

How Do You Respond to Personal Slander?

by Conrad Murrell

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“A Shiggaion of David, which he sang to the LORD concerning the words of Cush, a Benjaminite. O Lord my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me: Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver. O Lord my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands; if I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy:) Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honor in the dust.” - Psalm 7:1-5

The psalmist finds himself in a position we all commonly share at times. He is being slandered. His words and actions have been misrepresented and his character maligned.

He wisely makes his appeal before God. “In thee do I put my trust.” How different this is from most of us who, when slandered, go about refuting it in the court of men. If it is false, God will stand by us, and men can do no harm. If it is true, then the comfort and vindication of men is a hollow victory; for the Judge of all the earth knows our guilt; and He will avenge.

The godly man confesses his vulnerability. He does not foolishly trust in his own strength or the strength of his allies. He well knows if he draws not his help from God there will be “none to deliver.” He makes the confession of the redeemed who, apart from the love of Christ, are “accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”

Then the accused does a most prudent thing. While affirming his innocence, he does not fail to consider the possibility of truth in the allegations against him. If we would be honest, then we have nothing to fear from objective examination. The truth of the matter is, when people accuse us, there is usually some truth in what they say. And while the whole of the slander may be a lie, we must not shirk to acknowledge what is true, and be rebuked and corrected.

Thus, personal slander can be an occasion for soul searching, for personal discipline, and for learning to trust the Lord in the face of popular rejection.