

*Land mines: Which is better – to go around them, or to set them off?*

## I. THE REALITY OF OPPOSITION

A. When ministering for God – there will be opposition

1. **Matthew 10:16** *Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves:*

- a. Outside opposition: Authorities/council officers/Police
- b. Religious people: Trying to trap you into conversations they will use against you
- c. New Converts: There will be difficult conversations about emotional/tricky subjects

2. Some men have no ability to maneuver around these

- a. They don't try and get around opposition – they only tackle it straight on
- b. They view life as a fight: They gladly or openly get into conflicts – as big/loud as possible!  
1. *Standing for righteousness!* 2. *Standing up for Jesus!*

c. They view any conversation as "I had to tell the truth"

B. The results of this approach are not good

- 1. They make opposition worse; *They tick people off so it becomes personal – they're offended*
- 2. They get into open conflicts before it is time
- 3. They blow people away by the way they speak/when they speak; *No more hearing!*

## II. BEING WISE AS SERPENTS

A. Jesus gives a wiser option: **Matthew 10:16** *...be ye therefore wise as serpents...*

1. Speaking about the ability to maneuver

- a. A snake will try to evade trouble first – rather than strike; Will try and get around trouble
- b. Wise: *To rein in or curb*: Rein in your pride/your impulses/your mouth!

2. When facing opposition – maneuver wisely

a. **Wisdom in outreach**

1. Asking permission: Sometimes you are better off not asking (other times you have to!)

b. **When facing opposition with authorities**

1. Police/authorities: You don't have to pick a fight/rail on them

a. *Story: Police come – one guy tells them this is the last song/keeps 'em talking while another pulls altar call*

c. **When facing opposition in the church**

1. Pick the wisest time/place; Not in front of others/not at church if possible

a. *Launceston: Religious guy opposing – time to go. I'll tell him at church. Don't be foolish – he'll yell & make a scene & his wife will cry. Meet him at work – told him. Never saw him again – had no problems.*

## III. BEING HARMLESS AS DOVES

A. Some conversations are difficult because of the subject; Emotional/painful/upsetting

1. Some people can only say everything – bluntly; Unnecessarily offensive

- a. *Is Grandma in hell? Absolutely – she's frying right now!*
- b. *What about my Homosexual brother? Abomination – they're gonna fry!*

B. 2 issues:

1. **The issue of timing**: Sometimes the person isn't ready to hear what you have to say!

a. **John 16:12** *I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.*

b. **1 Corinthians 3:2** *I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.*

1. *A snake chooses it's time to strike*

2. *MH: Do I have to stop drinking to be a Christian? Will I go to hell if drink alcohol? Knew it was a deal breaker. I told him: When it's time to stop drinking – God can tell you. He got over it – kept coming.*

2. **How you say something**: **Matthew 10:16** *and harmless as doves*. Don't have to say it brutally

- a. The point is not deception/lying – it is maneuvering for the best outcome
- b. Some people can't do this: They think it's compromising

3. The point is what's best for this person?