

Pushing Back Against Evil

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During a recent speech in Texas, I mentioned that "Drag Queen Story Hours" are being sponsored by local public libraries across the country. Toddlers and kids are brought in and placed in front of cross-dressing men who read children's stories to them, stories that encourage them to reject fundamental gender differences between males and females. The LGBTQ agenda, I also noted, is being energetically promoted to upend and rewrite public school curricula even for kindergarten and pre-school-aged children.

During the Q & A after the talk, one of the parents in attendance, with a measure of frustration in his voice, asked what the average person can do to push back against the seemingly endless expansion of error and evil in our society.

His question is a common one. I usually reply by saying that we cannot yield to discouragement over the apparently widespread moral decline around us, nor dissipate our personal energy in worry and anxiety about the state of the world. Instead, we need to recognize how God has entrusted to each of us a small garden that he asks us to tend. If we tend that plot well, he will extend the reach of his grace in ways we cannot foresee or imagine, and we will actually contribute to

stemming the tide of error and evil well beyond the limited confines of our particular plot.

This implies that each of us has different responsibilities, depending upon our particular state in life, our commitments, and our employment and family situations. By attending carefully to those responsibilities and conscientiously tending our gardens, the air around us can indeed begin to change.

A true story I recently heard brought this lesson home in a powerful way.

A woman, facing complex health issues, felt a strong impulse one morning to pray for her oldest son while she was confined to her bed. He lived far away in a large metropolitan area and worked in his spare time for a ride-sharing company.

Later that day, her son called home, and she mentioned that she had felt the need to pray for him earlier. "That's interesting," he replied, "because I had something unusual happen today."

He then told her about picking up a pregnant woman with two young children. After greeting them, he looked at his phone and started driving. The address on his screen subconsciously caught his attention;

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meanwhile the woman was speaking to someone on her phone in the back seat. After several minutes of thinking about the address, the young driver suddenly realized where they were headed: the local Planned Parenthood abortion clinic.

He decided to make a couple of wrong turns to buy some time so the woman would finish up her phone conversation. When she kept on talking, he pulled the car over and brought it to a complete stop. As she paused her conversation, he turned and said to her, "I'm sorry but I have to let you know that because of my religious beliefs, I simply cannot take you where you are going. I will return you to where I picked you up and refund your fee."

The woman was surprised, but seemed to understand, and he drove her and her three children back to the pickup point.

That young driver made an intentional decision, within the confines of the particular garden God had given him to cultivate, to push back against a present evil he became aware of.

Another person of lesser determination might have said, "Who am I to get involved in this person's choices?" Am I my brother's

keeper?" He recognized, however, that he was already unwittingly involved, and that each of us, in fact, is our brother's keeper. He was concerned about a neighbor and her little family gathered in the back seat of his car. He knew he could not be party to the wrongdoing she seemed poised to carry out against her unborn child.

We don't know what happened after he dropped her off. Maybe, sadly, she just ordered another ride. Maybe, however, she reconsidered her choice. Any time we try to do what is right and push back against evil, any time we seek to act with resolve on behalf of what is good and true, new options open up, the air changes around us, and we contribute to renewing our world.

That's what each of us can do as we take care of our own garden.

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