

Dear Open Door Family,

Traveling in Mexico and visiting Missionaries was a remarkable experience for me. I loved spending time with God's very special servants. But seeing the country where I was born and have loved for many years going through the turmoil that they are experiencing was deeply troubling to me. In many cases those who are committing the violent acts are doing so purposely to send a message to others who are committing equally hideous acts. What they are doing is trying to intimidate and bring fear to the military and law enforcement people. As I read about or hear about some of what has happened I can't help but think of how evil it all is. A couple of questions come to mind for me: Where does this kind of evil come from and is there any hope? Let's look at these verses together.

Psalm 36:1-4 (NET) An evil man is rebellious to the core. He does not fear God, [2] for he is too PROUD to recognize and give up his sin. [3] The words he speaks are sinful and deceitful; he does not care about doing what is wise and right. [4] He plans ways to sin while he lies in bed; he is committed to a sinful lifestyle; he does not reject what is evil.

Psalm 36:1-2 (NLT) Sin whispers to the wicked, deep within their hearts... [2] In their blind conceit, they cannot see how wicked they really are.

Psalm 36 gives us an insight into EVIL and how it impacts men's hearts. We see that the evil man is rebellious to the core - that is to say on the very deepest level there is NO FEAR of God. He does not see what he is doing as wrong or evil. He does not see himself as God sees him. Perhaps he denies that God even exists. His PRIDE and arrogance make him look at his own power and what He can get away with. He never thinks that someday he may be held accountable by God. The Net Bible Note puts it this way: "His rebellious attitude makes him reject any notion that God will hold him accountable. His attitude also prevents him from recognizing and renouncing his sinful ways." So the evil person has a heart that is in rebellion against God - he does not think that he will ever have to answer for his actions or his words. (vs. 3)

When we hear of some evil act being committed, many times our minds recoil in horror from it and wonder how anyone could be so ruthless, so evil. Verse 4 tells us this is what the evil person does; he thinks and plans ways to continue to do more evil. Why? He is committed to a sinful lifestyle. This is the direction he is going and he has NO plan to turn away from the evil in which he is involved. He does NOT REJECT evil in any way. On one level evil comes from the hearts of evil men. Is there hope? YES? There is hope for anyone and everyone who will come to the cross of Jesus. The Apostle Paul persecuted and put Christians to death before he came face to face with the resurrected Lord Jesus. So how should we respond to evil when we encounter it or hear about it? We can look at our own lives and seek to turn away from evil in all its forms. We can pray that:

- 1- We would live lives committed to godliness
- 2- God would convict us of SIN and evil in our own lives so that we renounce it and turn to Him
- 3- God would protect His people from Evil
- 4- God would draw many people to Himself as a result of the evil things that are happening
- 5- God would grant repentance and deliverance from evil to those who are bound by it

PRAYER: Lord God, help me to FEAR YOU, to be in Awe of You, and to see the wonder of Your grace and mercy towards me. Help me to recognize my own sin and to turn away from it. Help me to grow stronger in my walk with You. May I be COMMITTED to living a GODLY LIFESTYLE.

Pastor Mark Kieft

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