

# (I) the Gospel of God's Great Love - Part 7 (Kicking Against the Pricks)

by Robert Wurtz II

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*God's love and desire for loving fellowship with man motivates Him to strive with man, even using physical pain to bring about repentance.*

**Scripture:** Genesis 6:3, Judges 3:31, Acts 9:5, Hebrews 12:5, 2 Peter 3:9

**Topics:** "Gods Guidance", "Holy Spirit"

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## Description

Robert Wurtz II delves into the insightful pictures the Bible uses to express how God strives with man, likening it to a farmer plowing a field with oxen and using ox goads to direct them. Just as the plowman uses the goad to guide the ox in the right direction, God uses various measures, including physical pain, to lead man to repentance out of His love for them. The story of Saul of Tarsus, who was urged to stop kicking against the goads by Jesus, serves as a powerful illustration of rebelling against God's Holy Spirit and the consequences of resisting God's guidance.

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## Transcript

In Genesis 6:3 we read, And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. The Bible uses some insightful pictures to express how God strives with man. One of them is that of a farmer plowing a field with oxen and how the plowman directs the ox to make sure the rows are being cut in a straight line.

Plows had attached to them on either side what is known as an ox goad. These were very sharp pieces of iron or wood that were attached to a device that the plowman could control. When he wanted to go 'left' he would press that goad into the right side of the ox causing pain in the side. This was much more than a 'thorn in the side' as it was very difficult for an ox to resist this measure without hurting itself. To give you an idea an ox-goad was used by a man named Shamgar in Judges 3:31 to slay 600 men. So this was very painful and difficult to resist.

When Jesus appeared to Saul of Tarsus that was persecuting and killing Christians He made an interesting statement, "Saul, Saul why do you persecute me- it is hard for you to kick against the pricks (goads)." This was a proverb of sorts to denote rebelling against God's Holy Spirit. God was working desperately to get Saul on the right track, but like a stubborn ox he was hurting himself all the more to maintain his own course.

But God said he would not always deal with man in this way. He seeks to get them to repent by various measures including physical pain. All in an attempt to bring man to repentance. Why? Because He loves man. He knows the finality of rebellion and desires to bring man back into loving fellowship. This would end at 120 years for man. God demonstrated through the preaching of Noah that man will rebel and procrastinate until their hearts are utterly hardened beyond hope. Apparently the cutoff for rebellion is 120 years. Beyond that rebellious man is only heaping judgment upon his/her head.

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