



Fight or Flight

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This week we laid to rest 21 year-old Riley Howell, of Waynesville, NC shot by a classmate at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. According to [Charlotte's Chief of Police](#), Riley tackled the shooter, saving the lives of his classmates. He "took the assailant off his feet before campus police officers arrived. Howell did exactly what we train people to do — you're going to run, you're going to hide and shield, or you're going to face the assailant," The Police Chief said. "He did the latter (and) his sacrifice saved lives."

Unfortunately, this week, there was another shooting incident in [Denver, Colorado](#) at Highlands Ranch STEM School. 18 year-old Kendrick Castillio is now hailed a hero. "Castillio died trying to stop one of the armed suspects from firing, allowing his classmates to escape. He was one of several students whose heroic actions prevented further carnage."

Reading the articles about Riley Howell and Kendrick Castillio, made me think of a term I had only previously used while teaching Biology. Altruism. We talked about this with meerkats, and how a single meerkat will be the lookout for the herd and will make a sound that actually draws attention to itself, but warns the others when a predator is approaching. [Altruism](#) is unselfish regard for, the welfare of others; behavior that is not beneficial to, or may be harmful to oneself, but benefits others of its species.

My husband and I were listening to the news about Castillio, and it made me think about my own fight or flight response. I told my husband that if I were ever faced with this type of situation, I thought my instinct would be to run.

He questioned me. "So, you think you can outrun a bullet?"

"Um, no. I just don't think I would tackle a guy with a gun. I don't think I would tackle a guy *without* a gun. My fear response, my adrenaline, would cause me to run. What about you?"

He said, "No doubt, I'm taking the gunman down. Later for running."

I thought about this conversation for the better part of the day, I even began to wonder what the Bible said would be the more appropriate response. It tells us in Proverbs 28:1, "The wicked flee when no one is pursuing, But the righteous are bold as a lion." It tells us in Ephesians 6:13, "Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand."

John 15:13 says, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." Jesus exhibited altruism for us. He gave up his life for our benefit. He did not flee from the circumstances that were to happen, He willingly laid down His life that we might have everlasting life. Jesus Christ is our example of all a long list of things man should be, and we can add to (he list that he is an awesome example of altruism.

(And I suppose my husband's instinct is more Christ-like than mine :-|

AMEN!

Thanks for reading!

Kim