

# Celeste Solum – “Wicked Problems”



Celeste Bishop Solum

## Introduction

This talk by Celeste Bishop Solum about *Wicked Problems* is confirmed by a Wikipedia article entitled, [Wicked Problems](#). The text was transcribed from her YouTube. Someday Celeste's YouTube may be taken down, but as long as I am around, this text will remain online.

The **bold emphasis** in the text is mine. I added some clarifications to the text that you won't find in the video, such as links to external resources.

## Celeste Bishop Solum's Bio



Celeste Bishop Solum

Celeste has worked as a contractor for Homeland Security and FEMA. Her training and activations include the infamous day of 911, flood and earthquake operations, mass casualty exercises, and numerous other operations. Celeste is FEMA certified and has completed the Professional Development Emergency Management Series. Read [more about Celeste from her website](#).

## Celeste Solum – “Wicked Problems” in Text Format

Hi, this is Celeste and this is the Celestial Report for July 23rd, 2020. And we are going to discuss something that I learned about maybe 10 years ago, and I haven't talked a lot about it, but I think these are the days, and it's called “wicked problems”.

So why are we witnessing wickedness across the globe? So I am going to humbly present to you that it is a **social tool called “wicked problems”**. And they have been loosed upon the earth to prepare for the evil global tyrant.

So in planning and policy, a wicked problem is a problem that is difficult or impossible to solve because it is either incomplete, it's contradictory and it changes requirements, and it's often very difficult to recognize. It refers to an idea or a problem that cannot be fixed and that there is no single solution to the problem. And it being wicked denotes resistance to the resolution such as the masks, rather than being an evil. I would propose to you that it is an evil, but that's what the social engineers say that there is resistance to the various solutions that they are proposing.

So another definition of it is that it is a problem whose social complexity means that it has **no stopping point**. That's interesting. Moreover, because of the complex interdependencies, for instance, the one health agenda which is multi-discipline, **the effort to solve one aspect of the wicked problem may reveal or create other problems**. So let's take for instance the current pathogen. If you treat it one way it may actually cause a plethora of other health problems. And so that is an example of a wicked problem.

So the phrase was originally used in social planning, and it was introduced by a [C. West Churchman](#), how ironic, in 1967, in management science. And it was in relation to operations research. And remember, we're operationalizing everything to inform the manager in what respect our solutions have failed to tame his wicked problem. And in 1973 there was a wicked problem, a treatise, and they were trying to tame it and solve problems such as mathematics, chess, and puzzle-solving. They were using those types of things to try and solve these wicked problems, but it didn't work.

So what are the characteristics of a wicked problem? So there is no definitive formulation for a wicked problem. So wicked problems **they don't have any stopping rules, so they can go on for in perpetuity forever**. The **solutions to wicked problems are not true and false but only better or worse**.

So think of our election system right now. We have to choose between the lesser of two evils, not really absolutes. **Absolutes such as true and false are disappearing from our culture and from the world**. There is no immediate or ultimate test of a solution to a wicked problem. And every solution to a wicked problem is a one-shot operation because there is no opportunity to learn by trial and error because every attempt counts significantly. That's because it's all metric out, and you either get it right the first time or you're out.

Wicked problems do not have an enumerable or exhaustive describability or a

set of potential solutions. There is not a well-described set of permissible operations that could be incorporated into the plan. Think of it as like a cake and you're making a cake mix and it calls for water and eggs and that type of stuff and then you beat it. There's nothing like that for a wicked problem. Wicked problems are **essentially unique**. And we hear that term being used over and over again, unique, unique, **unique, especially with global governance**. Every wicked problem can be considered a symptom of another problem, so that's the interdependencies that we were just talking about.

And then there is a discrepancy representing the wicked problem that can be explained in numerous ways. And that choice of an explanation determines the nature of the problem's resolution. So say for instance, if climate change, if you're on one side of the debate, you would explain it one way, if you're on the other side of the climate debate, you would explain it a different way. And a social planner has no right to be wrong. They are liable for the consequences of the actions that they generate. And with this great call for social and civil activism right now, what the young people especially, and people that are heeding the call to action, is they don't realize that there are consequences for the actions that they generate. So later Conklin (Conklin, Jeffrey (2006). Dialogue mapping : building shared understanding of wicked problems. Chichester, England: Wiley Publishing. ISBN 978-0-470-01768-5) generalized some other concepts of the wickedness in their planning and their policies.

So it's not well understood until after the solution or formulation of the solution. So they're basically putting the cart before the horse. And once again it doesn't have a stopping rule, it is not right or wrong, it is novel and unique. So **whenever you hear the words novel and unique you know you are dealing with a wicked problem**.

Every solution for the wicked problem is a one-shot operation, and stakeholders have different worldviews and different frames for understanding the problem. And the constraints of that problem are subject to the resources needed to solve the problem over time. And the problem is never solved definitively. It always a living document, it is always changing.

So what are some examples of wicked problems that you're probably seeing in the headlines today? They can be economic, they can be environmental, they can be political, they can even be religious. There are also climate change, natural hazards, health care system, (interesting!) aids, epidemic, the novel coronavirus, international drug trafficking, nuclear weapons, waste, and also social justice. Those are all wicked problems. And so they are identified and worked out in knowledge management, business strategies, and even space debris.

So biblically speaking what does wicked mean when we encounter it in the bible? So basically wicked in the Strongs (concordance) is Strong 7563 which is *arussia* which means wicked, criminal, evil, evil men, offender, ungodly, *arisha* which means wickedness, evildoer, the guilty. And then from Ezekiel 3: 18 and 19 we learn a few additional things, that if Ezekiel fails to give the warning to the wicked, and this is the Lord speaking:

Ezekiel 3:18 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

And this, my friends, is why we need to be telling people about the Quantum Dot, and the Hydrogel the potential link with the Mark (of the Beast) the deeper spiritual implications. And we cannot be shy. We must be bold, we must be courageous, because otherwise if we do not warn of this wickedness especially to the ones that are perishing, their blood is gonna be on our hand. So therefore as watch men and women we must warn the wicked. Because you were wicked you will die physically by divine judgment if you do not repent. God does not speak directly to the wicked, but He speaks to the wicked through you and I. You receive the word from God that such and such a wicked man or city or nation is going to die physically as a result of divine judgment, and if you fail to warn him or the city or whatever so that they have an opportunity to repent from their wicked way, that wicked one will die physically because of their sin, and the verse goes on, but his blood I will require at your hand. And this means that your life would also be forfeit.

This does not mean that you will lose your salvation. Salvation is not based upon works. The issue here is your physical life. And so warning the wicked was not in order that he might attain salvation, but to save his physical life. And then there is a change in verse 19.

Ezekiel 3:19 Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

So basically that you will live physically but the wicked person shall die in his iniquity. On the other hand, if you warn the wicked one and he does not repent, he will die physically as a result of the Divine judgment. The wicked one will die whether he is warned or not. The distinction is not how warning affects the wicked one who does not repent, the distinction is strictly on how warning a wicked one affects you, and as basically a prophet of Jesus Christ, because you, the revelation of Jesus Christ is prophecy, you deliver your soul.

We can find wickedness in,

Isaiah 57:21 There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

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Psalms 92:7 ¶When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever:

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Isaiah 57:20 But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

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Psalm 37:38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.

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Proverbs 21:12 The righteous man wisely considereth the house of the wicked: but God overthroweth the wicked for their wickedness.

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Psalms 94:3 LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?

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Proverbs 29:12 If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked.

Psalm 119:53, and Job 21:7. So there's a lot of different places that we can find wickedness. So the term is often in a general sense of wrong, and specifically to evil, and it's always or more often used in its active form as in mischief. So some other things to just keep in mind about wickedness are that it denotes a perversity of the mind which by the natural man surrenders himself to evil impulses. And this comes to us from Proverbs 15:26, Romans 1:29, and Psalms 10:1-11. Wickedness has its seat in the heart Jeremiah 17:9 and Mark 7:21-23, and we need to think that the heart is like a throne that we're studying in the book of Esther, and also we saw Pharaoh on his throne, and the antichrist coming will sit on the throne.

And so wickedness is in the seat of your heart. It is inspired by Satan, Matthew 13:19, and First John 3:12. It is progressive, Genesis 6:5. Get this one, wicked news is contagious in its manifestation! First Samuel 24:13. All these people are concerned about the contagion of this pathogen, but not concerned about the contagiousness of wickedness, imagine that!

In the Psalms, we learned that the contrast of the richest righteous and the wicked raises the question of the prosperity of the wicked, and we see this

in the Psalms like Psalm 37. There is a punishment for all who are wicked, and we see this in Psalm 9:17, Jeremiah 16:4, and Matthew 13:49. And it is never applied to believers in First Corinthians 5:13. Wicked works of unbelievers who are alienated from God. And we find this in Colossians 1:21. And those who are progressing in their faith have overcome the wicked one, First John 2:13. And that is a really good and encouraging verse. And it is the shield of faith, a sure defense against his attack. And we find that in Ephesians 6:16.

Wicked people are conceptualized as chaff, and being wicked is conceptualized as being dead physically and spiritually. So there's in the physical realm and the policymakers, there's no prescribed way to move forward. We are stuck in the muck of wicked problem management, and therefore we need this global government to take care of us.

So some of the world's strategies to cope with wicked problems are an authoritative government that seeks to tame wicked problems by vesting the responsibility for solving the problems into the hands of a few people or the elite. It is competitive. **The strategies attempt to solve the wicked problems by pitting opposing points of view against each other.** And I would propose to you that this is creeping into the church. So we need to be especially careful that it's not creeping into our life.

It is collaborative. These strategies aim to engage all stakeholders, pagans, and Christians alike in order to find the best solution for all stakeholders. And I can tell you it's not going to be for your benefit. It's a process, and there's something, a technique called dialogue mapping which is not what we just learned about on Tuesday night, which is miracle mapping, which is a good thing, but dialogue mapping is a collaboration approach to mapping out wicked problems.

If you want to learn more about wicked problems, there was a paper written by Robert Knapp called the [Wholesome Design for Wicked Problems](#). And basically he said, that you first shift the goal of action on the significant problems from the solution to an intervention. And this is where we see these legal interventions of the [ICD 10 codes](#) for our execution, and but they don't tell you that upfront, and people are getting paid to make wicked problems governable is the goal of what they want to do with their wicked problem structuring method. And they actually have something called in their operations research collaboration consensus negotiations of soft system methodology called [SODA](#). So that's a heck of a mess of a soda! And they actually call wicked problems a social mess of interrelated problems and other messes. It is the complexity or the system of systems, think the internet of things, is among the factors that make social messes so resistant to analysis and more importantly to resolution. And the reason it can't be resolved is because it doesn't have the living God in there to bring resolution.

So I'll just wrap up about the social mess. There are some other characteristics about it. There is no correct view of the problem. That's why everybody can have ... it's free for all. Different views of the problem can be contradictory. Most problems are connected with other problems. It's like

that old thing, like trying to find the end of a ball of yarn. I've been there, done that. Most problems, there's data uncertain or missing, there are multiple value conflicts, there are ideological and cultural constraints because of course, they purge God out of it, there are political constraints, there are economic constraints, there is a logical and an illogical and a multi-value thinking. And if that's not where we are folks, I don't know where we are. There's numerous possible interventions – think execution – and the consequences are very difficult to imagine. And that my friends is why everybody's having such a struggle trying to come to grips with this pathogen. It is uncertain and there's lots of ambiguity which we're seeing with the pathogen and there is great resistance to change.

And so there is one last thing and I'm gonna wrap it up for today, there are also super wicked problems. And a super wicked problem first surfaced in 2007 in a conference paper and it was followed up in a 2012 journal in policy science. And they definitely use climate change as a super wicked problem. And it has four characteristics,

that time is running out,  
there is no perceived central authority,  
and those seeking the problem are causing it,  
and policies discount the future irrationally.

So you know there's no rationality to the whole thing at all. So anyway I just wanted to bring this to you so that as you're perusing the news you're looking at your bible be aware that wickedness is afoot and it is in the form of wicked problems.

See you next time on the Celestial Report.