How to Make Decisions?

***B***elieve ***M***ightily ***o***n ***C***hrist or ***B***lock/Backup, ***M***ove, ***o***r ***C***apture/**C**ounter

Another basic principle in chess is **when a piece is under attack; some kind of action needs to be taken.** Many people are watching the ‘Christian’ to see how we ‘*act*’, but something more important is how we '*react’*' to the problems that come our way. Yes, being a Christian does not give you a magic cloak to shield you from the evil and sin of the world. In the ***Book of Job***, Satan says Job is so faithful to God because Job has the ‘Blessings’ of God. God tells Satan Job is faithful because he believes in God. Satan is given permission by God to take away Job’s family, his wealth, and his health; but Job praises God and remains faithful even when things seem very bad. How we handle problems is an important part of living the Christian life. The story of Joseph in the **Book of Genesis** is another great example how God shines through even in adversity.

**The three questions you always need to be asking are:**

WHAT IS BEING ATTACKED RIGHT NOW?

WHAT IS GOING TO BE ATTACKED?

WHAT CAN I ATTACK (OR DO) TO AVOID BEING ATTACKED?

Once you realize danger is always present, you have a choice of what to do about it. If you never ask what the danger is, you cannot take action to correct it.

Sin is like that; it attacks you but you do not recognize it.

You can only recognize sin once you recognize God (What is Good).

**Once you can tell right from wrong, you must decide what to do about it!**

***Doing nothing is an option***. If you choose to ignore the problem exists, there will be consequences. A person who is sick and does not get treatment may not get better. A person who knows they are sinful and does not seek the treatment will die (physically and eternally).

Some people have never learned the appropriate ways of handling problems. Have you ever seen a person start throwing or breaking things as a way to handle a problem? Some chess players have been known to knock over the board and throw pieces at times of loss and frustration. Being a Christian does not mean you will have an easy walk through life. What it gives you is the knowledge and comfort that we alone cannot handle problems, but Jesus has the solutions.

 **No matter how big the problems are, Jesus is bigger!**

There are three choices of action: **B**lock/Back-up, **M**ove, or **C**apture/**C**ounter!

BLOCK / Back-Up (protect)

Blocking means to put something between you and the threating danger. You could also Back-Up or protect and defend the piece with another piece. (But this might make a weakness or leave something else in danger. (This is sometimes called a ‘Pin’).

Does this make the problem go away?

NO! It only means it is not as immediate a danger as it was, but it is still there. You will still have to face the problem sometime.

 Block out the bad TV.

 Block out bad reading materials.

 Block out the bad material on the Internet.

 Block out bad thoughts that enter your mind.

MOVE

Moving out of danger is an option.

When there is no way to block the threat, move away from the danger.

 Move away from the gossip and bad talk.

 Move away from inappropriate places.

 Moving may get you out of a problem, but it may make a weakness or another problem somewhere else.

Sometimes you cannot run away from your problems and need to face them and the consequences.

Or....

CAPTURE/Counter

Capture the piece that is doing the attack.

Be proactive.

Go on the offensive.

 Know what you know and defend it.

 Don't run away from the truth.

 A strong offense is a good defense.

Make a difference.

 Get involved with a mission project.

 Join a Bible study class.

 Help bring the Word of God to a broken and lost world.**How do you plan a move?**

 **Ask the KEY questions?**

 **What is under attack?**

 **What is about to be attacked?**

 **What can I attack?**

***These questions need to be asked before every move you make***. Then, before you make the move you must visualize what the board will look like and ask yourself the questions again for the new changed position. As you get better at the game, you will be able to “see” further ahead and thus be able to avoid 'bad' moves. Chess is a very exciting game because every move changes the interaction between the other pieces. There are consequences and rewards for every move. Seeing the consequences of incorrect moves can teach you when you do not plan, you are planning to fail.

**You are responsible for the decisions you make!**

On the chess board, when the King is attacked, action must be taken.

When your other pieces are in danger, there is no warning. However, when the King is being attacked, this is called ***CHECK.*** At one time it was customary to inform your opponent when you placed him in check. You would simple say, 'Check'. This was short for *'Check your King, it is in danger*.'

Under current rules of chess, you no longer have to give your opponent the courtesy of announcing Check. It is up to her to notice she is in danger.

When a King is in CHECK, he must get out of the danger by:

Blocking out the danger with another piece (you cannot back-up the King)

 Moving the King to a square where he will not be under attack, or

 Capturing the piece that is attacking him.

If he does not see the threat and does not make a move to get out of danger, you must then inform him that he is in “check” and he must make another move.

***You never capture the King or remove the King from the board***.

*If it is possible, he should move the original piece he touched, even if it may not be the best way to get out of the danger.*

*(This is called the “Touch-Move” or “Touch-Piece” rule.)*

***CHECK***

The condition where the King is in danger and **could be** captured on the next move if he does not take action.

A King must always be given the opportunity to get out of Check.

***CHECKMATE***

The condition where the King is in check and cannot get out of danger. ***Checkmate ends the game***. The battle is over.

***It cannot be checkmate if the King is not in check!***

***STALEMATE***

The condition where the King **is not** in check but where there are **no legal moves** that can be made *anywhere on the board* that will not put the King in danger.

***A King may never place himself in danger!***

The game of chess ends when a King has been checkmated.

* It is not necessary to say ‘Checkmate’, but not many players cannot resist the satisfaction from stating the final result of all the effort that went into the game.
* **It doesn’t matter how many pieces you have taken or how many great moves you have made**.
* It doesn’t matter if you were just about ready to checkmate your opponent. **As soon as one player has been checkmated, the game is over.**

Checkmate is the final statement that signifies the end of the conflict.

Christ also had the final word in the conflict over evil. After the last sin had been paid for, with His dying words he said, “*Tetelestai*” or “It is finished!”

 (John 19:30).

**Sometimes Jesus is called the ‘WAY MAKER’ He makes a way when there does not seem to be any other way!**

**Thank you Jesus for paying the penalty for my sins. I know there is nothing I can ever do to save myself and that I need you to be my savior. Thank you for finishing the game and giving yourself for me. I do not deserve it, but by your grace, I too can have the peace that comes from knowing you.**

**I will make you my Lord and follow you forever. Amen.**