

The Lord Has Not Given Up On Chicago

By Dr. Winfred Neely

I grew up on the South Side of Chicago, and I am a White Sox Fan. Apart from my missionary service in West Africa, I have lived in and around Chicago all of my life. I told my wife the other day that I think I have internalized the Chicago Skyline. It has become a part of my mental horizon. I must admit that I have never liked winter in Chicago, but I love the place. I can still remember playing basketball in the summer from sun up to sun down at Jessie Owens Park. Yes, tempers would flare, and sometimes there would be fist fights, occasionally, we would hear about someone being shot, but that level of violence was not a part of my world in Chicago. That was over thirty years ago. To say that times have changed is evidenced by the constant reporting about violence and murders in Chicago. I was reading in the Newspaper this morning and noted that in this year alone there have been 113 people killed across the city of Chicago, the same number of U.S. Troops killed in Iraq and Afghanistan together for the same period. Chicago has been stained with so much blood, that two state representatives are calling on Governor Quinn to deploy of the Illinois National Guard to keep the streets of Chicago safe. Police Superintendent Jody Weiss does not support the idea because Law enforcement and the military operate under different rules. Weiss say that he is “Open to anything that reduces violence. But I have concerns when you mix law enforcement and the military.” To be honest, the National Guard idea has come to my mind on numerous occasions as I reflected on yet another murder in the city of Chicago.

At any rate, the temperature is rising in the city and so is the violence. The shed blood cries out to God. Every follower of the Lord Jesus in Chicago and under the sound of my voice should be praying for an end to the violence.

I understand the representatives’ desire to bring in the National Guard, but is this the best way? The city of Boston reduced teenage violence in that city through cooperation between local government, law enforcement, churches, and community organizations like the Ten Point Coalition. Would it not be better if the solution to our violence problem was generated by local people working together? Our churches, our schools, our district police commanders, our pastors – all of us must come together to think through and address our growing problem of violence. Speaking about the future of Jerusalem in the millennial kingdom of Christ, the prophet says, “Thus says the Lord of Hosts, Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of great age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets (Zechariah 8:4-5).” I long for this day to come, but in the meantime I suggest that local leaders come and work together for the common good of our city. It will be a sad day indeed if the National Guard has to step in and help us resolve this problem. The Lord has not given up on any neighborhood in Chicago and neither should we. These are some of my thoughts, and I am Winfred Neely for Prime Time America.