service for family and friends at the base Chapel soon. That was it. The suicides began to end right after tha.

And so it's interesting the over reporting, the emphasizing, maybe even going too far in just a simple article somehow glamorizing it or making it feel like that the suicide person is actually remembered well by everybody and impacted everybody and all that, whatever, but the power of that media influence on them. So I'm going to go on, but, yes, quickly.

[unintelligible]

Yeah, it's not a, I mean, it's not a hard cause and effect. I'm just showing the influence that it looks like that for sure at least it fuels to some extent.

[unintelligible]

Sure you do. Yeah. Here's, I'm handing this out so this will go in with our next point. I'm handing this out to you. This is from Suicide Awareness, Voices of Education. This is for you to have and take home, and they're going to bring in the difference between suicides and mass shootings but I think it's very interesting they talk about the way to report suicides and mass shootings so that it's not exacerbating the problem, okay?

So let's talk about mass shootings, media influence in mass shootings. Media influence in mass shootings. This is from a study called "Mass shootings, the role of the media and promoting generalized imitation," from the National Institutes of Health. And they said, "When mass shooters imitate other mass shooters, they are generally not imitating personally observed events, although this is possible in gang related instances. In each case in which the event is unobserved, all information that could serve as a model of imitative behavior was provided via various media sources. Legacy media, that's like ABC, NBC, CBS, New York Times, social media and new media, "and research has demonstrated that media can influence," that's not an automatic cause and effect, so it can influence imitation. "Not only do people often imitate behaviors that are portrayed in the media, the 'reality' of the portrayal does not seem to have a significant influence. Imitation can occur regardless of whether the model is presented live, whether it is presented via film, or even when the modeled behavior is merely described." This is a report in 2017. I just think that's very interesting that noticing they're noticing the



connection between mass shootings and the imitation, okay? So the more it gets reported and you notice, look at the news reports, the more it gets reported, the way it gets reported, it becomes something of an imitative behavior.

[unintelligible]

Yeah, yeah. Yes, and keep that thought because that's extremely important. When they used to say the name all the time and now they're not necessarily saying it, not more in front, but there's a reason for that. It has to do with this, what we're talking about here.

So this is from another report called "Does media coverage inspire copycat mass shootings," from the National Center for Health Research 2019. "Shooters get enormous attention. Their name, photo motivations and story are often shared for days following the event." This is what she was just talking about. "The American Psychological Association points out that this 'fame' is something that mass shooters desire that sometimes inspires a copycat shooting where the potential shooter typically tries to kill more people than the predecessor." That's a scary thought.

And in that same article came this picture. This is from The Washington Post, ?? drew this. And here is a bunch of kids and they're saying, "Oh, come on, Mr. Feis, so many of us want to meet you." And then the article asked these questions and I thought this was very pointed, I mean, this just made it very clear what they were getting at. "Do you remember the name of the hero from a Parkland shooting? The killer got much more publicity than Aaron Feis, the coach who saved the lives, the students' lives." I think that's, I mean, when I read that, I'm just going, "Yeah, I don't remember the guy. I don't remember any of those folks that have actually done something heroic," because they almost never get mentioned or if they do get mentioned, they get mentioned once and the rest of time it's talking about the shooter and what's happened, right? So I thought that was very pointed, but the closeness of the mass shooter, the reporting of mass shootings and the increase of mass shootings.

One more study. So Michael Jeter from the University of Australia and J. Walker from Old Dominion University, they presented a discussion paper to IZA Institute of Labor Economics in 2018, and that is right here, that's this study right here. The study is called "The effect of media coverage on mass shootings." In this study, they followed one major news source, they trimmed everything down to one major news source, it's a legacy media news source, and then they charted the number of mass shootings and the time frame of the mass shootings after the news reports were broadcast. Then to give themselves something to bounce off of and to compare and make sure they're not reading into it, they compared, so they compared the rise of the shootings during the reporting to what happened when the news became primarily reporting about wildfires and natural catastrophes. Do you hear the difference? So they were tagging, okay, we're following, here's what happens with mass shootings and here's the next mass shooting. It usually happens 7 to 10 days later. And they followed that, followed it, followed it and then they said, now let's see what happens with mass shootings when this particular news source

begins to report on wildfires and natural catastrophes. And they found a pronounced decline of mass shootings when the media was reporting on other things, okay?

So in their study they have all the XY charts and all this statistical stuff, and here's their conclusion and they go from saying that media over reporting fuels the problems, to saying that media reporting, over reporting can be in the driver's seat. Here's what they say. It's down here. "Our findings consistently suggest that media coverage systematically causes future mass shootings. It suggests that 58% of all mass shootings between January 1, 2013 to June 23, 2016 are explainable by news coverage." Okay, now maybe it's an overstatement.

[unintelligible]

I mean, that's what they focused on.

[unintelligible]

Right, right, right. I think they were using that to say here's when it was being reported using that source, and then saying here's when it was being reported because that's how we see it in this particular news outlet over and over again, these are the dates, and then they followed those dates and looked at the mass shootings afterwards and went that way. But you're right, I mean, because there's not just one news source, it gets over reported repeatedly across the spectrum

So that was about mass shootings. Real quick before we go on, any questions or anything? Okay, so let's talk about media over reporting in terrorism and this is actually the name of the study, so I'm putting this up here in front. It's actually British. Okay, I know, sorry, but it's British, alright. It's from the Royal United Services Institute. It's royal because the Queen is the patron of this organization, so that's why it's called the Royal United Services Institute. But anyway, that was just one of several studies. This was, I just wanted to point this one out and this goes along with my training when I was in the Air Force as a security policeman when I first was being trained. A lot of things that were said in the report and this was a 2016, 2017, 2018. 2020 something like that... Real quick.

[unintelligible]

All right, so 2020 report. So this went along really with what I was being taught when I was a security officer, security policeman in the Air Force about terrorism and what goes on there. So this is what they said and I'm just going to just kind of cut this down as quick as I can. So they go and they state, "Mass media can play a contributory role in amplifying negative impact. While levels of fear are difficult to measure empirically, this research found substantial theoretical agreement that the media can amplify the negative impacts of terrorism and collective levels of public fear. This is primarily due to its role in broadcasting the story to more people than would have been immediately affected by the attack." They go on to say, "Mass media reporting can contribute to imitation of

terrorism. Social contagion theories suggest that the reporting of terrorism events encourages the spread of terrorist behavior among like-minded individuals." It encourages the spread of terrorist behavior among like-minded individuals. Now you can take that terrorist and you can take that word terrorist out and you could put in there others who are violent and you begin other groups that are violent and you can start seeing the way that goes, how that plays out. That's what we were taught when I was a security policeman in the Air Force is that most terrorist organizations and violent organizations look for publicity. The more publicity they get, they're not necessarily looking for a body count, they're actually just looking for more publicity, more publicity to get their recruiting numbers go up.

So let me give you an example. Charleston, SC, is that where the neo-Nazis were defending the taking down of the statue a few years ago? Was it Charleston? Charlotte? Charlotte, NC, right. So the neo-Nazis show up, Antifa shows up and there's a big brouhaha, and then one of the neo-Nazi's takes this car, runs it in and kills a woman and so forth. All the news reports were just reporting on it over and over and over and over and over and over and over and over and over and over and over and over, all week long. I mean, it was like every time you woke up, every time you went to bed, reported, reported, reported. It was funny because at the end of all, it's funny this way, at the end of all of that came the news report, "But we don't know why, but Antifa and neo-Nazi recruitment numbers have gone up." Well, you just gave them free press for a whole stinking week, right? So it just begins to exacerbate those situations.

So this is why, for example...do you like my curtain?

["It's beautiful."]

Thank you. So the FBI actually has a really useful interactive website for kids, primarily for kids, so I would recommend that this is just very simple to do, this is one page. It's very interesting to go through it and just look at it, some of the things they come up with and what they were noticing, and actually you don't see it on here, but they actually have a place where they deal with freedom of speech, what that means and they did do a really, really good job. I mean, I was really impressed with some of the things they do, but this one is actually, don't be a puppet, free the puppet. So you have all these little buttons here like this one says Internet and cell phone and there was more. This is just a screenshot from my computer.

When they come down to the warning sign to say, "Based on what you've learned so far, beware of those who are convinced their cause justifies the use of violence. You ?? words against a certain race, religion, gender, etc. try to isolate you and encourage you to leave your home and so on, promise you a better life with more money and a husband or wife, say anyone with a different opinion is evil, or try to trick you and pick out religious passages to justify hatred and violence." Those are just two of the things here, those last two that's all part of the group. And then it goes on to say, "How to resist recruitment efforts. Don't trust everything you read." I thought that was interesting. "Don't trust everything you read or hear as fact, even if several people say it. Ask hard questions and

think about and research what you hear. Keep lines of communication open with friends and family." I thought that was important because I run across that sometimes where those lines of communication break down. "Stay balanced. Hang out with people with a variety of backgrounds and viewpoints and on social media," and such and so forth. I thought it was interesting that they bring up watch what you read. They're talking about alternative medias, they're talking about propaganda, they're talking about whatever. It's just watch what you read and make sure you've got things you bounce that against and so forth, because it can be part of the recruiting aspect.

So all that to show, and that's just a sampling, all of that to show media over reporting, the influence of media over reporting just on three subjects, on suicide clusters, mass shootings and terrorism. Okay so what might be some other examples where over reporting might have adverse consequences?

[unintelligible]

Yeah, yeah. Cindy, did you hear that?

[unintelligible]

Right, right. Right. Then after that you add media reports and articles that talk about it and actually almost sometimes glamorize it. So yeah. And it's an over reporting. Yes?

[unintelligible]

Okay. Yeah, yeah, but said the beer?

[unintelligible]

Sure, right. Good. Yep, here. Well, going back to Cindy's statement? Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

[unintelligible]

Hold that thought but keep going. Hold that thought and keep going.

[unintelligible]

Sure. Yeah. Yeah, I always, I'm always looking for the new sources that are less emotive and far more about let me just tell you that the Joe Friday thing. Just the facts, ma'am. Just the facts, right? Or the Colombo, one more question to ask you, right? I love it. I mean, that's I look at the same thing. So I mean, we can go through a whole host of aspects of you're pulling those out and that's good because I think that that over reporting the over emphasizing, over and over and over again exacerbates lots of these different subjects and I actually have several more in my head that as well. So that's good to see that.

So then the question to ask if this is the case, the question to ask is then what might be the influence your media source of choice is having on you and your family? And I think Herb brought up a good point, the emotive aspect of some of the reporting. I didn't have time to put it on here, I just ran across a report that was done showing how statistically we like to, if we use social media, we like to broadcast those articles that evoke negative emotions, that we have statistically gone in that direction where that's what we look at and that's what we like to promote.

I'll give you an example. In the 1980s, I was one of those few or many that was running around saying, "I wish the media would quit being so negative and start reporting positive articles, articles about good things, things that are really heartwarming." And so the media listened to me. No they didn't. But anyways, sometime later they actually started doing some of that. I found out of all the articles, I think I read one. The rest bored me to tears so I didn't read them.

[unintelligible]

Yeah, yeah, it's like to yourself. So I found out the other day I was looking and showing Wes this, I found that if you have an iPad that Apple News has a whole page of the good news you've missed this last week. And it's all these thoughts, I think I've looked at one of those pieces, right? But I'm always looking for the other thing. Isn't that funny, we are attracted to that which promotes, you know, uses the negative emotion that often is emotive, okay?

But it is a question to ask about what might be the influence of your particular media source of choice. Whatever you're using, what is it having on you and on your family? If it's over reporting something, what is the impact it's having on you and your family? It's having an impact. First off, I'm just going to say it's having an impact. What is the impact it's having on you? If you find yourself anxious and fearful, hair on fire, thinking the end of the world has come, there's probably a problem there, okay? I'm not saying there's not issues that they're reporting or that they're actually actively reporting, I'm saying the influence it's having on you. And so I think what Earl's talking about is one of things to do to see if that's what's happening, you're being grabbed by the emotive aspect, and that's to start looking for other reasonable news sources that really want to report the facts and primarily stay with the facts and not use the emotive. That's usually a good place to go.

So that's a good question to ask ourselves, what might be the influence our media source of choice is having on us and on our family? The reason I bring this up is because it's too easy for us to shift the blame. It's just too stinking easy for us to say it's all the media's fault. Are you buying those papers? Are you clicking on those articles? Are you sharing them on social media? We become part of the problem because we're promoting those things, advancing those things, sharing those things, spreading those things and their algorithms and all their researchers know what we're, you know, know how many times are going out, so they can plot mainly for money so they can go to their clients and say,

"See, we get lots of people over here so you need to advertise in our paper with our source so that we can have lots more money." Right? That's just one aspect. I'm going to actually talk, hopefully next week I'm going to show you the Pew report that shows following the money.

[unintelligible]

Right. No, I'm not doubting that. I'm just saying that we become part of the problem if we begin to start spreading all those things, if we start taking those and go further with them. They wouldn't put those things out there if there weren't readers on those issues. Or if we started complaining. If we started doing like that does where it's going through, and I think it was Nellie was pointing out how, you know, like with mass shootings, they're beginning to hear from enough people, they're backing up and going, "Oh, you know what? We probably shouldn't glamorize the mass shooter. Maybe we shouldn't name the mass shooter. Maybe we should be a little bit less detailed about his name."

[unintelligible]

Sure, right. That's a whole other class, but yes, yes. We have a problem there.

[unintelligible]

Yeah, yeah, right, right. We do have a problem there.

[unintelligible]

Yeah, yeah, that's right.

[unintelligible]

Sure, absolutely. And if you're hear me not say that here, I mean you're mishearing me, right? So, but even church shootings, statistically it's like this is almost 0, right, at the church that it happened. So there's nothing wrong with being preventative, right? But the fear is where the problem ends up being because then people start panicking and that's when we want to, we don't want it so you don't want to be controlled by the over reporting. That's all I'm getting at.

We can stop there. I've got one last thing and we've got to close. We don't want to be controlled by the over reporting. So, how can you mitigate the negative influence of over reporting? Have to talk about it. I'm not talking big, I'm not talking about the government. I'm not talking about the state. Yeah, me personally.

[unintelligible]

Right. And then you had this big, long gap in there to watch Hogan's Heroes and stuff like that. And then you came back and watched the news later that evening.

[unintelligible]

Right, right, right, right, right, right, right, right. So I mean, so that's a good example. I mean, just controlling the amount of content and how much time you spend on it, okay? Just controlling the amount and how much time you spend on it because there's more to life than what's being reported. I mean, I don't know if you know that, but there's far more to life than what's being reported, okay? And so there's a good example. Yes?

[unintelligible]

Yes, yes. Right, right. And even building relationships, for example, because what does fear normally cause you to do? Hide. Hunker down. Fight and retract. And we're right now with a year...huh?

["Fight, flight, freeze."]

Fight, flight, freeze. And right now for a year and a half of pandemic news, for example, we've had a lot of that, we've had that practice where we pull away, right, and what we really desperately need, we need to actually be building these relationships. This is where we can do to mitigate that over reporting influence, okay?

So there's lots of other things. Let me come back to our passage here. All right, here is the summary: suspend judgment, assume innocence, accusation does not mean guilt, Hanlon's razor, reporters are human, are there other reasonable explanations, ask what's the media angle, don't be part of over reporting, validate before you palpitate, authenticate before you propagate. Let me end with this passage, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me--practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you."

Let's pray.

*Lord God in heaven, we confess to you and admit to you that we are very influenced by our media, we allow them to have influence over us far more than maybe we think we do. We pray that you would help us, that we would not be a people of anxiety and fear. There are things to be concerned about, no doubt, and truly show, Lord, that we would not be running around with our hair on fire and we would also be very discerning in how we're vetting the media, how we're looking at it, what we're looking for and so forth, that we may be a people whose reasonableness is known to everyone around us. We pray, Lord, that you would be with those maybe even in our own midst who may be contemplating*

*things like suicide. We pray that they would find themselves they could trust us and would come and we would be able to be a means of walking them away from that. There are other things, Lord, we pray that you would help us with. For now, Lord, as we get ready to enter into the good news, as we get ready to enter into your presence to worship you and adore you, to see you, Lord, high and lifted up, we pray that you would bless our hearts and bodies and minds, fill us with good things. In Jesus' name. Amen.*