

Dangerous Traps!



"But Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him for saying such things. 'Heaven forbid, Lord,' he said. 'This will never happen to you!' Jesus turned to Peter and said, 'Get away from me, Satan! You are a dangerous trap to me. You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God's.'"

Matthew 16:22-23 (NLT)

Ever had your bike chain derail? My first time, far from home (of course), the chain jammed between the sprocket and guard. What a mess! Though a rookie repairman, my diligence paid off and I made it home. From then on, a field-tested veteran, I never feared a repeat.

Similarly, as you move to advance your Mission, the unforeseen hit of a “derailer” can stop you cold. Your enemy shrewdly uses a well-intended, innocent, comment from someone close to you to subtly, but powerfully, jab your “cut,” the place of your wound. Be prepared! One undefended hit and your Mission could end up a twisted mess.

Reflect: **Have I suffered a hit from someone close to me?**

We find Peter reprimanding Jesus after he stated that that he will go to Jerusalem, suffer and be killed. Really? He had just received the revelation that Jesus was the Messiah! Nonetheless, with good intention, he speaks from his heart, “Heaven forbid, Lord!” He loved Jesus, of course he didn't want to see him die. Jesus snaps back forcefully. Rebuking the Boxer’s jab, he allowed nothing to interfere with the fulfillment of his Mission. He steered clear of a dangerous trap.

Consider: **What would have happened had Jesus allowed Peter's comment to derail him?**

Once, on the cusp of resigning from my job to become a financial advisor (a dramatic jump of faith to a new Forum), a friend said “Oh, you're too nice to be a financial advisor.” Ouch! This hit below the belt sent me reeling; my fear of failure was unleashed to question everything. A major derailer... from a good friend! It took all my strength to stay the course.

Fortunately, the groundwork I’d laid spiritually paid off. God filled me

with the courage I needed. Deeply fearful but with great determination, I locked my eyes on God's promise to provide and made the jump. So glad I did! My life has never been the same; jumps of faith are incredibly fruitful! Could I have experienced the life God intended had I succumbed to the Boxer's jab?

Imagine: The fruitfulness of persevering in the face of derailers.

Jesus knew his Mission was high stakes, but look at the fruit! Although you are not called to save the entire human race, your Mission helps complete what Jesus started. The stakes remain high, how will you defend yourself from derailers?

Attuned to the Boxer's schemes, Jesus decisively turned the jab back. He knew the Boxer would deliver blows, even via friends. Your enemy has not changed his tactics because they work. Stay alert! When the Boxer strikes, turn back the attack by rebuking him.

"They were just trying to intimidate us, imagining that they could discourage us and stop the work. So I continued the work with even greater determination." Nehemiah 6:9

Nehemiah, under a constant barrage of threats from his enemy, like Jesus, stayed relentlessly focused on his Mission. Seeing through the devil's schemes, the attacks actually strengthened his resolve. He considered the attacks affirming!

A friend likes to say, "Expect to be shot at if you're flying over the target." Your enemy doesn't want your Mission to advance. Consider derailers an affirmation. Redirect your energy into your work with even greater determination – derailers are...

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Go off the grid and ask these questions:

Coach's Questions

- Revisit the origin of my Mission. Why is this work so important to God? Reaffirm my commitment.
- What wound is vulnerable to the Boxer's jabs? Write Spirit Talk to shore up my protection.
- Who can I enlist (in advance) to keep me focused on my Mission when derailers hit?

Spirit Talk

Post this where you will see it regularly.

"Rebuke derailers and move on."

"Don't be afraid of the enemy! Remember the Lord, who is great and glorious, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes!"

Nehemiah 4:14 (NLT)



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