

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” (MATT. 6:13).

EVIL

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS:

Our day-to-day lives aren't usually spent thinking about evil forces. For many of us, we have the benefit of living in communities where we feel safeguarded from the evil “out there.”

But then bullets fly into a mass of humanity. A madman drives a car into a crowd. The vest explodes and shrapnel explodes in every direction. Life is indiscriminately ripped away from people without any prior relationship to the actor. And evil's true face is revealed.

These events can shake our reality and force us to come to terms with the fact that evil is indeed in the world. Sometimes they even hit our own communities, and evil is no longer just “out there.”

When these things happen, we see evil for what it is. Such violence is the natural result of evil, and evil is always a step toward death. Have no doubt: Evil indeed exists. There is an active force at work — the powers of darkness — that strive against God and against His creation. These powers are, in fact, against *you*.

When evil strikes, many people begin to question God and His goodness. Where is the light in all the darkness?

The only Good News that there ever is and ever will be in the face of evil is Jesus. Christ Himself went into the dark corners of the earth. He battled the great cause of evil “out there” and everywhere. He stared evil in its face and *conquered*.

He is our triumphant King. Jesus' resurrection proved that He is indeed greater than all the forces of evil that hell could muster. He is the Champion of Light. We realize the reality of His victory now, as we partake in His blessed community — the church. As we eat of His body and drink of His blood in the Holy Supper — His feast of victory — we proclaim the truth of His victory and recount that His victory is indeed *for us*, too. And as we daily dwell in His Holy Word, His very presence accompanies us. Even in the darkest valley, we fear no evil.

The Light shines in the darkness — the Light of Life. He has come that one day we will never see evil again. That Great Day — His return — will usher in the fullness of the reality: Death and evil will not only have been conquered, but they will be banished forevermore. So when tragedy strikes or evil is too close to our door, we remember that Jesus is not absent. He stepped into darkness and conquered — *for you*.

SCRIPTURES:

Colossians 2:15

“He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.”

Psalms 23:4

“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”

Ephesians 6:12–13

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.”

CONVERSATION POINTS:

- How do we respond to evil as individuals?
- Who ultimately delivers us from all evil?
- Where do we turn in the face of evil?