

September 2, 2019

By Rick Boxx

TRUSTING IN GOD'S DIRECTION, NO MATTER WHAT

When Larry was CEO of an information systems company, someone filed an unwarranted lawsuit against the company. Along the way, even though Larry's company was innocent of any wrongdoing, many people urged him to settle the lawsuit. The cost of mounting a defense, even if unjustified, as well as the time defending the case would require, made an out of court settlement the most reasonable course of action, they contended.

Rather than conceding to those recommendations, Larry prayed for wisdom and direction. As he did that, God impressed upon Larry that rather than settling, he should defend the company because it was innocent. The prolonged legal process did cost millions of dollars in legal fees, but the company was ultimately vindicated and cleared of the wrongful claims.

In the meantime, God blessed and prospered the business so much that the legal fees became insignificant in size. Reflecting back on that troublesome and stressful time, Larry concluded that the fact his company had thrived in the midst of great adversity was a reflection of God's favor for obedience.

Repeatedly in the Scriptures we read that we should seek God-inspired counsel when confronted with difficult decisions. For instance, *Proverbs 15:22 states, "Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."* However, that does not guarantee that all the advice we receive is necessarily correct. We need to consult the Lord directly, and when He leads us in ways contrary to the counsel we have received, we still must do as He instructs.

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Close, trusted friends are an asset, without question. But they can never replace and should not supplant the counsel of the One we should trust the most. Jesus spoke to His followers and admonished them about the importance of remaining close to Him: *If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you" John 15:7).* The Bible often underscores the importance of having complete trust in God:

Trust even when we don't understand. Sometimes God calls us to act in counterintuitive ways, as Larry did in rejecting the recommendation to settle the unwarranted suit. *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6).*

Trust even when we fear disaster. Emotions may cause us to seek the fastest, seemingly easiest solutions to pressing problems. However, belief that God has our best interests at heart should encourage us to look to Him, rather than at our circumstances. *"For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future'" (Jeremiah 29:11).*

Trust even when God's way doesn't seem practical. If God is leading you to take a stand, trust in Him, even when others disagree. *"Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun" (Psalm 37:4-5).*

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Reflection/Discussion Question

1. Do you understand why people urged Larry to seek an out of court settlement, even though he knew his company had done no wrong? Why do you think they recommended he take that course of action?
2. How easy – or difficult – do you think it is to make decisions the run counter to the seemingly well-intended counsel you are receiving from people around you? Explain your answer.
3. In the case described, Larry prayed about what he should do and then felt impressed to act contrary to the advice he had received. Have you ever done something like this? How would you go about seeking God’s wisdom and will regarding a difficult challenge you were facing?
4. What does it feel like to “not lean on your own understanding,” as Proverbs 3:5-6 instructs? Can you think of a time when you had to do this, even if with reluctance? Describe the situation and what its outcome. What did you learn from it?

NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more about this subject, consider the following passages:

Psalm 37:1-7,34; Proverbs 11:14, 12:5, 12:26, 18:24, 19:20, 24:5-6

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