

Confronting Evil

We know evil as a cold, cruel, and vicious visitor. Sometimes it is the elusive and vague force just out of view. In some places and times its terrible power comes with full force overwhelming us.

Writing about “The Divine Speeches” Carol Newsom says: “It is not just that we cannot see something, but that we are afraid of looking squarely at what we can glimpse just at the periphery of our vision. Like the characters in the book of Job, many people are reluctant to confront the reality that human beings cannot secure their lives and their families against harm.”

Preparing for this issue of *CR*, mindful that we continue to tend to the wicked wounds of racism, I was apprehensive about the use of imagery characterizing the light as good and the dark as evil. I sought counsel from Reverend Fred Allen, a member of our senior staff. He reminded me about the story of Martin Luther King, Jr. during the Montgomery bus boycott*. The dispute with the segregationists persisted so long that King grew weary and frightened after repeated threats against him and his family.

Shaken and under enormous strain, one night he couldn't sleep and sat up in his kitchen. He felt that his trouble was so deep that he knew nowhere to go but to God for help. And so he prayed, confessing that he was in over his head and unable to cope.

King said later, “It seemed as though I could hear the quiet assurance of an inner voice saying: ‘Martin Luther, stand up for righteousness. Stand up for justice. Stand up for truth. And lo, I will be with you. Even until the end of the world.’” In the memory of that extraordinary witness to the power of God to sustain, and fully mindful of the tragic events in Memphis when King was assassinated years later during a similar struggle for justice, my colleague affirmed with bold gratitude, “The darkness cannot put out the Light!”

The writers in this issue of *CR* help us to find our way through the fog so that we will not be confused about the reality and destructive capability of evil. But they also guide us as **we remember and claim with confidence the inexplicable, indisputable, and astounding power of God to transform and redeem every aspect of our lives.** Read on with humility, courage, and hope!

*See *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, edited by Clayborne Carson, pp. 77-78.

Neil M. Alexander

President and Publisher

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—Carol Newsom