

Elliot Rodger and Why Mass Murders Are Really Rising

"This is my last video. It all has to come to this. Tomorrow is the day of retribution, the day in which I will have my revenge against humanity—against all of you. I'll be a god exacting my retribution on all those who deserve it. Just for the crime of living a better life than me."

Those were among the last words of Elliot Rodger, the 22-year-old gunman police say killed six people in a drive-by shooting after stabbing three others to death in his apartment last weekend. Ultimately, he also committed suicide. His agony was on display in a disturbing YouTube video that also recorded the disgruntled virgin youth saying, "You girls have never been attracted to me."

"I don't know why you girls aren't attracted to me. But I will punish you all for it," said Roger, the son of *The Hunger Games* assistant director Peter Rodger, followed by crazed laughter. "It's an injustice, a crime. Because I don't know what you don't see in me. I'm the perfect guy. And yet you throw yourselves at all these obnoxious men, instead of me, the supreme gentleman. I will punish you all for it."

Rodger's beef wasn't just rejection from women. Female spurning actually led him into hatred for all mankind. In his YouTube rant, he continued, "I hate all of you. Humanity is a disgusting, wretched, depraved species. If I had it in my power, I would stop at nothing to reduce every single one of you into mountains of skulls and rivers of blood."

Mass Murder Rising

Startling words. Of course, Rodger is not the only troubled man to go down in mass murder history in recent years with startling words and acts of pent-up rage. For clarity's sake,

the FBI defines *mass murder* as “four or more murders occurring in the same incident, with no distinctive time period between the murders. These events typically involve a single location, where the killer murdered a number of victims in an ongoing incident.”

Adam Lanza fatally shot 20 children and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School in December 2012. Andrew Engeldinger shot five dead at Accent Signage Systems in Minneapolis before killing himself in September 2012. Army veteran Wade Michael Page opened fire on six Sikh temple members in August 2012. James Eagan Holmes killed 12 people and wounded 58 at the midnight premiere of *The Dark Knight Rises* in July 2012. Ian Stawicki opened fire on Café Racer Espresso in Seattle, killing five, in May 2012. Jake England and Alvin Watts shot five black men in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in April 2012. The deadly list of mass murders goes on and on and on.

According to a *New York Times* investigation published in July 2012, there were only one or two mass murders each decade until 1980. From there, we see a dramatic spike. There were nine mass murders in the '80s and 11 in the 1990s. The *Times* recorded 26 since the year 2000—before several of the high-profile mass murders listed above occurred.

The Earthly, Demonic Root

What's going on here? Why are mass murders really rising? Can we blame mental illness? Lack of gun control? Media hype? There may be many contributing factors to the rise of mass murder, but the root is earthly and demonic—it's the condition of man's heart. Jeremiah 17:9 reveals this reality: “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?”

And Jesus confirmed the issue: “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies” (Matt. 15:19).

This has always been true, but just as we see the rapid rise of sexual immorality, we're seeing the rapid rise of other last days signs, like false Christs, false prophets, wars and rumors of wars, earthquakes, famines and Christian persecution (Matt. 24). Saints, we're in the last days.

Paul explained, "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!" (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

Do you see this evidence all around you? Consider the atheist agenda and secular humanists that mock God, failing to realize that He will soon return and longs for them to accept His Son and enter His kingdom. Peter prophesied about such mockers and slanderers: "Knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation'" (2 Pet. 3:3-4). And the book of Revelation makes it clear that in the last days, unrepentant mankind will be guilty of four major sins: murder, sexual immorality, thievery and sorceries, which is drug use and experimentation with the occult (Rev. 9:21).

What's the Answer?

So, we can blame the rise of mass murders on mental illness. We can blame the rise of mass murders on a lack of gun control. We can blame the media for coverage of the mass murders that puts the idea in the next troubled person's head. But, ultimately, we have to remember this: Satan was a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44) and inspires these acts in the hearts of those who are slaves to sin.

Much like pastors who commit suicide, it all starts with a thought—and God doesn't put harmful, destructive thoughts in our heads. That's why Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, instructed us to cast down vain imaginations that exalt themselves against God's truth (2 Cor. 10:5). Of course, the lost soul doesn't know the Word of God, much less understand how to wield the sword of the Spirit against temptations like murder, sexual immorality, thievery and sorceries.

So what's the answer? If we want to curb the mass murders—if we want to stop suicides and abortions and drug use and other evils—we need to shine a light on the real problem: the carnal nature of lost man that's so easily influenced by the devil, one who comes to steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10). And we need to get busier preaching the gospel and making disciples so fewer lives are lost in this age and in the age to come.

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