

Touchstones Theme: Good & Evil

I believe that there is one story in the world, and only one, that has frightened and inspired us, so that we live in ...continuing thought and wonder.

Humans are caught — in their lives, in their thoughts, in their hungers and ambitions, in their avarice and cruelty,

and in their kindness and generosity too — in a net of good and evil. I think this is the only story we have and that it occurs on all levels of feeling and intelligence. Virtue and vice were warp and woof of our first consciousness, and they will be the fabric of our last, and this despite any changes we may impose on field and river and mountain, on economy and manners. There is no other story [At the end we ask,] was it good or was it evil? Have I done well — or ill? *John Steinbeck*



Sometimes I think I use a very subjective, subconscious barometer in reading the paper or receiving the news of the day and deciding whether some event, some action, bears the weight of that word, evil. It's not the size of the event, nor the cruelty or self-interest of those involved, or even historical impact. I find more and more that it's the degree of heartbreak that I feel: beyond horror or shock or sorrow, that sense of something in me has been blasted apart, a shattering of hope, a collapse (and not for the first time) of what I thought I wished was true about the construction of the world and about human nature, the eclipse of optimism by a creeping cynicism, that I begin to call 'realism.' ...The wind's knocked out of you, the light goes out, or flickers.... Evil is the only word for this. And human is the only other for this. *Rev. Victoria Safford*

Join us in exploring Good & Evil

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