

In a way, I had played the part of Balaam's donkey that day. Just like the animal in the biblical story, I had stood between a wayward person and potential trouble.

Over the years, a number of people have played that role in my life: parents, teachers, youth leaders, friends, roommates. Seeing the trouble I was heading for, they stubbornly stood in my way, doing their best to prevent me from making foolish choices.

Did I thank them? Not very often. I was too busy pouting because they had kept me from getting something I thought I couldn't live without.

Taking a stand between friends and their destructive choices will seldom make you a popular person, but it will make you a good person. Your friends may even call you a traitor, but God will call you His friend. Emotionally and socially, it's a difficult choice to make. But intellectually and spiritually, it's a no-brainer. --JAL

REFLECTION

- Do I have a friend who is heading for trouble? What am I going to do about it?
- How can I stand in the way without getting run over? How can I maintain a position of influence without going along with my friend's destructive choices?
- Who is standing between me and some bad choices I'm considering? Am I resentful or grateful?

A true friend blocks your path to trouble.



Pastor:

4wayner@tpg.com.au

Wayne Robilliard

17 Woodland Ave, Hazelbrook

Ph: 4758 8778.

0404 804 778

Please feel free to contact the Pastor for any needs you may have, queries, or questions about our church family.

Central Mountains Baptist Church

13 APRIL, 2014

Call Me Balaam's Donkey

(Galatians 6:1) "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted."

The driver in the car behind me was not happy, and I was the reason. She made this clear by "hugging" my rear bumper (but not in the affectionate sense) and making impatient gestures (which I could see in my rear view mirror).

When this failed to achieve the desired result, she began tooting her horn (perhaps assuming that I had somehow remained oblivious to her).

I'm no fool. I knew what she wanted. She wanted me out of her way--right now! But I chose not to move.

I could have sped up a bit, passed the car in the lane next to me, and moved out of her way. But I saw something she apparently didn't see. A parked police car just ahead of us. So I held my position, maintained the speed limit, and kept the wild woman from getting a speeding ticket--or worse.



Farther down the road the traffic thinned out, and the woman darted around me and disappeared over the horizon. Did she mouth the words "thank you" when she passed, acknowledging the favor I had done for her? Not exactly. She just sped away into the rest of her life, leaving me to ponder the lesson I had just learned about my role in the universe.



Drawing Close

Restoring Gently

(Galatians 6:1) "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted."

Matthew 18:15

There are two steps to gentle restoration:

1. _____ yourself,

Matthew 18:15

(Matthew 5:23-24) ""Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, {24} "leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift."

(James 5:20) "let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins."



PAUSE

◆ P stands for _____, _____, and _____ your words

(Romans 12:19) "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord."

(Matthew 5:44-45) ""But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, {45} "that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; ..."

(James 3:5-6) "... See how great a forest a little fire kindles! {6} And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity."

(Proverbs 15:28) "The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, But the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil."

◆ A stands for _____ of your love,

(Romans 12:18) "If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men."

(James 3:17) "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy."

◆ U stands for _____ by listening,

(James 1:19) "So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;"



◆ S stands for _____. _____ will have to be discussed.

(Romans 12:17) "Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men."

(Luke 17:3) ""Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him."

(1 Samuel 25:28) ""Please forgive the trespass of your maidservant. ..."

(1 Samuel 25:26) ""Now therefore, my lord, as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, since the LORD has held you back from coming to bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hand, now then, let your enemies and those who seek harm for my lord be as Nabal."

(1 Samuel 25:30-33) ""And it shall come to pass, when the LORD has done for my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and has appointed you ruler over Israel, {31} "that this will be no grief to you, nor offense of heart to my lord, either that you have shed blood without cause, or that my lord has avenged himself. But when the LORD has dealt well with my lord, then remember your maidservant."

{32} Then David said to Abigail: "Blessed is the LORD God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! {33} "And blessed is your advice and blessed are you, because you have kept me this day from coming to bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand."

◆ E stands for _____.

_____ with prayer

(James 5:16) "Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. ..."

(Romans 12:18) "If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men."



2. Get _____, Matthew 18:16-17

(2 Timothy 2:24-25) "And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, {25} in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,"

