

DELIVER US FROM EVIL (and THE EVIL ONE)

MT 6:13; Gn 3:5; Jn 8:43-44

I. EVIL EVIDENT

- A. Historical data—Huns, Mongols, Nazis, *The Black Book of Communism*
- B. Self-awareness—Solzhenitsyn re line through every human heart
- C. Posing ancient/current question: why does a Good God allow evil?

II. EVIL EXPLAINED

- A. Various theories: (1) an Illusion—Mary Baker Eddy & Christian Science; (2) an Evil God—some Algonquin tribes; (3) a Cosmic struggle between good & bad gods—Zoroaster, Mani; (4) a Good God capriciously orchestrates (Islam); (5) all Creation, matter evil—Gnostics; (6) social Environment flawed—Rousseau, Marx, Critical Race Theory; (7) an Evolutionary surd—need more time to perfect creation;
- B. Consensual Christian stance: deprivation of good—Augustine & Aquinas & classical theism
 - 1. God & creation good
 - 2. Satan's & Adam's fall alienated us from God, forfeiting Holy Spirit's abiding presence

III. EVIL ERADICATED? SUPPRESSED? ANNULLED? (differently explained by Christian thinkers)

- A. Those believing in Total Depravity prescribe imputed grace (declared righteous)—covering our sins and enabling us to live rightly; following Luther & Calvin & Edwards; “common grace” enables limited good
 - 1. From God's perspective, covered by the Blood, we are fully righteous
 - 2. From our perspective, gratitude for Grace prompts holy living
- B. Those believing in the divided self (sinful but not Totally Depraved) prescribe imparted or infused grace, holding that sinners can be transformed within by the renewing, strengthening Presence of God the Holy Spirit, walking in the Light and Loving God and man—following Irenaeus, John of Damascus, Aquinas,
 - 1. God sees us as we actually are, washed by the Blood of Christ
 - 2. We are sufficiently freed from the bondage of sin to walk rightly with God
- C. Those believing in the basic goodness of human nature prescribe following the divine precepts and imitating the example of Jesus—Pelagianism/Liberalism/Modernism
 - 1. Society of Friends (George Fox, William Penn) & “inner light”
 - 2. Nurture rather than nature—Taylorism & New England theological shift; education rather than conversion
 - 3. Social Gospel & rectifying injustices—Wm Rauschenbusch & “Social Gospel”
 - 4. Therapeutic Gospel—“positive thinking” & prosperity gospel & “Self-Esteem”

IV. THE EVIL ONE—SATAN—RESISTED

- A. He is “a murderer from the beginning” taking innocent life (since Cain killed Abel)
 - 1. Given the current “culture of death” utterly evident in pro-abortion parties
 - 2. We resist Satan by protecting & promoting life—e.g. medical care, education, caring for poor
- B. He is “a liar and the father of lies” leading us astray, away from truth re reality
 - 1. **Creation** without a Creator, falsifying discernible data, denying demonstrable reasoning
 - a. Given the current Naturalism in various forms—worshipping “Mother Earth;” denying sexual differences; panicking at spurious rumors (cf. *Hot Talk, Cold Science* data re current “climate change”), deifying Evolution through Natural Selection
 - b. We resist Satan by looking through grandeur of creation to the Creator; by diligently seeking to discern scientific truth; by resisting false “facts” and fallacious reasoning
 - 2. **History** without “His Story,” especially His Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection
 - a. Given the current contempt for the actual historical record (analyzed in *The Killing of History: How Literary Critics and Social Theorists Are Murdering Our Past*), evident in many “biblical scholars” manipulating and misinterpreting Scripture, visible in distortions of Church history
 - b. We resist Satan by preserving the documents, listening to wisdom of history, observing Providence
 - 3. **Man** without a soul—human beings demeaned, deprived of the “image of God”
 - a. Given the current commitment to portraying man as an evolved primate, denying the reality of the soul, reducing everything to material entities, treating men as machines
 - b. We resist Satan by discerning and celebrating our significance, our dignity, our worth as God's children, awaiting promised life everlasting
 - 4. **God** without Being/Substance, merely an idea rather than the One Who Is and Is revealed as “the Father almighty” and fully revealed in Christ Jesus
 - a. Given the current influence of atheists & agnostics, the widespread contempt for natural law and divine law, the persecution of churches and believers
 - b. We resist Satan by vigorously doing apologetics, carefully listening to the Scriptures, zealously promoting missions, consistently supporting local churches, praying “without ceasing”