

## **CHAPTER 21**

### **HOW TO CONDUCT YOURSELF PROPERLY, AND SAFELY, WHEN TACKLING THE WICKED, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SEEKING GOD'S HELP**

<sup>20</sup> *“Behold, I send an angel before you, to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place which I have prepared. <sup>21</sup> Give heed to him and hearken to his voice, do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression; for my name is in him. <sup>22</sup> But if you hearken attentively to his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.*  
*Exodus 23:20-22 (RSV)*

<sup>7</sup> *he stores up sound wisdom for the upright;  
he is a shield to those who walk in integrity,  
Proverbs 2:7 (RSV)*

<sup>14</sup> *So the men partook of their provisions, and did not ask direction from the Lord.  
Joshua 9:14 (RSV)*

<sup>23</sup> *Keep your heart with all vigilance;  
for from it flow the springs of life.  
Proverbs 4:23 (RSV)*

*He who walks in integrity walks securely,  
but he who perverts his ways will be found out.  
Proverbs 10:9 (RSV)*

*The Lord is a stronghold to him whose way is upright,  
but destruction to evildoers.  
Proverbs 10:29 (RSV)*

<sup>4</sup> *For the Lord takes pleasure in his people;  
he adorns the humble with victory.  
Psalm 149:4 (RSV)*

*He who is slow to anger has great understanding,  
but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly.  
Proverbs 14:29 (RSV)*

*A prudent man sees danger and hides himself;  
but the simple go on, and suffer for it.  
Proverbs 27:12 (RSV)*

*He who trusts in his own mind is a fool;  
but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.  
Proverbs 28:26 (RSV)*

*A fool gives full vent to his anger,  
but a wise man quietly holds it back.  
Proverbs 29:11 (RSV)*

**The fact that someone is attacking us does not entitle us to do whatever we want in order to defend ourselves. We must still control ourselves and react in a godly way.**

The fact that someone is doing wicked things, or even trying to harm us, does not entitle us to do whatever we want in response. The wicked person may not recognise any moral boundaries, but we still have to. We cannot just say or do whatever it takes to resist them, or fight fire with fire by doing back to them whatever they do to us. So, we cannot deal with a liar by telling lies about him. Neither can we respond to manipulative tactics by being manipulative ourselves. Our task is therefore made harder by the fact that our resistance to wickedness has to be righteous.

It must be done in a godly way. Therefore, the mere fact that someone is a threat to you does not entitle you to carry out a 'pre-emptive strike' by attacking them before they can attack you. We can resist the wicked, and use our *legitimate* authority against them. However, we may not use *their* tactics, or tell lies, even if we have good reason to feel threatened and expect to be lied about. This is not just abstract theory. I have often had to tackle malicious people whom I *knew* would use lies and manipulation to avoid being brought to justice.

This happened in the police and also when I acted in civil litigation cases on behalf of clients. However, it probably happened most when I had to investigate and discipline staff in my own business. Wicked people will do virtually anything to get away with things. Thus I had to be even more thorough and imaginative in laying traps to expose them without going outside of the law myself or telling any lies. Those constraints on my own actions, and reactions, made things a lot harder.

Even so, it can be done, whilst still preserving your own integrity, as I have proved many times. I believe I received God's help precisely because I did things His way, and because I prayed for His help in trapping the wicked in their schemes. God answered my prayers by causing such people to "fall into the pits they had dug for others" and/or to accidentally expose their own, or each other's, misconduct. I believe God was willing to do that for me because I kept my own hands clean and did not act as they did. King David had the same experience:

- <sup>18</sup> *He delivered me from my strong enemy,  
from those who hated me;  
for they were too mighty for me.*
- <sup>19</sup> *They came upon me in the day of my calamity;  
but the Lord was my stay.*
- <sup>20</sup> *He brought me forth into a broad place;  
he delivered me, because he delighted in me.*
- <sup>21</sup> *"The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness;  
according to the cleanness of my hands he recompensed me.*
- <sup>22</sup> *For I have kept the ways of the Lord,  
and have not wickedly departed from my God.*
- <sup>23</sup> *For all his ordinances were before me,  
and from his statutes I did not turn aside.*
- <sup>24</sup> *I was blameless before him,  
and I kept myself from guilt.*
- <sup>25</sup> *Therefore the Lord has recompensed me according to my righteousness,  
according to my cleanness in his sight.*
- <sup>26</sup> *"With the loyal thou dost show thyself loyal;  
with the blameless man thou dost show thyself blameless;*
- <sup>27</sup> *with the pure thou dost show thyself pure,  
and with the crooked thou dost show thyself perverse.*
- <sup>28</sup> *Thou dost deliver a humble people,  
but thy eyes are upon the haughty to bring them down.*
- 2 Samuel 22:18-28 (RSV)*

**When dealing with the wicked it is vital to act with honesty, integrity and righteousness. Your own character will be either your defence or your undoing.**

You will never defeat the wicked by being like them. They are far better at it than you, have had more practice, and feel comfortable doing it. They will therefore run rings round you if you try to use their tactics. You would actually be playing into their hands, as any dishonesty on your part will be seized upon with relish, and used to discredit you. The fact that that would be hypocritical, as they do far worse things themselves, is beside the point. They don't claim to be honest or godly, so they don't need to be consistent.

In other words, they are allowed to be hypocrites, but you aren't. So if they can get you to act like them they will take full advantage of it, and will even publicise your wrongdoing. The only answer is to resolve never to take part in anything dishonest, or even questionable. This is what the 'armour of God' from Ephesians chapter 6 is about. You are to act in accordance with the *character qualities* listed within the armour of God. Then you will be protected from all sorts of things that would, otherwise, have happened to you. Let's look at the passage:

*<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, <sup>15</sup> and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; <sup>16</sup> besides all these, taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. <sup>17</sup> And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. <sup>18</sup> Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,*

*Ephesians 6:10-18 (RSV)*

Many assume that the armour of God in Ephesians chapter 6 is entirely supernatural. Some even think of them as lucky charms. However, I believe it is primarily about character. That is if you act in these ways, then your conduct will protect you. You will be protected by what you do, but even more so by what you *don't do*. Maintaining godly standards will automatically prevent you from doing improper things, or even morally questionable things, which would have added to your problems if you had done them.

The above passage from Ephesians 6 does refer to our battle against the Devil and his demons. But it also applies to our battles with wicked human beings. They operate on very similar lines to demons, having the same nature as them, albeit not at the same level of wickedness. It is also true that the degree to which God will answer your prayers, and intervene on your behalf, is partly linked to your character and conduct. Accordingly, if you "cherish iniquity in your heart", God may choose not to hear your prayers, as the Psalmist says:

*<sup>18</sup> If I had cherished iniquity in my heart,  
the Lord would not have listened.  
<sup>19</sup> But truly God has listened;  
he has given heed to the voice of my prayer.  
Psalm 66: 18-19 (RSV)*

Acting in a godly way at all times, regardless of any provocation you may face, will protect you, whether you are contending with demons, or wicked people, or both. It will also cause God to be more willing to answer your prayers and intervene on your behalf. Let's look briefly at each part of the 'armour' and see how they operate and why they are needed:

### **“The belt of truth”**

The RSV and KJV refer to “*girding the loins with truth*”. The NIV puts it more simply as the “*belt of truth*”. It means that a Christian must always be truthful in everything he says, does and thinks. This applies to all our dealings with others, but also in what we say to ourselves, because it is with ourselves that we are least truthful. It is normal to deceive oneself and to think favourably of all our own actions and motives rather than scrutinise them with ruthless frankness. A person can easily persuade himself to believe whatever suits his own interests or makes himself appear in a good light.

Forcing yourself to stop being false, both with yourself and others, will prevent many problems that would otherwise have arisen. People get themselves into terrible situations due to lies, even very ‘small’ ones. These are often only told to avoid or solve problems, but they are actually more likely to create new problems or make existing ones worse. The classic example was President Richard Nixon. He had to resign, not because of the original Watergate break-in, but due to his subsequent attempts to *cover it up*. It was telling lies to save his job that actually caused him to lose it.

A similar thing occurred with the former Cabinet Minister, Jonathan Aitken. He had to resign, and even went to prison, because he told one lie. Other than that, his behaviour was good, and certainly better than the newspaper which went after him. Yet, the fact remained that he had told that one lie, and it would not go away. After a humiliating court case the lie was exposed and he had to resign and go to prison. That was where he heard the Gospel and was saved. He later wrote a book, ‘*Pride and Perjury*’, about his downfall and the lie which caused it.

If we tell the truth all the time, people may be able to see that we made mistakes, were foolish, acted wrongly, and let people down. But they will never be able to say we acted *dishonestly*. That is vastly more important than any of the things we might seek to cover up. That is one reason why Winston Churchill had such an incredibly long career in politics, being an MP from 1900 to 1964. He made mistakes and some of his projects failed, though not usually because of him. Yet he always survived and bounced back after every setback

That was largely because nobody was ever able to point to any scandal or dishonesty, however small. He always told the truth and acted honourably. So, we are told to wear the “*belt of truth*”, in the sense of avoiding all falsehood, lies or phoniness. If you do so, you will automatically be kept away from a host of problems which would, otherwise, have happened to you. You may never come to know what those things would have been, because truthfulness preserved you from them and they never happened. But they would have harmed you if they had happened.

### **“The breast plate of righteousness”**

The breast plate of righteousness involves the righteousness we exhibit, and the sanctification we develop, by living day by day with integrity and consistently doing what is right, in accordance with our conscience and God’s Word. Therefore, always behave righteously, even when you are confronting the wicked, in fact *especially* then. That enables God to approve of your actions and plans and to support you in them and reward you for them. King David spoke of this:

***The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness;  
according to the cleanness of my hands he recompensed me.  
Psalm 18:20 (RSV)***

***Blessed is he who considers the poor!  
The Lord delivers him in the day of trouble;  
Psalm 41:1 (RSV)***

### **“The equipment of the Gospel of peace”**

This involves the peace that comes from knowing you are saved. Tackling the wicked can rob you of your peace, especially if there are many of them, and the battle goes on and on. Knowing you are eternally secure increases your capacity to fight, and to endure doing so for years. I know what it is to be kept awake at night by the latest battle against yet another wicked person. The peace that comes from knowing you are saved is vital. No matter what they do, and whether you win or lose, they can never take that peace away from you. Without it, the strain could become overwhelming.

### **“The shield of faith”**

This is the power, and the protection, that you receive from believing in, and acting upon, God’s Word. Faith is about trusting God and believing His promises. It also involves speaking those promises out loud and acting on them, as you face the challenges of life, and especially of tackling the wicked. However, it is one thing for God’s promises to sit there on the pages of the Bible, untried and untested. It is entirely another matter to make those promises part of your own life by proclaiming or ‘confessing’ them and then relying on them in real life situations.

To ‘confess’ means ‘*to say the same as*’. So, when we confess our sins we say the same about them as God says. We can also confess God’s Word by saying the same as He says in the Bible about any other issue, not just our sin. That includes taking a passage in which a promise or statement is made and then speaking it out yourself and relying on it. You are then taking that promise from the pages of the Bible and allowing it to operate in your own circumstances. Until then, those statements or promises that God has made were just theoretical head knowledge, not a practical reality.

By proclaiming God’s promises, and acting in reliance on them, they become real in our own lives. That is when we truly find out that God can be trusted. However, the *faith* that we are to have must be *faith in God Himself and in His Word*. It is not faith in the concept of faith itself, as if it was some kind of disembodied ‘force’. There has been a growing belief in a false and unbiblical doctrine which speaks of faith as if it was “the force” from Star Wars. Faith is not magic. It is not a stand-alone power which can be ‘harnessed’ by itself, without reference to God Himself.

To think of faith in those terms is to make the same error as the ‘*word of faith*’ movement. They take faith in God, and faith in His Word, and turn it into little more than voodoo. Our faith must always be in God Himself, not in faith itself, or in anything else. So, when we proclaim God’s Word we are not harnessing a power, as if it was electricity, which we can wield at will. We are meant to operate in bold but humble reliance upon God’s Word, and to confidently state our reliance upon Him and what He has said.

### **“The helmet of salvation”**

Paul doesn’t actually explain within Ephesians itself what he means by this expression. However, he is referring to ‘*hope*’. We discover that from 1 Thessalonians, in which Paul speaks more fully:

***But, since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.***

***1 Thessalonians 5:8 (RSV)***

Hope has to be cultivated because it is needed as a protection for our minds. Hence the metaphor of a ‘helmet’. By maintaining our hope we prevent a whole range of problems within the mind such as depression, fear, anxiety, demoralisation, despair and so on. All of those are kept at bay by hope. The best definition I have ever heard of ‘hope’ was given by Derek Prince. He said it is “*the confident*

expectation *of good*.” Faith centres upon our trust in God’s character and promises, whereas hope relates to the way we think of the future and the expectations we have for our own lives.

God wants those expectations to be consistently positive, confident and healthy. He does not want us to dwell on gloomy expectations of failure, disaster or death. By contrast, the demons want you to dwell on all of those. If you continue to let yourself think such dark thoughts you will eventually become unable to withstand even the stresses of ordinary life, let alone prolonged clashes with the wicked and the demons who guide them. Hope is built up and maintained by coming to believe in God’s Word and, in particular, what it says about our future.

Therefore, set out to become thoroughly well-informed, and convinced, about what the future has in store for a genuine Christian. It then becomes easier to maintain a hopeful disposition and a confident expectation of good, because the Bible says our future is glorious. Developing the habit of focusing on all of that will keep your mind solid, stable and secure. Then you will not be overcome by depression, anxiety and discouragement, which the demons are continually trying to create in you.

### **“The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God”**

This last item is defined within the verse itself. It refers to the way in which we wield God’s Word as a weapon. This is closely related to the proclamation, declaration and confession of God’s Word, and especially His promises. To declare and proclaim His promises as part of our prayer times has great power to change our circumstances. It also has a major effect on the way you think, speak, act and react. A person who is persistently repeating God’s Word back to him will be changed and strengthened by the very process of doing so.

Your faith, hope, strength, endurance and resilience will all grow, as will your alertness and discernment. A person who is consistently proclaiming God’s Word out loud within their prayers is not only saying them, but *hearing* them. Remember that the Bible says that faith comes by hearing. Such a person will also change in terms of how they see, and are seen by, the demonic realm. Their own strength will increase and that of the demons will decrease. The demons will also realise that you are not so easily deceived, demoralised or intimidated as you used to be.

It is rather like the reaction of a gang of bullies who watch, with growing alarm, as your muscles and combat skills grow due to training as a boxer. Be bold and assertive when tackling the wicked, but without falling into the opposite error of being over-confident or cocky. Under-estimating the wicked is as dangerous as over-estimating them. God wants you to develop the right balance, whereby you refuse to be intimidated by the wicked but, at the same time, you do not become presumptuous or complacent either.

Your confidence has to be in God, not in yourself, or your own abilities. The moment you start under-estimating the wicked, assuming they can’t harm you, or treating them lightly, you put yourself in danger. Finding that balance will take time because your early victories can produce over-confidence, which may then lead to some defeats. In the end, having had some victories and defeats, you may find that place of balance, whereby you are both confident and alert at the same time.

**Be aware that if you get in the way of a wicked church leader, or any other wicked person, witchcraft may well be used against you.**

I shall only mention the subject of witchcraft very briefly here, because I shall cover it further in chapter 27 below. For now, we merely need to flag this issue and briefly define it. At its most basic level it is the means by which person A seeks to control or influence person B by means of ‘*soulish power*’. In particular it is achieved by manipulation, domination and intimidation. Witchcraft also involves *mind-*

*control*, whereby person B's thoughts and feelings are influenced by person A, or by the demons who are within or alongside either of them.

This usually occurs without person B ever realising what is going on, who is doing it, or how it works. The person practising witchcraft can, merely by the use of their own mind, emotions and will, (even without the help of demons) influence the mind, emotions and will of the other person. That is how people control and manipulate each other every day at work or in churches. It is commonplace. At a more spectacular level, most of us have seen the immense power that hypnotists can have over people in stage shows. The things done there are entirely real. It is not a trick. Real power is being wielded.

That is an aspect of witchcraft, but it is still only at the lower end of the scale. Witchcraft becomes even more powerful and dangerous when person A adds the use of *demonic* power to their own soulish power. The same basic techniques are being used, and with the same objective, namely controlling person B. However, the 'help' of demons is now being used *in addition*. This is a subject which most of the Church, at least in the West, either ignores or under-estimates. Many don't even believe that it is real or, even if it is real, that it could ever affect *them* or the people they know.

It is seen as something purely theoretical, which only affects people elsewhere or in the past, not here and now. The very idea of witchcraft is often made light of, with caricatured images of witches in pointy hats and cauldrons. It is also assumed that those who were accused of witchcraft in past centuries were innocent people, falsely branded as witches by fanatics with over-active imaginations. That was not always the case. Witchcraft is absolutely real and there is nothing imaginary about it.

The danger is greatest for those who don't believe it is real, see no need to seek God's protection from it, and don't recognise the symptoms when they arise. If that describes you, please check what the Bible has to say about this and begin to take it seriously and literally. It may assist if I tell one brief story of how we once came up against the power of witchcraft and sought God's protection from it. Bear in mind also that this took place *in a church* and that the 'person A' who was engaging in the witchcraft was one of the *leaders*.

It occurred after we left the church led by 'Rick', due to our concerns about his lies, carnality and 'showmanship' as a leader. We had similar concerns about the church as a whole and the character and conduct of the wider leadership. I had a number of meetings and wrote various letters, in which I set out my concerns. I urged them all, but especially Rick, to repent and change course. After a long battle we left the church because we were getting nowhere. In fact, we were being deliberately undermined and lied about, to prevent others listening to us.

When we left, a letter was read out to the whole church and then handed out at a Sunday meeting. We were not present, but we heard of it afterwards and somebody got us a copy. It had been agreed prior to this that the wording of that letter would be worked out jointly with us. Instead, it was handed out without our ever seeing it. The letter purported to be from the whole Oversight Team, but I later learned that they had played no part in writing it. They were not even aware of it until it was read out at church.

So, it had been produced in breach of the agreement we made, and was not actually from the group which it purported to be from. At first sight, the letter didn't sound too bad. It contained a lot of pseudo-religious language, which I felt was phoney. But it was basically a brief explanation of the fact that we had left, though without saying why. Strangely, it also contained, underneath each paragraph, verse references from the book of Acts. It didn't set out the actual passages. It just gave the bare references. So, you would only know what they were saying if you looked them up.

We had not done this at first, but we did so later, after we were alerted to what was being said subliminally within the letter. A friend of ours had checked through it and he said to me: "*Do you realise they're cursing you? The verses they have selected tell the story of Ananias and Sapphira and apply it to you*". We then checked for ourselves and, sure enough, the sequence of verses amounted to

a death-curse being directed at my wife and myself. It was unmistakable. Therefore, my wife and I took a number of important steps.

Firstly, we prayed that God would break the power of any curses uttered against us and against our family or our business. We asked others to pray for us all as well. We also *forgave* Desmond, the real author of the letter, plus Rick with whom he was in close liaison, plus the whole Oversight Team, in whose name the letter had been sent. They had done nothing to revoke it or to apologise for its contents, even after they became aware of it. That point about forgiving them all was important. That is one way to prevent other people's curses from taking effect in our lives.

If we forgive them, bless them and also ask God to bless them, then we are acting in the opposite spirit from them. That is what God wants us to do, rather than returning cursing for cursing, or becoming carnal and enraged like they are. For a curse to alight upon a person there needs to be some opening in their life, such as sin, or an ungodly attitude or reaction. Or it could be that they themselves are engaging in cursing, or responding to other people's curses with curses of their own. If you refuse to join in you will, to a large extent, be protected from the effect of their curses.

Please see chapter 27 below, plus the chapters on forgiveness within my Book 2. At any rate, I then wrote to Desmond, Rick and the whole Oversight Team, pointing out the unmistakable meaning of their letter and its sinister sequence of verse references. I told them that what Desmond had sent us, in their name, was a curse and was plainly meant as such. I also told them that what Desmond was doing, in their name, was witchcraft and that God would hold him, and all of them, accountable for it.

I urged them to retract the letter and repent of what they had done, and of what they had allowed to be done in their name. I also warned them, and *Desmond in particular*, that this was an extremely serious matter and that if they did not repent, any curses they uttered would come back upon themselves. I was not wishing that upon them. On the contrary, I was trying to help them not to be damaged by what Desmond and Rick had said and done. We reap what we sow and engaging in the occult was laying them wide open to a demonic attack upon themselves.

Lastly, I asked the whole Oversight Team to meet with me to discuss the situation. However, my warnings were all ignored, and they refused to meet. One of the other church leaders in the town, who had acted as a mediator and had tried to set up a meeting, was told that they didn't want to meet with me. Desmond even added for good measure: "*No, he's left the church now. He's history*". Very sadly, the things I had feared would happen to them did happen, and on a far worse scale than I had expected.

The most serious development, which I believe was the direct result of his own actions, was that Desmond was diagnosed with acute leukaemia. He was the deputy leader of the church, and the main author of that letter. It was he who inserted the verses about Ananias and Sapphira being struck dead. The diagnosis came only a few months after he wrote it. He then declined rapidly and was dead within a few further months, despite the fact that we forgave him, asked God to forgive him, and prayed earnestly for his healing.

I believe Desmond's illness was the direct consequence of the curse he wrote out against myself and my wife. It returned back upon his own head, as curses do. That is how it works. I will explain that briefly in chapter 27 below and then more fully in future books in this series. However, it wasn't just Desmond who was affected. The whole church imploded and became a shadow of what it had once been, or rather what it had *appeared* to be, because there was a lot of hype. Here is a brief summary of some of the more obvious things that resulted.

Firstly, Rick's entire ministry fell apart, after having been a full time evangelist and then a church leader for over 20 years. This collapse occurred in less than a year. He left ministry, left his wife for another woman and left the town to live with her. Secondly, 'Peter' the leader of the children's ministry, which was the biggest part of the church, and the most (apparently) successful, also left his wife. He had been



having an illicit affair, even while leading that ministry with his wife. Thirdly, the church shrank in size, as a lot of people left it.

The children's ministry collapsed overnight when Peter's wife discovered his adultery. The shock devastated her and she was too distressed to continue. The children's work had been the 'flagship' ministry of the church. The leaders had often boasted about it, because it had been attracting huge numbers of children from all over the area. They were literally brought back and forth by buses. Yet, it all fell apart. Other things happened too, which I won't mention, because they concern individuals whose privacy I wish to preserve.

Some might say that all of those things, which all happened very quickly, were just a series of random coincidences and had nothing to do with the behaviour of those leaders or with Desmond's curse in particular. My own conviction is they were direct consequences, just as I had feared would occur. However, in stark contrast to them, we went from strength to strength. Our business flourished and grew much larger. Then, in later years, I also went into full time ministry as a writer, speaker and Bible teacher.

I don't believe any of that would have been the case if we had not taken the curse seriously and prayed for it to be broken and to receive God's protection from its effects. I have told this story in order to warn you to take such things seriously. This is necessary if you intend to do battle with the wicked, because you will then become a target for human and demonic opposition. That will include the use of curses and witchcraft. You need to learn what these things are and how to deal with them, or you will suffer a lot of needless damage which you could have avoided.

**Be comforted by the fact that the wicked are only around for a short time.**

In the 35 years that I have been a Christian, I have come across very many wicked people. However, none have ever been an active part of my life for more than a few years. In one way or another, God prevents them going on forever. He either moves them, or He moves you, or you learn how to defeat them. If so, their continued presence no longer troubles you as much. Alternatively, the reign or influence of the wicked is at least cut short by their death, as God reduces their life span:

*But you, O God, will cast them down  
into the pit of destruction;  
men of blood and treachery  
shall not live out half their days.  
But I will trust in you.  
Psalm 55:23 (ESV)*

Ultimately, the wicked can only live for about 70-80 years at most. However, it is likely to be less, because they tend not to live as long as the righteous:

*<sup>1</sup>Fret not yourself because of evildoers;  
be not envious of wrongdoers!  
<sup>2</sup>For they will soon fade like the grass  
and wither like the green herb.  
Psalm 37:1-2 (ESV)*

Take courage because, for one reason or another, the wicked will not last long. That being so, we have all the more reason to resist them and to hold on.

**We must not fear the wicked.**

We need to take the wicked seriously and tackle them firmly, but we never need to *fear* them, especially once we wake up and realise who they are. From then on we are in a much better position to defeat them. Therefore, although they *want* you to fear them, you must never do so:

*<sup>5</sup>Why should I fear in times of trouble,  
when the iniquity of my persecutors surrounds me,  
Psalm 49:5 (RSV)*

*<sup>6</sup>I am not afraid of ten thousands of people  
who have set themselves against me round about.  
Psalm 3:6 (RSV)*

**The wicked fight deviously, in secret, and out of sight. They try not to come out into the open.**

David was a great warrior, but he knew that in dealing with the wicked, even he needed God's help. The activities of the wicked are not out in the open, where you can see them. They like to operate covertly and their main weapon is deception. They also set hidden traps for the godly. One reason why they act in these ways is because the wicked are often weak and even pathetic people. Most would be no match for us if they came out into the open. Thus their general policy is to operate behind backs. So there is all the more reason to seek God's protection, as David did:

*<sup>2</sup>hide me from the secret plots of the wicked,  
from the scheming of evildoers,  
Psalm 64:2 (RSV)*

When tackling the wicked we also need to rely upon God's Word, like King David. The more you study the Bible, the more understanding you will gain of the ways of the wicked. You will then be better prepared. God will also use Scripture to give you specific insights at key moments, as and when you need them. Therefore make a careful, lifelong study of the whole of God's Word, so that you can be ready in advance for anything that happens.

**Most people don't recognise the wicked people in their lives, or even know they are in a battle. Therefore they don't seek God's protection.**

Many fail to seek God's help against the wicked, because they don't even realise there is a battle to be fought. It is so covert they are unaware that it is even going on. Others may realise there is a battle, but lack the discernment to recognise who the wicked are, so as to be able to fight them. The more senior you become, the more covert the opposition will become. Early in your career, the wicked will oppose you openly. But if you rise to be a manager they will do it secretly. Thus you have all the more reason to seek God's help.

**When Delilah extracted secret information from Samson, in order to destroy him, it was almost certainly achieved by the use of witchcraft.**

Delilah wore down Samson's resolve by repeatedly asking him to reveal the secret of his great strength. She wanted to pass it on to the Philistines, so they could destroy him. Have you ever wondered how Samson could be so stupid as to give her that secret information, after seeing she had already betrayed him? On the face of it, the account doesn't make sense. There has to be more to it than mere persistence on Delilah's part. No doubt her nagging had some effect.

However, it cannot fully explain why Samson gave in to her, especially after seeing what she had done on each of the previous occasions, when he'd given her false answers. It also doesn't even explain why he let her go on questioning him, or remain with him at all, after having betrayed him to the Philistines already. Let's look at what happened from when he first met Delilah. Remember she didn't *become* false. She was already false, from the very outset:

***<sup>4</sup> After this he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Deli'lah. <sup>5</sup> And the lords of the Philistines came to her and said to her, "Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lies, and by what means we may overpower him, that we may bind him to subdue him; and we will each give you eleven hundred pieces of silver."***

***Judges 16:4-5 (RSV)***

Delilah wasted no time and started to probe at Samson to get him to reveal his secret. Samson doesn't just say no, or tell her to be quiet, or even send her away. He simply gives her incorrect answers, which he must know will eventually be revealed to be incorrect, even if she doesn't betray him:

***<sup>6</sup> And Deli'lah said to Samson, "Please tell me wherein your great strength lies, and how you might be bound, that one could subdue you." <sup>7</sup> And Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings which have not been dried, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man."***

***Judges 16:6-7 (RSV)***

In the absence of supernatural factors, any sane person would have got rid of Delilah immediately after this first incident. It was obvious she had given the (false) information to the Philistines. Any sensible person would see what is going on and refuse to cooperate any further. But Samson did not. Neither do many others when faced with witchcraft. Samson became increasingly passive and let her continue, even though every fact indicated that he shouldn't.

He even allowed Delilah to speak as if she had been wronged by him. It may sound absurd for her to claim that, but it is actually very common. A person operating in witchcraft will often make brazen assertions, and with a completely straight face. They know that your capacity to think straight, and to see their sinister motives, is blocked by the very mind-control techniques they use against you. Those are an integral part of what witchcraft is all about. Delilah continued, without any shame, and did the very same thing, all over again:

***<sup>10</sup> And Deli'lah said to Samson, "Behold, you have mocked me, and told me lies; please tell me how you might be bound." <sup>11</sup> And he said to her, "If they bind me with new ropes that have not been used, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man." <sup>12</sup> So Deli'lah took new ropes and bound him with them, and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" And the men lying in wait were in an inner chamber. But he snapped the ropes off his arms like a thread.***

***Judges 16:10-12 (RSV)***

When her second attempt fails, Delilah still isn't embarrassed or afraid and she doesn't run away, as some would do if exposed as a traitor. She knows that Samson *isn't able* to function as he should, or to see through her, or to think straight at all. Therefore she knows she will be able to do it all over again. When she does, Samson passively goes along with it and gives her a third incorrect answer. But each time he gets a little closer to the truth. He is gradually drawn, even against his own will, towards revealing his secret, as if by an invisible magnet:

***<sup>13</sup> And Deli'lah said to Samson, "Until now you have mocked me, and told me lies; tell me how you might be bound." And he said to her, "If you weave the seven locks of my head with the web and make it tight with the pin, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man." <sup>14</sup> So while he slept, Deli'lah took the seven locks of his head and wove them into the web] And she made them tight with the pin, and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he awoke from his sleep, and pulled away the pin, the loom, and the web.***

***Judges 16:13-14 (RSV)***

Eventually, on the fourth occasion, Delilah gets the real answer out of Samson. She had been nagging at him, “*day after day*”, until “*his soul was vexed to death*” and he caved in:

*<sup>15</sup> And she said to him, “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and you have not told me wherein your great strength lies.” <sup>16</sup> And when she pressed him hard with her words day after day, and urged him, his soul was vexed to death. <sup>17</sup> And he told her all his mind, and said to her, “A razor has never come upon my head; for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother’s womb. If I be shaved, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.”*

*Judges 16:15-17 (RSV)*

This time Delilah knew it was the real answer. The wicked are very discerning. As before, she went straight to tell the Philistines, with disastrous results for Samson:

*<sup>18</sup> When Deli’lah saw that he had told her all his mind, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, “Come up this once, for he has told me all his mind.” Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her, and brought the money in their hands. <sup>19</sup> She made him sleep upon her knees; and she called a man, and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. <sup>20</sup> And she said, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” And he awoke from his sleep, and said, “I will go out as at other times, and shake myself free.” And he did not know that the Lord had left him. <sup>21</sup> And the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with bronze fetters; and he ground at the mill in the prison. <sup>22</sup> But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.*

*Judges 16:18-22 (RSV)*

Why did Samson have such poor judgment when dealing with Delilah? The explanation cannot be his foolishness alone. It’s true that he had previously behaved foolishly, but that one factor can’t explain the almost comatose passivity that he showed. She clearly had a hold over him that made him incapable of thinking straight. He was under the power of her witchcraft. I have experienced it myself many times in the past, where I felt my mind was numb and I was so confused I was unable to think properly.

That bewilderment is also based on some natural factors, because some of the things you think are *facts* are actually *lies*. Therefore, however hard you try to make sense of the ‘facts’, they don’t add up. That combination of truth and lies creates a debilitating feeling of confusion. Your mind knows, unconsciously, that something must be wrong somewhere and that the pieces of the jigsaw don’t fit together, or make sense. But you can’t put your finger on *why* and that leaves you feeling disorientated.

However, it is often also due to the fact that one or more of the people you are dealing with is practising witchcraft against you. That has happened to me many times when dealing with false staff at my law firm, or false Christians within churches. When trying to investigate wrongdoing, I would feel inexplicably indecisive, confused and mentally numb, as if I was wading through deep mud. It can be paralysing. One of the other hallmarks of such witchcraft is that I have even found myself feeling *sympathy* for the wrongdoer.

They have an extraordinary way of making you feel sorry for them, even while they attack and exploit you. We saw it above, in the way Delilah spoke, as if she was the one who had been wronged. My former PA, Julie, used to operate mind-control. For example, I sometimes found myself forming the thought that I ought to pay her a bonus, or give her a pay rise. The idea would come into my head, even though she had not said anything, and I would feel drawn to speak up and offer it.

When I did so, she would purport to be surprised, and even reluctant. In the end I realised that, on many such occasions, she had been *planting thoughts* in my mind. Partly it was done in the natural, through well-chosen and well-timed words, spoken subtly and almost subliminally. However, it was also achieved supernaturally, through witchcraft. Now that I am aware of this, and more alert to it, the

problem has reduced. If you are unaware of the power of such mind-control, or don't take it seriously, you will be influenced by it, especially if you try to tackle the wicked.

A similar thing occurred with Rick, the church leader. I often gave financial gifts to him spontaneously, thinking the idea was mine, or that God had prompted me. I later concluded that he had planted the thoughts in my mind. It was partly by his own guile and manipulation, but also by his use of witchcraft and the whisperings of demons. I mean that last point literally, because Rick was heavily demonised. I later saw a demon in his eyes and I tell the story in chapter 17 of my Book 1.

I would urge you to recognise that there really are such things as witchcraft and mind-control and that multitudes of people practise these to one extent or another. There is nothing imaginary about any of it and it is going on all the time. Moreover, it is done by entirely *ordinary* people, even in churches, by those who claim to be Christians. Indeed, that is where witchcraft is at its most damaging, because it is least expected and because the Church is so important.

### **The right way to handle difficult, and even wicked, bosses at work, when you are young and/or in a junior position**

A young Christian recently asked me how to handle difficult bosses at work. She had started a new job and some of the senior staff were making life hard. This will arise for all of us at times. Most of the workplace examples I have given are from the perspective of a boss, because I was a boss for most of my career. However, I wasn't always a boss and I can still remember what it was like to be on the receiving end of real, *or imagined*, harshness and unfair treatment. It can be very difficult to handle and deeply distressing.

However, a high proportion of the rough treatment that Christian employees receive is not necessarily due to wicked bosses. Or it could be that the boss is wicked, but that is still not the reason why they are being treated roughly. There are a number of possible alternative explanations. Firstly, the boss could be wicked and is giving you a hard time purely because he is wicked. Secondly, the boss might well be wicked, but that is irrelevant, as he is giving you a hard time because *you* are lazy, negligent, incompetent or have any number of other faults.

Thirdly, the boss could actually be a good person, who isn't wicked at all. Yet he may be giving you a hard time for the same reasons, namely your bad habits or character deficiencies. Fourthly, the boss could be either wicked or good, or something in between, and he is giving you a hard time because *God wants him to*. God Himself might see faults in you that need to be confronted, or 'rough edges' that need to be 'sandpapered' away. He may be using the boss as His 'agent' to do that for Him.

God is very practical and realistic. He knows that very few Christians will ever tell you the frank truth about your faults, whereas bosses are more likely to be willing to do so. Therefore God makes full use of them in our lives to get us to learn and to change. So, before we leap to conclusions about why we are being given a hard time at work, we need to consider each of the above possibilities. We may have assumed our boss is wicked, or at least harsh and unfair, when in fact he might be none of those things.

He may just be responding rationally to the faults in us that he can see, but which we can't see, or won't admit to. That is very common, because few of us see ourselves as we really are. Most of us never get anywhere near the truth when assessing ourselves. We view ourselves through rose-tinted lenses while, at the same time, other people are seen through grey lenses which accentuate their faults and mask their virtues. So, although we will often have to face wicked bosses who are dishonest, selfish and unfair, it should not be your automatic assumption that that is what they are.

When trying to assess the position, give serious consideration to each of the four options I listed earlier. Don't just assume automatically that there is nothing wrong with you, and no conceivable reason why any sane person would ever wish to criticise or punish you. Therefore, if you are suffering at work, or

if bosses are making demands of you, or holding you more accountable than you would wish, stop and ask God about it. Try praying along these lines:

*“LORD, I am going through difficulties with colleagues and/or bosses who are criticising me and/or making demands of me. Please show me why this is happening and whether any of it is my own fault. In particular, please show me what your purposes are in all of this and whether you are using those people to try to change me, chasten me, or toughen me up. If you do want me to change, please show me how and why, so I can cooperate and get this process of change over with more quickly.”*

If you pray in that way you will begin to see your bosses differently. You will also start to see yourself more clearly, especially your faults, bad habits and bad attitudes which, hitherto, only other people knew about. You will also begin to see God’s purposes more fully and to realise what His long term aims are for your character development. Even where you are doing nothing wrong, and are truly up against wicked people, you will be better able to handle them and more capable of seeing how God can use them to strengthen your character, as He did with Joseph in Egypt.

You can even start to find it possible to give thanks for such mistreatment and for those who dispense it. Even they can be used as God’s agents for your self-improvement, and they often are. Giving thanks to God (not them) for the ordeals they cause, and for their effects in your life, will also help to get it over with more quickly and produce better results. However, there are also times when mistreatment at the hands of the wicked is *not* what God wants for you. In such cases, He wants you to pray for His help in protecting you from the wicked and/or removing them from your life.

We shall look at that in the chapters below. Therefore we also need to know when, and how, to resist the wicked and even to pray against them. Life would be a lot simpler if it was always one situation or the other, such that we could always use the same methods and take the same approach. However, it isn’t like that. Therefore we need to learn how to discern the real nature of the situation, where it’s coming from, who is behind it and what God is doing through it. You can’t be a one club golfer, and you have to learn how to treat different situations differently.

**You cannot resist the wicked solely “*in your own strength*”. You need to rely on God’s strength, wisdom and guidance.**

God does want us to be bold and confident. However, our confidence always needs to be in Him, rather than in ourselves or in our own abilities or gifts:

*<sup>6</sup> For not in my bow do I trust,  
nor can my sword save me.  
<sup>7</sup> But you have saved us from our foes  
and have put to shame those who hate us.  
Psalm 44:6-7 (ESV)*

So, as we fight and win battles, it needs to be done in His strength, in reliance upon Him. It must also be in accordance with His methods and principles, not the world’s, or those of our own flesh nature. God must empower and enable us:

*But God will strike the heads of his enemies,  
the hairy crown of him who walks in his guilty ways.  
Psalm 68:21 (ESV)*

*Awesome is God from his sanctuary;  
the God of Israel—he is the one who gives power and strength to his people.  
Blessed be God!*

*Psalm 68:35(ESV)*

You cannot rely solely on your own discernment when assessing people and situations. You have to seek God's guidance, and ask him to *expose* the real nature of other people's characters, or of contracts, job offers or other opportunities being offered to you. If you don't, you will make far more mistakes and end up making deals that you should never have made and getting involved with people you should have kept well away from. King David knew this and he consistently sought God's guidance when choosing what to do, where to go, and even whether to fight:

*After this David inquired of the Lord, "Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?" And the Lord said to him, "Go up." David said, "To which shall I go up?" And he said, "To Hebron."*

*2 Samuel 2:1 (RSV)*

*<sup>19</sup> And David inquired of the Lord, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Wilt thou give them into my hand?" And the Lord said to David, "Go up; for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand."*

*2 Samuel 5:19 (RSV)*

*<sup>22</sup> And the Philistines came up yet again, and spread out in the valley of Reph'aim. <sup>23</sup> And when David inquired of the Lord, he said, "You shall not go up; go around to their rear, and come upon them opposite the balsam trees. <sup>24</sup> And when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then bestir yourself; for then the Lord has gone out before you to smite the army of the Philistines." <sup>25</sup> And David did as the Lord commanded him, and smote the Philistines from Geba to Gezer.*

*2 Samuel 5:22-25 (RSV)*

### **Joshua's failure to seek God's guidance before making a peace treaty with the Gibeonites**

An example of the need to seek God's guidance before taking action is Joshua, who led the Israelites in to the Promised Land. God had said they must destroy *all* the Canaanites because they were so wicked they would cause problems in the future if any remained alive. So, Joshua knew he could make no peace treaties with any of them. Even so, a group of Canaanites known as 'Gibeonites' tricked Joshua into believing they were travellers and were only passing through. Joshua therefore made a peace treaty with them, due to his mistaken belief that they were not Canaanites:

*<sup>3</sup> But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai, <sup>4</sup> they on their part acted with cunning, and went and made ready provisions, and took worn-out sacks upon their asses, and wineskins, worn-out and torn and mended, <sup>5</sup> with worn-out, patched sandals on their feet, and worn-out clothes; and all their provisions were dry and moldy. <sup>6</sup> And they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal, and said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have come from a far country; so now make a covenant with us.*

*Joshua 9:3-6 (RSV)*

The Israelites were doubtful at first, and questioned the Gibeonites, but not thoroughly enough. So, they were taken in by the deception and believed they were just travellers from another place:

*<sup>7</sup> But the men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you live among us; then how can we make a covenant with you?" <sup>8</sup> They said to Joshua, "We are your servants." And Joshua said to them, "Who are you? And where do you come from?" <sup>9</sup> They said to him, "From a very far country your servants have come, because of the name of the Lord your God; for we have heard a report of him, and all that he did in Egypt, <sup>10</sup> and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, Sihon the king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who dwelt in Ash'taroth. <sup>11</sup> And our elders and all the inhabitants of our country said to us, 'Take provisions in your hand for the journey, and go to meet them, and say to them, "We are your servants; come now, make a covenant with us."' <sup>12</sup> Here is our bread; it was still warm when we took it from our houses as our food for the journey, on the day we set forth to come to you, but now, behold, it is dry and moldy; <sup>13</sup> these*

*wineskins were new when we filled them, and behold, they are burst; and these garments and shoes of ours are worn out from the very long journey.”*

*Joshua 9:7-13 (RSV)*

Their error was they did not ask for God’s direction, or ask God to expose any deception, before entering into something as serious as a covenant or peace treaty with these men:

*<sup>14</sup> So the men partook of their provisions, and did not ask direction from the Lord. <sup>15</sup> And Joshua made peace with them, and made a covenant with them, to let them live; and the leaders of the congregation swore to them.*

*Joshua 9:14-15 (RSV)*

Three days later, when it was too late, as they were bound by their peace treaty, Joshua discovered the truth about the Gibeonites. But he could no longer do anything about it, because to fight them would have meant breaking a vow. We must therefore take great care before making promises. Ideally, try not to make any at all. If you must, then seek God’s guidance first, or you could end up being bound by your own words, as Joshua was:

*<sup>16</sup> At the end of three days after they had made a covenant with them, they heard that they were their neighbors, and that they dwelt among them. <sup>17</sup> And the people of Israel set out and reached their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephi'rah, Be-er'oth, and Kir'iathe-arim. <sup>18</sup> But the people of Israel did not kill them, because the leaders of the congregation had sworn to them by the Lord, the God of Israel. Then all the congregation murmured against the leaders. <sup>19</sup> But all the leaders said to all the congregation, “We have sworn to them by the Lord, the God of Israel, and now we may not touch them. <sup>20</sup> This we will do to them, and let them live, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we swore to them.”*

*Joshua 9:16-20 (RSV)*

The making of vows, contracts, deals, or even promises, is really important, as it is so easy to get ensnared by the wicked. Then, when your eyes eventually open, and you realise what kind of people they really are, you are trapped by your own words, due to the agreements you have entered into or the promises you have made. You may have accepted a job offer, or a business partnership, or involvement in a contract, or some other entanglement, from which it can be difficult to escape. Or you may have made a promise which you now regret.

Yet, it could all have been avoided if, before entering into it, you had prayed to God along these lines: “*Lord, I am proposing to enter into this arrangement, or to become bound by this deal/contract/partnership/new job etc. Please show me if there is anything I can’t see that I need to see, or anything about which I’m being blinded, deceived or manipulated. Please show me whether you want me to enter into this. Please also block my path if it isn’t right.*”

It is so easy to be enticed by what may appear to be desirable opportunities. The very fact that it is attractive or time-limited, such that a decision has to be made quickly, can tempt you to go ahead and grab it without praying for guidance. That is a major error, for which you may later pay a high price when the real facts emerge. The decision can seem good, but it could lead to very bad consequences, as Solomon found:

*There is a way which seems right to a man,  
but its end is the way to death*

*Proverbs 14:12 (RSV)*



## **My own failure to seek God's guidance before accepting an offer of an equity partnership in a law firm**

I made this mistake when I was a young lawyer and was offered a partnership with a one third equity stake in a law firm. It was what I had always wanted and had landed directly on my plate. I reasoned that it must therefore be what God wanted for me and that He must have given it to me. That is how one tends to think when presented with an enticing offer. The advantages are focused on, but the disadvantages are glossed over, especially if they come from the quiet voice of our conscience. We can easily drown it out and ignore it when it is speaking against something which we want.

I was offered equity partnership, together with the roles of Head of Litigation and Managing Partner. It seemed so good that I felt it had to be from God. Yet I also knew, from the outset, that one of the equity partners was of dubious ethical character. He was also a senior Freemason, and I already knew Freemasonry was occultic. I also knew he had had a chequered past and had been expelled from a previous law firm, with allegations of dishonesty and manipulation made against him.

I should therefore have been on my guard, based on that knowledge alone, and should have refused the offer. At the very least, I should have taken advice, prayed, and asked others to pray, that God would show me *whether* to accept it. Unfortunately, I didn't do any of those things. I accepted it immediately and told myself his 'dodginess' could be kept under control, especially as I was going to be the Managing Partner. I was wrong about that in particular and it led, three years later, to disaster. I describe that elsewhere in this book and also in Book 2.

## **Invite God to veto anything which He thinks is not good for you, or even if it is good, but is not the best option.**

It is precisely when an offer, business deal, opportunity or marriage proposal, seems attractive that you most need to seek God's guidance. You also need to *ask him to block it if it's not right*, or even if he thinks it's not the best thing for you, and that some other option would be better. For example, we learned to pray like this before buying any house: "*LORD, we really like this house, but if it is not what you want us to buy, please block it and prevent us from buying it.*" We prayed that prayer each time we found what seemed like the ideal house, over a period of about a year, and God answered it.

On *four* occasions our purchases fell through. We got discouraged, because it went on and on for what seemed like an age. Four houses were either withdrawn from sale or another buyer 'gazumped' us by pushing in and taking the house ahead of us. Then, on the fifth attempt, the perfect house came up, which turned out to be God's choice. That fifth attempt was not blocked, though we did invite God to block it if He wanted to. The moral of the story is that you should always seek God's guidance and, even after that, give Him a right of veto.

Positively *invite* Him to block any opportunity that He does not want you to take, especially when it seems attractive. It is even more essential where there is any kind of urgency which puts you under time pressure to decide quickly, without taking advice or making proper checks. The wicked, and also the demons, use time limits to entice us into making unwise agreements or promises. Whenever you feel such pressure, stop and ask yourself *who is creating the urgency*, or making use of it. Then force yourself to step back from the brink and think, ask questions and pray for guidance.