

# Are You Entangled?

**Introduction.** There is a South American vine called the “Matador” or “killer.” It begins at the foot of a tree, and as it grows, the Matador vine relentlessly winds its way around the tree, makes its way to the top, and slowly strangles the tree.

What you are tolerating may seem harmless while it’s just “small,” but if it is allowed to grow, it will clasp itself around your heart and spiritually contaminate and kill your soul. One of the real and present dangers that saints face is entanglement.

The Bible warns against unbelievers becoming entangled in 2 Timothy 2:3-4 and 2 Peter 2:20-22. “Entangle” is translated from a Greek word that only occurs in these two places in the New Testament. “Entangle” means to “weave in,” “enfold,” or “envelope.” The noun form is used of twisting a crown of thorns (Matthew 27:29) and braiding the hair (1 Peter 3:3).

While both of our texts warn the Christian not to be entangled, they warn about being entangled in two different ways. We want to share what the Bible says to disciples about entanglement, and suggest how we can avoid becoming entangled.

## ***I. Entangled In The Affairs Of The World***

- A. Paul, in 2 Timothy 2:3-4, warns against being entangled in the affairs of life. “Affairs” refer to the preoccupations of life that are not necessarily sinful in and of themselves: work, school, extracurricular activities, sports, recreational activities, social functions, hobbies, vacations, etc.
- B. These are the ones Jesus described as springing up and the thorns coming up with them (Luke 8:7, 14). Paul said, “For me to live is Christ” (Philippians 1:21). The one entangled says, “For me to live is Christ, plus all these other things ...”
- C. We should not be distracted by life in such a way that we do not give ourselves wholeheartedly to our Commander and His orders.
  1. Assembling with the saints is not elective. Teaching our children the Bible, visiting those in need, and restoring the fallen are not optional.
  2. There’s simply no excuse for planning and regularly allowing the secular to keep us from these duties.
  3. It shouldn’t matter that Sunday is the only day off you get. It shouldn’t matter that the weather is pretty enough to go to the lake. It shouldn’t matter that this is the only chance little Johnny will get to go to state. Jesus rejected those who excused themselves from His service (Luke 14:16-20, 24).
- D. You’re a soldier — and you have to recognize that being a Christian is not a playground; it is a battlefield. It is a battlefield where battles are being won — and lost (Ephesians 6:12; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5). Jesus did not ask that His Father take Christians out of the world, but that He take the world out of Christians (cp. John 17:17, 19).

## ***II. Entangled In The Pollutions Of The World***

- A. Peter’s warning in 2 Peter 2:20-22 is against becoming “again entangled.” This is something that we were in, got out of, and now possibly will entangle ourselves in again.

1. The writer tells us earlier in the verse what this is — “pollutions of the world.” This is “foulness,” or anything that makes us unclean or unholy. This is sin!
  2. It is important that you recognize that the one entangled is not a Christian who, in ignorance or weakness, slips, commits an act of sin, and quickly and remorsefully repents.
    - a) This is one who is “overcome” and who “turns from the way of righteousness.” Think of “to weave;” this is not a loose thread — this is a part of the fabric.
    - b) This is someone who walks in darkness (1 John 1:6). This is someone who has given themselves to a habitual or continual action.
- B. It is wrong for Christians to become entangled in this way, whether young or old. This includes all forms of evil:
1. Sins of action including sexual immorality, public/private drinking, dancing, gambling, pornography, tobacco/drug use, lying, cheating, gossiping, and forsaking the assembly.
  2. Sins of attitude including pride, envy, jealousy, anger, wrath, bitterness, unforgiveness, unmercifulness, and being without natural affection. As it pertains to our religious services, failing to involve the heart in prayer, the Lord’s Supper, singing, and giving are sins as well.

### **III. How To Avoid Entanglement**

- A. Please the Lord (Galatians 1:10).
1. Paul instructed that one doesn’t entangle himself because he wants to please the one who enlisted him. Of course, for us, that’s God and Jesus.
  2. Is that who you really want to please? Did you obey Christ so that you wouldn’t go to hell, but you’ve turned around and entangled yourself?
- B. Guard your heart and look up (Proverbs 4:23; Colossians 3:2-4).
1. It’s not easy to say no to yourself.
    - a) Life is like walking by a cookie package when you are on a diet. You think, “Maybe I’ll just have one.” Soon, you’re back where you started.
    - b) Instead of having a divided heart, pray to God like David for a united heart (Psalm 86:11).
  2. How did Jesus do it?
    - a) When faced with deep hunger after fasting forty days, He was tempted by the devil to turn stones into bread (Matthew 4:1-4).
    - b) He could have said, “No,” but He did more. He rebutted the devil with the scriptures (Deuteronomy 8:3). His focus was not on the earthly, but the deeper, more spiritual heavenly. He pleased His Father (John 8:29).
- C. Put the kingdom of God first (Matthew 6:33).
1. Entanglement may be caused by a low level of commitment and dedication to the Lord, or a distorted sense of priorities.
  2. It’s ironic how some remind us of the commitment they’ve made to work, the team, the club, etc., and how dependent others are on them, but they forgot the commitment they made to seek the kingdom first and to provoke their brethren to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24).

3. We don't have to make so many secular commitments or fill our calendars with secular appointments. We choose to do these activities! It's our fault if we consistently do not say "no" to the secular and "yes" to the spiritual.
- D. Put sin to death and don't be its servant (Romans 6:7, 12, 16-17).
1. Peter uses the vivid pictures of a dog returning to his own vomit and a sow returning to the mire to help us see how repulsive it is for a Christian to turn back to sin (cp. Matthew 12:43-45).
  2. If you have escaped and are again entangled, then God is calling you to leave defilement behind (2 Corinthians 6:16-17; James 5:16).
  3. Everyone has a part to play in untangling the entangled: elders are to warn; preachers are to rebuke; and, members are to encourage the fainthearted (1 Thessalonians 5:14).
- E. Take time to be holy (1 Peter 1:16) and choose the good part (Luke 10:42).
1. We live in a world where busyness is king. We're so busy glorifying how busy we are, we miss out on experiencing the moments that matter. Busyness crushes our soul, and we should focus more on reducing the number of events on our calendar than adding to it.
  2. These are definite decisions (Joshua 24:15; 1 Kings 18:21). This is the battle that you'll have to fight in your heart — and you must be victorious!

**Conclusion.** This sermon has only one purpose: to warn you not to be entangled — not in the affairs of this world, not in defiling sin. Both will prevent you from producing mature fruit.

If you're entangled — too busy to take care of spiritual affairs, weak for a lack of spiritual nourishment and exercise, neglectful of your spiritual duties because you "do not have the time," then examine and reorder your life. Don't let the secular strangle the spiritual. Don't be unfruitful. Don't be lukewarm. Don't be spiritually dead.

There will be a time where all the world's elements will not mean anything! If you are "polluted with sin" and haven't escaped or become entangled again, you can leave it behind now by obeying the gospel or confessing your sin.

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[https://www.preceptaustin.org/are\\_you\\_entangled](https://www.preceptaustin.org/are_you_entangled)

<https://newlife.com/habits-that-strangle/>

<https://www.facebook.com/UnveiledMinistries/posts/the-south-american-vine-called-matador-is-a-vine-that-begins-at-the-foot-of-a-tr/732171586945604/>

[https://nosidebar.com/quiet-life/?fbclid=IwAR3P2gWSMwML9o2dZn-H51Im\\_pZvOerYtHR8S1Tcms3S-VzK-zNH3rBONu0](https://nosidebar.com/quiet-life/?fbclid=IwAR3P2gWSMwML9o2dZn-H51Im_pZvOerYtHR8S1Tcms3S-VzK-zNH3rBONu0)