

**Passages: Tools for Finding Your Way Through Conflicts**  
**Dr. Tamara Albrecht**

- Know yourself • Know what you want • Know working conditions • Know job expectations  
 • Are you the right fit for the job? • Is the job the right fit for you? • The Interview is the most crucial piece of the puzzle

One way to achieve a new conflict resolution life-style as a Christian church musician is the ability to utilize biblical examples to arm one-self against those who would inflict harm. Ephesians 6:10-20 is a powerful visual presentation of the principles of living in harmony with each other by donning Christ's armor. Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, Spirit, and prayer are seven pieces of armor that represent tools for conflict.

I. **FOCUS ON YOU:**

- A. **Know Thyself Chart:** The first two weapons are revealed in verse 14, "Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness."

<b>How do you see yourself? Strengths</b>	<b>How do other people see you? Strengths</b>	<b>Your job needs</b>
<b>How do you see yourself? Weaknesses</b>	<b>How do other people see you? Weaknesses</b>	<b>Church job needs</b>

B. **Are your needs and expectations clearly defined in the job description?**

1. Mediation agreed if requested?
2. What is the plan for assessments and termination?
3. Code of honesty: bring all concerns to the table and expect honest discussion
4. Hidden agendas?
5. Does the church follow Christian standards and use scripture as a guide?
6. Respect for music ministry?
7. Respect for the musician as minister in own right?
8. What is the plan for assessments and termination?
9. An advocate to help handle prejudice, scapegoating, and mistreatment, if you feel targeted?
  - a. Ethnicity
  - b. Lifestyle orientation
  - c. Age
  - d. Male/female
  - e. Are you prepared to walk if something does not feel right with yourself or the energy of the people and church which might threaten your job stability?

C. **Church needs**

1. What does the church need to know about you within legal boundaries?
2. Work ethic of music minister
3. Faith life of music minister (although that is private information)
4. What kind of working relationship does the church wish from the music minister?

- D. **Before committing to accept God's armor, we must first strip off our own armor.** We often associate the idea of evil with bad people. Moreover, we should recognize our own natural inclinations toward evil. Carla Waterman is very clear in how she explains the dangers of wearing the wrong armor:

Self-protective armor can be forged by our anger whether the links are hot, bitter and defensive or cold, icy and withdrawn. Rather than fleeing to the cross of Christ with our pain, we nurse it, and, in failing to fight the battle of releasing the offending party to Jesus and living hidden within the spaciousness of Christ's righteousness, we build up our own defenses. Sometimes we attack our offender; sometimes we simply choose not to care anymore. Either choice encases us in rigid self-protection that hardens our hearts.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Carla A. Waterman and Pamela K. Kreske, *Songs of Assent* (Carol Stream, IL: WaterManuscripts, 2009), 147.

1. Write a personal mission statement
  - a. By means of writing and presenting a strong personal mission statement, the musician clarifies his or her own commitment level and understanding of servant leadership
  - b. The musician establishes and validates music ministry as hierarchically equal to the status of ordained ministry as opposed to lay ministry status
  
2. Trust yourself and your instincts: In verse 16, The Apostle Paul states, “In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of evil.”<sup>2</sup>
  - a. Ephesians 6:10-11, “Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil.”<sup>3</sup> Gerald Borchert points out in verse ten that Paul talks about Christians portrayed as ancient warriors wearing armor from head to foot. Borchert also stresses that the enemy represents “powerful forces of darkness under the command of the devil.”<sup>4</sup> Thus, the importance of armor and prayer as conflict resolution practices is an essential Christian lifestyle tool.
  - b. Stay awake when your instincts warn you of some ways others might try to control you with mental abuse or inappropriate behavior
    - 1) Cross relations
    - 2) Body language
    - 3) Triangulation
    - 4) Engaging in gossip
    - 5) Scapegoating

## II. FOCUS ON THE JOB:

### A. Verse 14, “Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God’s righteousness.”<sup>5</sup>

1. Trust yourself to respond quickly and objectively in conflictive situations
2. Do your job even if others do not; just do YOUR job
3. Try to maintain professional but friendly relationships
  - a. Discern before accepting lunch or other social invitations one on one (why?)
  - b. Discern carefully if you wish to become a member (why?)
  - c. The job interview (before) is the most important step to access what kinds of conflict one might encounter
    - 1) Be truthful. If you feel you must hide or bend answers, that raises a huge red flag something is wrong
    - 2) Ask multitudes of questions so that you may detect underlying issues and energy that does not sit well with your instincts.
    - 3) Can you see yourself working as equal team ministers honoring each respective field?
    - 4) If the job does not seem healthy, walk away

### B. Tools for Constant self-evaluation: Paul said, “For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared” (v.15).<sup>6</sup>

1. What have I learned and accomplished?
2. Plant educational seeds but try not to drive a change. Let change grow from seeds if it is to happen. Within a year evaluate how many seedlings have sprouted
3. Use theological, biblical, and musical language to increase one’s own comfort level and to help educate others by expanding awareness of why music is: worship, scripture, sermonic, and God inspired
4. Explore writings of Martin Luther and other theologians. Begin collecting quotes and wisdom on the importance of music as worship and theology

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 1, 5-6

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 2, 6.

<sup>4</sup> Gerald L. Borchert, *Worship in the New Testament: Divine Mystery and Human Response* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2008), 137.

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 3, 6-7.

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix 4, 7.

5. Know that conflict can also lead to positive results, including a sense of harmony in team ministry
6. Adopt language that reflects your personal mission statement
  - a. Use beautiful and poetic words when discussing worship: The book of Ephesians may serve as a conflict resolution guide book. Borchert reminds us that Paul's writing enlightens us with poetic language such as riches, grace, glory, faith, knowledge, fullness, filled up, peace, love, armor, power, inheritance, and unity.<sup>7</sup> These positive and energizing descriptions of Christ and the Holy Spirit, encourages us to absorb ways to stay mindful of Christ's love and teachings when we are seeking ways to resolve conflict. Borchert shares another complementary description:
 

The letter to the Ephesians stands as a remarkable handbook of spiritual formation and worship in which Paul described an authentic relationship with God in Christ while rejecting all evil patterns of life. He defined the nature of genuine community spirituality, authentic new Christian morality, and appropriate family relationships as aspects of mature responses to God, all bathed in the context of prayer and worship.<sup>8</sup>
7. Try to temper or eliminate ID tags that encourage hierarchical and judgmental attitudes towards worship and musicians, which often causes split congregations, such as:
  - a. Formal Worship
  - b. Informal Worship
  - c. Praise Worship
  - d. Contemporary Worship
  - e. Folk Mass
  - f. High brow music
  - g. High and Low Church
  - h. Blended worship

### III. WAYS TO WORK IN THE SPIRIT:

The conflicts we face tend to be spiritual indeed. In verse 18, Paul states, "Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere."<sup>9</sup>

- A. **Learn pros and cons about subjects that often come up that can be detrimental to music ministry and overall integrity of worship:**
- B. **Meet with the ministry team before a general discussion to get a perspective on how much the ministry team understands the implications of change without comprehensive understanding and education.**
  1. A meeting might result in leading a respectful, knowledgeable, and honest but positive discussion that is educational and helpful for all sides.
  2. If discussion heats up, "reset" with prayer or a minute of silent reflection or a short and pertinent scripture before continuing.
  3. A mediator might be helpful if both sides are not willing to keep the discussion God-centered instead of self-centered.
  4. Have ideas for anticipating how or if compromise might work. Some examples of potential conflictive subjects include: (Add to the following list)
    - a. Pipe organ versus electronic
    - b. Keyboard versus acoustical piano
    - c. Other acoustic/electric instruments
    - d. Worship space acoustics – why not carpet and pew cushions?
    - e. Praise band verses worship that encompasses a vast history of great music genres
    - f. Language issues:
      - 1) Labels for styles
      - 2) Understanding music terminology
      - 3) Major and minor music – Why is minor bad?
    - g. Secular vs. sacred
    - h. Hymnals vs. screen
    - i. Hymn/song texts vs. music and texts

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<sup>7</sup> Borchert, 137.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 130.

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix 5, 7-8.

- j. Use of technology during worship to display artwork, videos, texts, announcements, quotes
- k. Discussion on what is worship and why certain words, phrases, or concepts might not be loyal to God's expectation of our role as Christian models and shepherd leaders
- l. Casual worship and attire
- m. Loose worship planning
- n. All services are happy and upbeat
- o. Do not change anything
- p. Stay only with what is safe - if an idea does not work the first time – out it goes
- q. Music *enhances* worship and other phrases that do not include music ministry and music as worship in its own right
- r. Why wear robes?
- s. Why children's role in worship is performance oriented with clapping?

#### IV. MINISTRY ISSUES

##### A. **The following ministry issues often occur, regardless of the denomination:**

- 1. Lack of knowledge and training in dealing with stressful church situations
- 2. Lack of clarity regarding job boundaries
- 3. Undervaluing skills and knowledge of music ministers
- 4. Failure to consult with music ministers when implementing major worship decisions or changes
- 5. Difficulty in finding and funding help and guidance for conflict situations
- 6. Ungodly treatment of music ministers which leads to being fired or resigning
- 7. Conflicting views of what styles and music should be used for worship

##### B. **Job Termination: In verse 17, Paul tells us to “Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.”<sup>10</sup>**

- 1. Called in and terminated without discussion or reason– How to react?
- 2. Terminated because of prejudice
- 3. Terminated and threatened if one does not resign and to keep quiet or there will be no severance pay
- 4. Terminated and slandered
- 5. Terminated by scapegoating
- 6. Terminated over power struggle
- 7. Terminated because musician was not co-operative or acted arrogant or aloof – can be just or unjust

##### C. **Work towards the following outcomes:**

- 1. The church musician is directly consulted on all matters pertaining to voluntaries, choral and instrumental music, hymns, liturgy, acoustics, instruments, music spaces, special services, and conflicts dealing with music ministry
- 2. Working as a ministry team, both on the same ministerial level, with mutual respect for one another: helps to diminish conflict issues between ordained ministry and music ministry
- 3. Through learning to be more observant of impending conflict, the musician is able to:
  - a. Recognize signs of conflict earlier (e.g. changes in staff relationships)
  - b. Observe physical changes:
    - 1) Switching order of mailboxes: musician is placed from near the top to the bottom
    - 2) Listing order, or exclusion, of staff in bulletins, newsletter, and other correspondence
    - 3) Moving rehearsal room to smaller space
  - c. Be more confident of self, and trust one's body reactions and signals when conflict is present
- 4. The musician enjoys honest interaction with staff and minister(s)
- 5. The musician is able to build a strong and effective congregational support group
- 6. The musician understands the importance of respecting clergy and staff, even if there is not complete harmony and agreement
- 7. The musician engages in frequent dialogue with the chain of command

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<sup>10</sup> See Appendix 6, 8.

8. The musician utilizes effective conflict resolution strategies for conflict situations
9. The musician is conscious of the church infrastructure and the location of support systems outside the work place
10. The musician is confident, effective, knowledgeable, rational, and objective in times of conflict or job termination
11. The musician uses his or her expertise to defend and support the best solutions rather than the most expedient, popular, or cheapest solutions
12. The musician is able to verbalize and discuss all aspects of an issue in a non-confrontational manner
13. The musician is able to successfully define and articulate the underlying issues implicit in stated issues. Two examples of the difference between (stated) issues and [underlying] issues might include the following:
  - a. Church growth: (change the music to create growth) = [minister does not like or understand high quality church music, even if blended with other high quality music genres; or minister uses music as a scapegoat for why the church is not growing]
  - b. Music genres: (give the people what they want) = [I want to do it my way]

## V. CONCLUSION

It has been my conviction that healthier partnerships between musicians and ministers might evolve if music ministry were decreed as a biblically ordained professional worship ministry equal in status to ordained clergy. Thus if church musicians were respected as ministers (even if un-ordained), future conflicts might be easier to negotiate and resolve. As a result Conflict resolution skills for musicians would also help establish ministry-status because conflict resolution training fulfills one of the skills some ordained clergy have been required to study in seminary.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1

So, I assert that we must take Paul's exhortation seriously when he says, "Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm" (v.13). Cohick points out that the verb "stand" and the phrase "the full armor of God" implies that Paul is "deadly serious about the potential damage the devil can do to believers, and the serious nature of the battle." "Standing firm" becomes a more forceful and serious warning against evil as opposed to in chapter five when Paul stresses walking in Christ.<sup>11</sup> Francis Foulkes agrees with Cohick's highlighting the word "stand" as he quotes H. Moule's visual interpretation: "The present picture is not of a march, or of an assault, but of the holding of the fortress of the soul and of the Church for the heavenly King."<sup>12</sup> Putting on "every piece of armor" is a one-time ritual that, as Cohick says "unlike a seatbelt," one must continuously deploy.<sup>13</sup>

There is much irony in talking about the shield of faith and at the same time serving God in the church where so many Christians are dodging fiery arrows hurled by church leaders and congregations, and alike by ordained and music ministers. Often it seems arrow throwers are hungry for power. Evil actions are usually triggered by competitive behavior, jealousy, and perceived feelings of being threatened personally and professionally. Interestingly, the root of such behavior usually stems from feelings of inadequacy. Cohick reminds us:

Perhaps our desire for success...has blinded us to the real goal of Christian life—obedience. Our obedience matters not only in the world of human interactions but also in the spiritual realm, for it brings glory to God. It show the spiritual forces of evil and darkness that God reigns supreme and that he has the power to do the impossible, namely provide grace for humans to live righteously. Obedience, however, is not simply a matter of the will, for if we think in those terms, then we are on our way to assuming right living is our own doing. We need to be meditating and reflecting at the foot of the cross, the place where sins are forgiven, where we have been saved to do good works in God's grace.<sup>14</sup>

Fred Craddock confirms the theory of inadequacy when he talks about Saul's struggle and anger before his conversion to Paul when, after generations of Jews seeing themselves as God's people, Jesus comes along with the message that his atoning work is not only for the Jews but also for the Gentiles. Together Jews and Gentiles who believe in Jesus Christ are to be incorporated into one family of God, the new society called the church. Saul becomes bitter and lashes out at

<sup>11</sup> Lynn H. Cohick, *Ephesians: A New Covenant Commentary*, (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2010), 152.

<sup>12</sup> Francis Foulkes, *The Letter of Paul to the Ephesians: An Introduction and Commentary* (Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 1989), 178.

<sup>13</sup> Cohick, 153.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

others because of his own blind zealotry for the Jewish faith and uncertainty about Jesus' message for Jews and Gentiles, who believe in him, to share in the same family of God.<sup>15</sup>

## Appendix 2

Carla Waterman suggests that rituals remind us to boldly renounce the devil "The foundational movement from emptiness to fullness begins with an intentional journey from complicated to simple. This journey takes the form of baptismal vows."<sup>16</sup> Practicing a short daily baptismal renewal ritual, including vows renouncing Satan, and praying Ephesians 6:10-18 will instill God's peace, confidence, and receptivity to God's guidance and protection.<sup>17</sup>

The Apostle Paul makes clear that the battles or conflicts tend to be spiritual in nature: "For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places" (Eph 6:12). N.T. Wright suggests that not many people, including ministers, are comfortable addressing the idea of satanic forces. The dangers of evil forces permeate both Old and New Testament Scriptures.<sup>18</sup> C.S. Lewis mentions in his introduction to the *Screwtape Letters*:

There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight.<sup>19</sup>

When evil creeps into church conflict situations, people often express surprise when they hear there is a serious problem, especially if it involves the church leaders. They tend to think that the conflict can be no more than a small disagreement that can easily be fixed or patched.<sup>20</sup> What MacArthur discusses about the havoc evil plays on church bodies is very precise:

The passive aggressive character of Satan drives churches into delusional thinking; that good and evil are not in serious conflict in the supernatural sphere. Living in delusion causes God's people to spiritually stagnate and become lethargic. The armor becomes tarnished and dull: is that not acceptable? God and Satan have no immediate conflicts. Quite the contrary, conflict between Satan and God has not only escalated, in fact Satan's plans to center the conflict on earth have succeeded. Satan has us in a vulnerable place.<sup>21</sup>

## Appendix 3

"The belt is actually a leather apron that protects the midsection and thighs."<sup>22</sup> The belt of truth is explained by Clinton Arnold as referring "to both knowing and appropriating the truth of one's new identity in Christ and developing the practice of speaking and living the truth."<sup>23</sup> Arnold continues to emphasize the repetitious use of the word stand: "God not only makes it possible for believers to stand, but expects them to do so by depending on his divine resources."<sup>24</sup> Sirota adds a coda to Arnold's comments: "Do not allow bullying voices to take over the holy space. Stand up for what is good and right and true."<sup>25</sup>

Lynn Cohick mentions how putting on each segment of armor serves as a memory hook to capsulize Paul's final command for the entire community to take appropriate actions against conflict and evil. Some words and phrases that recapitulate from earlier chapters include, truth, righteousness, peace, the gospel, the word of God, salvation, faith and prayer.<sup>26</sup> Cohick stresses the importance of "growing together in community as each member speaks the truth in love and does not give way to slanderous speech."<sup>27</sup> When one is faced with conflict resolution issues and satanic forces, the word of God (armor) provides the ability to keep an open mind, sharpen listening abilities, communicate in an honest manner, and exercise objective behavior.

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<sup>15</sup> Fred B. Craddock, *The Collected Sermons of Fred B. Craddock* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 243.

<sup>16</sup> Waterman, 47.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

<sup>18</sup> N.T. Wright and Lin Johnson, *Ephesians: 11 Studies for Individuals and Groups* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Connect, 2009), 54.

<sup>19</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Screwtape Letters* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2000), ix.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

<sup>21</sup> John MacArthur, *Ephesians* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1986), 340.

<sup>22</sup> Peter S. Williamson and Mary Healy, *Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 194-195.

<sup>23</sup> Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 451.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 451.

<sup>25</sup> Victoria Ressemeyer Sirota, *Preaching to the Choir: Claiming the Role of Sacred Musician* (New York, NY: Church Pub., 2006), 131.

<sup>26</sup> Cohick, 152.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

Mark Nation tells us besides armor and prayer, if people in conflict listen to each other, new information and insights may arise from mutual dialogue.<sup>28</sup> The process of taking time to talk and listen utilizes inter-<sup>29</sup> and intrapersonal<sup>30</sup> skills. In turn, these skills nurture the process of resolution to achieve, as Nation shares, hope, trust, freedom from guilt, forgiveness, and respect.<sup>31</sup>

#### Appendix 4

It is good to approach conflict with the expectation that peace and harmony can prevail and will serve the greater good of God's community. Steagald adds more ideas for how to walk a peaceful life journey: How do we live in peace with God and one another? We come to the Table. We come to the altar. We pray for one another and not just about one another. We make many confessions and repent. We offer forgiveness. We do not think of ourselves more highly than we ought, and we do not think of others less. We remind ourselves, again and again, that we are all at the Table by Christ's invitation alone: we receive this grace only by his grace. I can look to no one's heart save my own; I can examine no one's life but mine; I can repent for no one else's sin. I am late to this awareness, but the wisdom is ancient.<sup>32</sup>

Returning to the whole reason for training church musicians in conflict resolution skills for working in the church, we must ask the question of how do we implement the tools, the peace, and the armor when the church itself fails to recognize the huge conflict it creates among people who serve in leadership or volunteer capacities? Nation affirms that the church is afraid to do Jesus' work. Church leaders avoid dealing with violence by not teaching how to confront wrong-doing, ignoring and not recognizing and fighting evil, not modeling contemplative rituals, not teaching ways to deal with healthy conflict and reaching resolutions, and not striving to become a "community of peace."<sup>33</sup> If churches wish to be peacemakers, worship has to be, in the words of MacArthur, "the communal cultivation of an alternative construction of society and of history."<sup>34</sup> The role of Church communities should demonstrate that conflict resolution is both a social science and a set of skills that are vital for churches and communities to learn how to become peacemakers. "The bottom line," states MacArthur, "is this: at its core, peacemaking is not a set of skills, of course, but a way of life....peacemaking is a virtue among Christians."<sup>35</sup>

#### Appendix 5

Paul uses conflict resolution skills to ward off evil through active use and constant awareness of seven pieces of godly armor engraved in our being. In summary (vv. 18-20), he commands us to "Pray in the Spirit...Stay alert...be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere...pray for me...Ask God to give me the right words... pray that I will keep on speaking boldly for him, as I should...." If we use the entire Ephesians passage as preventative conflict resolution tools both personally and corporately, we encourage each other to stay alert and seek godly ways to engage and support musicians and ordained ministers to spread the gospel as team ambassadors. Since music ministry spreads the gospel through music it is important to prayerfully choose high quality music and texts so that sermons and musical offerings support and together strengthen the proclamation of the Gospel to the highest level.

Steagald states:

The basic premise is this: The beginning of prayer is to look hard at ourselves in light of God's will and purposes. We try to discern where our wills and God's are aligned, where they are at odds, and we pray to bring them into unison, or at least into harmony. That is what I am doing here at this time of day: I am trying to see, or begin to see, where God is working in me, or would, and how I might make God's work in and through me easier through repentance and devotion.<sup>36</sup>

Paul's advice to put on armor goes hand in hand with using the armor to meet privately with someone who has shot an arrow. Very seldom do musicians take initiative to meet with ministers, and likewise with ministers, when conflict occurs because musicians often feel intimidated, fearful, or guilty, even if they feel they have done nothing wrong. Some catch words and phrases in this chapter of Paul were the following: "pray in the Spirit, at all times," "every occasion," "stay alert," and "be persistent in your prayers for all believers." Some catch words and phrases from Steagald were "prayer is to look hard at ourselves," "God's will," "bring God's and our will into unison," "discern," "repentance and devotion," and "God is working in me." Both Paul and Steagald address effective conflict resolution strategies. Steagald's idea of staying alert helps

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<sup>28</sup> Mark Thiessen Nation, "Toward a Theology for Conflict Transformation: Learnings from John Howard Yoder," Goshen College, 54, accessed April 30, 2012, <http://www.goshen.edu/mqr/pastissues/jan06nation.html>.

<sup>29</sup> Interpersonal skills relate to other people.

<sup>30</sup> Intrapersonal skills relate to one's inner thoughts.

<sup>31</sup> Nation, 54.

<sup>32</sup> Tom Steagald, *Praying for Dear Life: [a Reason to Rise, Strength for the Day, Courage to Face the Night]* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2006), 74.

<sup>33</sup> Nation, 54.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 52-53.

<sup>36</sup> Steagald, 44.

one to observe when conflict is present. Paul's belt of truth helps church musicians and ministers to discern what form of sin is being committed.

Lastly, Peter Williamson refers back to verses ten and eleven and concludes that most likely "Paul seems to envision prayer as the seventh and final piece of equipment (in the Bible, seven is a number that symbolizes completeness)...prayer functions both defensively and offensively."<sup>37</sup> He also stresses that when one prays in the Spirit one prays in union with the Spirit who comes to help us in our weakness.<sup>38</sup>

#### Appendix 6

Uncertain people tend to become persecutors. Persecutors in the church may and do sometimes wear false collars. They struggle with internal battles. Craddock adds, those battles point to "the struggle from head to heart. I know that the longest trip we ever make is the trip from head to heart....And until that trip is complete we are in great pain. We might even lash out at others."<sup>39</sup> Church leaders who go through such inner struggles tend to replace their shields with arrows to seek revenge. Christian servant leaders, however, who polish their armor with conflict resolution skills are led by the Holy Spirit to disarm the arrows of revenge. Thus, in verse 17, Paul can say: "Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

The helmet of salvation equips Christians to ward off all evil forces. Protective headgear protects our thoughts. If we keep our helmet on at all times we will not get hit or bruised in ways that mar our discerning abilities. When we learn how to deal with conflict through social, scientific, and biblical ways (the sword), our helmet continues to nurture confidence and ability. We place ourselves in the Lord's hands, manipulate the sword of the Spirit, and act in Jesus' name to conquer evil energy.

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<sup>37</sup> Williamson and Healy, 200.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Craddock, 244.