

“Power, Money or Sex”

“There is nothing new under the sun”, says the wise author of the Book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon. (Ecc. 1:9). In other words, whatever we are seeing and experiencing now, whether good or bad, is nothing that we can say has never happened before. The circumstances, scenarios, and faces may be different but at the end of the day, it is just more of the same wrapped and presented in a different package. In fact, with enough study and introspect we can look back at the biblical records to see that the Bible is replete with more than enough examples that demonstrate that what we have personally lived through (or are currently living through) is not an uncommon occurrence. They serve as historical case studies for us to learn from. The Bible gives us plenty of warning signs and insightful direction to help us avoid decisions and actions that only bring forth disastrous outcomes leading us to suffer the consequences. A critical area that the Scriptures demonstrate as playing a vital role in this whole dynamic is an old, yet timelessly rehashed strategy...the lure of power, money or sex.

With every story that we hear of a prominent figure, or a friend or family member, or a Brother or Sister in Christ, or even us falling from grace through some personal corruption, it is usually traced back to a poor decision that was laced with very familiar ingredients or motivation. There are a set of poisonous ingredients that are “nothing new under the sun” yet individually (and collectively for some) can bring about horrific repercussions. It is widely accepted that when a decision that is laced with the ambitious and unhealthy pursuit of power or money is made, that it is only a matter of time before turmoil arises. Of course, the same can be said of an action or a decision that has been fermented in the desire for sexual gratification. In either case, it is only a matter of time before God will “bring to light what was hidden in darkness.” (1 Cor 4:5). I am confident that if you ask anyone who has found themselves in a vicarious predicament with serious ramifications that they will tell you that at the very core of that careless decision was the pursuit of power, money or sex. If given a platform in which to speak all of these individuals would say that, in retrospect, they realize where their motive for their action originated and regret it. They would certainly make a different decision if given an opportunity to do it all over again. I can almost guarantee it. It’s not rocket science. Very rarely will someone suffer negative consequences when making a decision based on love and compassion. When we examine the Bible we see in a number of instances how such bad decision making affected not only the lives of these biblical characters, but the lives of those around them as well. To highlight this point, I will mention a few here but there are many more:

Adam and Eve. One cannot argue that Adam and Eve’s decision to pursue equality, (and hence power) destroyed the original plan that God had for man. (Gen 3:1-24).

King Saul. His decision to pursue and kill the soon-to-be King David was motivated by jealousy but primarily to retain his power. (1Sam 18:8, 11). His demise as well as his three sons followed soon thereafter.

King David. The much heralded King David’s downfall came when he decided to sleep with his general’s wife, Bathsheba. A decision purely motivated by lust and sexual gratification. (2 Sam: 11)

Judas Iscariot. The most notable example of an ill-motivated decision was Judas’s decision to betray Jesus in pursuit of money. He later hung himself from the guilt and shame of what he had done. (Matt 27:3-5)

Whether it is Biblical references, secular history, current events, or more importantly (for many) our own personal lives, there are moments that we can recall when we made an ill decision that was founded in these pursuits. The Bible serves to teach us as well as make us aware that there is nothing new under the sun so that we are not caught off guard or blind sided by an uncharted situation that has never been faced. The outcomes will always be predictably negative if we allow ourselves to engage in activity where the motive is rooted in the unhealthy pursuit of power, money, or sex.

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