

# This Just Happened for the First Time Since 1939

Some of the weekend news was unexpected: South Carolina and Gonzaga will play in this year's NCAA men's basketball Final Four for the first time in their history. Oregon will join them for the first time since winning the inaugural tournament in 1939. (North Carolina also made the Final Four, but that's no surprise at all.)

Other weekend news has become all too familiar. A shooting at a Cincinnati nightclub left one dead and 15 wounded; police are still searching for suspects this morning. Authorities today can find "no apparent reason" for a shooting on the Las Vegas strip that killed one person and injured another. Two missing girls were found stabbed to death in North Carolina; their father has been arrested on murder charges.

Were you shocked by the London terror attack last week? Were you surprised by news of more violence here at home? One of the most dangerous temptations of our day is to view such tragedies as the "new normal."

Becoming callous to calamity is an understandable defense mechanism. We don't have the emotional bandwidth to treat each new violent act as new. So, in this day of 24-hour news coverage, as we are bombarded all through the day with bad news from anywhere in the world, it's easier to tune it out, to shrug our shoulders and withdraw emotionally from the culture.

Here's where our biblical worldview sets us apart from the world.

In *The Ten Golden Rules of Leadership*, M. A. Soupios and Panos Mourdoukoutas claim that "the key distinguishing feature of an authentic leader is traceable to a philosophically informed

worldview.” They believe the singular trait possessed by world-changing leaders is their ability to interpret the world in a cohesive and consistent way.

Today’s secular worldview is cohesive and consistent only in that it views life through the prism of the self. Our ultimate value is whatever makes us happy. Dwelling on the sufferings of others doesn’t seem to help them and only saddens us. This era of constant access to the world has actually accomplished the opposite—it’s made us less attentive to the world. If the news doesn’t make us happy, we turn it off.

By contrast, one way the Christian worldview is cohesive and consistent is that it views life through the prism of the other. We’re taught to “bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2). Loving God and loving our neighbor are intertwined (Matt. 22:37–39). Jesus identifies himself with those in need: what we do for them, we do for him (Matt. 25:40).

If we value people in pain as Jesus does, we can never be callous to their suffering. Every victim of violence—and every perpetrator—is someone for whom Jesus died (Rom. 5:8). The answer to compassion fatigue is not less compassion—it’s the power of the Spirit. The first “fruit of the Spirit” is “love” (Gal. 5:22). The ability to care for those in crisis comes ultimately from Christ.

So, ask Jesus to give you his heart for those who hurt. The great British evangelist George Whitefield explained his motivation for crossing the Atlantic seven times to speak to colonial Americans: “The love of your souls constrains me to speak.”

Will you pray for the compassion to say the same? {eo}