

The Boston Marathon Bombings and the Image of God

In light of the horrible tragedy at the Boston Marathon Monday, many pundits on both sides of the aisle are voicing their opinion regarding the root cause of the incessant societal violence we face. One of the more salient liberal responses came from stand-up comedian Jay Mohr, who tweeted Monday night, “What bothers me most about today is that we’re getting used 2 it. ENOUGH. 2nd amendment must go. Violence has 2 stop. Culture MUST change.”

Blaming guns, though, overlooks the fact that the **Second Amendment** has been part of our nation since its founding—so the change in culture this actor alludes to has to have been birthed out of something that changed in the past generation (which is obviously not the Second Amendment).

In my opinion, Genesis 9:6 gives us the root cause of our culture of violence. It says, “Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image” (ESV).

Essentially, this passage is teaching us that when we shed human blood, it is a direct attack on our Creator because humankind is made in the image of God. (Read Genesis 1:26-27.) This is why human murder is so serious.

Consequently, the more we remove God from the public square, the more respect for human dignity as the highest form of all creation is diminished, because God’s image and respect for human life are inextricably connected.

Furthermore, when the U.S. Supreme Court legalized **abortion** in 1973, it pushed our nation as far from the biblical worldview and image of God as possible and desensitized society to the shedding of innocent human blood. Jesus called His followers the “salt of the earth” in Matthew 5:13 because the church has

been commissioned by Jesus to disciple nations as His representatives (Matt. 28:19). Since salt acts as a preservative, the more society marginalizes Christianity and Scripture, the more likely society will self-destruct because the basis for valuing human life is found in the teachings of Scripture (John 3:16). Even Thomas Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence that we have all been endowed with the unalienable rights given to us by our Creator!

You can get rid of all the guns in the world, but until humanity connects itself back to the image of God, people will continue to abort babies and find ways to degrade and murder their own until whole societies and people groups collapse under the weight of their own sin.

The only way to reverse this culture of death is to move our nation back toward its Judeo-Christian roots and to embrace a high value of Scripture in public schools and homes. Only then will narcissism and the self-centered ideals that objectify fellow humans be eradicated from mainstream culture so that young people will value loving their neighbor as they love themselves as one of their highest ideals in life.

Joseph G. Mattera *is overseeing bishop of Resurrection Church, Christ Covenant Coalition, in Brooklyn, N.Y. You can read more on or connect with him on Facebook or Twitter.*