

“What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?” (Lk 4:34). We know that Jesus came to save humanity. He came to offer liberty to the captives and sight to the blind. The devil came to destroy, to pull us away from God. To ask that question about Jesus in such a negative way is to show one’s hand. Clearly, the man is possessed by a demon, a minion of Satan. Jesus rightly calls the demon to come out of the man. Although the demon leaves the man, he does so in a fit of rage throwing the man down to the ground.

Satan is the one who has come to destroy us, and he is active in every corner of the globe. Violence is not just a problem halfway around the world in Afghanistan, it is also a sad reality in every large city in the United States.

In the city of Baltimore, 93% of the homicides are due to one black person killing another. An insult, a snub, a minor thing, like stepping on a another’s foot can lead to violence. Guns are drawn, a life is taken, a friend or relative seeks revenge, and they go to hunt down another person and kill in retaliation. “Young men are using guns to settle their disputes because they don’t know how to solve their conflicts any other way.”<sup>i</sup>

Corey Winfield works for Catholic Charities, and he is trying to end the cycle of violence. His motto, Safe Streets: Stop Shooting, Start Living. Children need a father and mother. They need parents who teach a child how to forgive. In the absence of that formation of character in the home, they need role models who will help them to forgive. One role model for Corey was his mother.

Corey’s brother was killed in the streets of Baltimore at the age of 21. Within a day, Corey knew before the police who killed his brother. He hunted his brother’s killer down and was ready to take the life of another man. In a chance encounter, the police pulled up to Corey and he returned home rather than carry out the retaliatory murder. When he returned home, his mother saw the look in his eye and knew the evil in his heart. She grabbed her son and pulled him close to her begging, “Please stop. I can’t lose another baby.”<sup>ii</sup>

Corey used to be part of the problem, now he is part of the solution. He tries to help people resolve their conflicts without resorting to violence. Like his mother, he looks for the hurt and anger and offers another way. He teaches people how to talk to one another, how to forgive, how to transform hurt into hope.

“God did not destine us for wrath, but to gain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live together with him. Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, as indeed you do” (1 Thes 5:9-11).

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<sup>i</sup> [wsgw.com/gun-violence-americas-other-epidemic/](http://wsgw.com/gun-violence-americas-other-epidemic/)

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid.