

Dylann Roof, the unrepentant

I despise the murderer of the Emanuel Nine, and all he stands for. But I can't embrace his death.

By [David Williams](#)

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The sentence, death, and it's easy to see why.

He is utterly unrepentant, a soul poisoned by a hate so deep that he still sees no wrong in his actions. The death of his innocent victims and the suffering he inflicted on those families mean nothing to him, not against the hate that burns in his heart against those who he was taught to despise.

So he must die, or so our culture asserts. There is no question, none, that he is evil. He is not considered insane, not against any meaningful measure. He is lucid, aware, responsive, and completely committed to the ideology that led him to commit a reprehensible crime. He would, if given a gun and a chance, do it again.

He is a despicable human being. I, personally, despise him and all that he stands for.

So we will kill him. Not eagerly. Not with heat and passion, but efficiently. "Humanely."

Yet seen through the lens of Jesus and his teachings? His death still cannot be embraced, not if you stand in a meaningful relationship with the Nazarene. It is antithetical to the teachings of my Master.

There are many reasons that this is so, but the one that burns most fiercely in my soul is this: he is, now, unrepentant. Without repentance, he will remain a monster. I accept this, because it is self-evidently true.

But I cannot say, with certainty, that he will always be so. I cannot say that three years from now, or ten years from now, or twenty, that something will not change in

him. That compassion might not find its way into his blighted soul.

I do not wish him to be free to do harm. But when we as a culture choose to kill him, when we coolly end his mortal coil, we are assuming that he cannot ever be made whole.

And that assumption, of grace precluded, cannot ever define the Christian way.

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