

Psalm 64

Sometimes things need to happen which reveal mens true intentions. It would seem strange to wipe out God haters, who never spoke up for fear of reprisal. You cannot know a person's true intentions until they feel free to act out with impunity. Believers can be ridiculed and persecuted. Some face dire and fearful opposition from evil men. We can be like alligator bait, to reveal unbelievers true intentions. David was chased around by evil men. In the end, the evil men were killed. Have you ever had a situation where you felt like a pinata? It might seem like everyone is taking a swing at you. Did it seem like a random thing that came at you? We are billboards for Jesus.

Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. (1 John 3:13)

Read Psalm 64:1-4: We live in a fallen society; but we are protected.

"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless[f] as doves. (Matthew 10:16)

It is sad to experience the ongoing damage to our society. There are some places where men's decline are more evident. The bay area seems to have more obvious moral decay than San Diego. I look around at the city of Vallejo, where I am working. I see drug addicts and homosexuals and street people. There are encampments with trash strewn in the streets. Cars and buildings are broken into, materials are stolen. The police are over-run. This is a fallen place. After a while, people and government agencies grow weary, and are too stretched to remove all of the abandoned cars and dumped furniture. People are living in tents; teaming with cardboard, plastic bags, and junk.

I learned through a city contact that free housing has been offered. Some street people reject the offer because they will not submit to a curfew or drug test. Our government has lost the will to keep any hard boundaries on conduct and civility. We keep lowering the bar, to accommodate those who have made bad decisions.

This place has affected me a little bit. It has motivated me to pray for our country. My first impression was in the jobsite neighborhood; and at my hotel. I saw a lot of wandering, unkept and confused street people around the city. I also saw opportunists looking for things to take. I saw people urinating in public. My hotel had a bullet proof glass outdoor check in. Signs were posted stating that management was not responsible

for personal injury or loss of property. So far; I have had to call upon the police at least 6 times. After being on hold, in non-emergencies, it becomes just another report. Our construction storage lot was broken into numerous times; as was our building project. I have fixed our fences from break-ins over a dozen times. I have picked up drug paraphernalia, abandoned trash, car parts and personal effects left by street people at our gate scores of times. At the police station; people describe kidnapping as though it was a normal part of everyday life. Fences are cut and rammed and trash is left everywhere. The quality of life here is lower than elsewhere. Expectations are also much lower.

I look around; and I wonder what opportunities exist to heal these broken lives. I thought that surely these are Jesus' people. In a sense; this seems like a perfect place to preach the gospel or provide a physical ministry. There are prostitutes, drug addicts, thieves, people with mental problems, kidnappers and all kinds of other issues. I tried to connect with a street person who circulated around our jobsite until I discovered that he wanted a homosexual relationship; and he became transfixed on following me wherever I went. Ministry can be a very messy thing. I know that I should not give handouts to able-bodied panhandlers.

I feel like I am missing a ministry opportunity. I put up a flyer on my apartment complex bulletin board for a weekly bible study. It is a huge complex with hundreds of people. Many months later...no takers.

Perhaps My jobsite relationships will produce a curiosity. It is the typical mixture of workers. Is this a wasted opportunity to minister? Am I too focused on my extensive responsibilities to step out in faith? I have these questions. Amidst all of this, I am reminded that I am here for a reason. Either way, I am reminded of the necessity of the Holy Spirit to get something going. I am experiencing a personal transformation. I have to go deeper into my quiet time to keep my bearings and perspective.

28 *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.* **29** *For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8:28-29)*

Am I supposed to become comfortable in these surroundings? David asks for protection from the fear of his enemy. What does it take to rock our boat; and become frazzled? We all want to make a nest where we have some level of expectation of our

environment. Do I need to worry about demonic plots that work against me? After all, I deal with all of the things that are in conflict and problems. The scriptures promise that we will have problems, trials set backs, and disappointment from the sweat of our brow.

David and Abram and the other examples of faith seemed to go from one test to the next. The challenges seem to come back to back, in a measured way. It can even be humorous at times. As soon as I catch up; my phone rings with my next challenge.

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to [d]bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

David is in a situation with people who are trying to take him down. These people will have to answer for their own decisions; but they do serve a purpose in our lives. I am not supposed to just watch Fox News wringing my hands. God is in control. I need to focus more on God; and less on the mess. The challenge becomes keeping calm as the waters get higher and higher.

...whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. (Philippians 4:8-9)

It is more than not becoming transfixed on the evil around us. We are to walk more closely with God, and fill ourselves with the things of God. The trick is to take on more quality God time; without letting worries creep in and steal your thoughts back. The only way that you can drown that much noise and confusion and fear is to increase our quiet time and quality time with God.

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: [d]adultery, [e]fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, [f]murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just

as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 [g]gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. (Galatians 5:16-23)

Psalm 63 described how holy men were taken out into the desert to re-establish their focus on God. That is why it is called a quiet time. We need to have a separation and dedicated time for God. Demonic powers want to keep that phone ringing and calls coming as you settle in with God. Holiness can mean holding to a dedicated separation of purpose. As our society declines, we should be more of a contrast.

Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever. (Daniel 12:3)

Read Psalm 64:5-10: One key concept to consider is that *God will subject men to their own devices*. When evil men plot and scheme; they will fall prey to their same inventions. Those who lie about the true north will begin to believe that the compass is upside down themselves. Their efforts to deceive will end up deceiving themselves.

Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, And he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him. (Proverbs 26:27)

Evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. (2 Timothy 3:13)

It is interesting and tragic to see a drug addict taking extreme measures to continue in his ways. He is getting run down, separated and becoming like a street animal as he continues in his pursuits.

This correlation between deception resulting in self-deception and self destruction explains a lot in our society today. We muse over how intelligent people can make such damaging and blind decisions. Their commitment to special-interest groups and to carrying the banner for godless lifestyles leads them to a self-destruct end. For example, the term gay suggests happiness. Psychologists tell us that the self-loathing and suicide amongs gays is extremely high. They use drugs and multiple partners to find something unattainable. Businessmen who attempt to deceive the government and other businessmen become subject to cruel circumstances themselves. Men who leave

their wives for another, sadly discover that in time, some of the same marriage dynamics begin to repeat themselves. Gang members who gain through violence fall prey to violence.

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. (Galatians 6:7-8)

People who find themselves in the streets do not typically return to any normalcy. They create an imaginary new-normal. I know a man who lives in shelters with most of his teeth missing. He considers himself a businessman. He has no business; and he lives off of charity and trash. It can be hard to determine what to attribute to mental illness versus a long list of bad decisions.

The police tell me about the local network of underworld information sharing among street people. Some of the locals have a long-standing reputation of exploits and crime. There is a whole underground community that we know nothing about.

Some people spend their lives trying to extract as much out of their employers or their neighbors or innocent bystanders as they can get away with. They are like undisciplined children who have grown up unbroken and wild. What is their destiny?

A worthless person, a wicked man, Walks with a perverse mouth; 13 He winks with his eyes, He [g]shuffles his feet, He points with his fingers; 14 Perversity is in his heart, He devises evil continually, He sows discord. 15 Therefore his calamity shall come suddenly; Suddenly he shall be broken without remedy. (Proverbs 6:12-16)