



### **Devotional Thoughts:**

Evil often looks so innocent. We ourselves tinker around with it without much thought or fear. We know the Scriptures speak about it with grave warnings but our experience so often seems to be that evil occurs without much consequence. In fact, many times we become so comfortable with evil that we seek after it and rejoice when they have found it.

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

We often want to shield each other eyes when evil shows its true nature. We don't want our loved ones to see it. But when they do, it is important to call it what it is, lest we fall back into the delusion that evil and death do not know one another.

Have no doubt, when these things happen, we see evil for what it is. Such violence is the natural result of evil. Death is always the end game of evil. Not every act of evil is so obviously morbid. But evil is always a step toward death. It is a stride away from life and from the author of life.

So next time evil comes calling with all its tempting power, let your brain remember this day. The evil one will say, "Oh, that was an aberration. Evil is the gateway to pleasure not death." But you know better. You have seen evil manifested with chilling clarity. Take a good look at its face and never forget how ugly it is.

Others seek to make such events about God's character, asking why he has allowed it. They marshal the event to the aid of their most beloved cause. But let us not miss the most obvious point: evil and death are quite natural companions.

This tragedy confirms our belief that God's assessment of all evil is true so that we repent of all evil, even the kind that seems to shine with light rather than be clad in darkness. Then true light will shine, the Light. Only Jesus can deliver us from evil. He is the answer to all evil and the source of all life. He has dealt with evil through his own death and resurrection. He has come that one day we will never see evil again.

### **Scriptures:**

**Isaiah 5:20** Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

**1 Thessalonians 5:22** Abstain from every form of evil.

**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.

**Romans 12:21** Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

### **Conversation Points:**

- Is there always an immediate consequence to sin or evil? Does that make it any less dangerous?
- How do we respond to evil as individuals?
- What are we to do when we recognize evil and sin in our own lives?
- Who ultimately delivers us from all evil?

***"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."***