



“Playing with Fire”

Manipulation is not of God. I had planned on posting something else for the weekend however, as I sat down to prepare, I felt strongly to talk about the subject of “control” and “manipulation.” Lets look closely at the definition of Manipulation:

The art of controlling people or circumstances by indirect, unfair or deceptive means, especially to one’s own advantage; to control or play upon by unfair, or insidious means, especially for one’s own advantage

All of us (me included) know what it is to struggle with the issue of control or manipulation in our personal life. However, sometimes it can be difficult to recognize a manipulate spirit at work in someone else. Sometimes we are the ones doing the manipulating, and other times someone is manipulating us.

Example: Today’s media is all about control and manipulation. They will intentionally live out facts or distort truth in an attempt to get you to buy into what they want you to believe. We need to check the facts for ourselves concerning a lot of what they say.

Unfortunately in the church manipulation is rampant. Manipulation masks itself with a form of godliness, but really denies the power of God to operate (2 Timothy 3:5). It stifles trust and faith in God. It promotes one’s one desires and goes against trusting God to work things out. A manipulative spirit seeks to control the circumstances by whatever means possible. Including using people.

As Christians we need to be alert to forms of control or manipulation, either in our own lives or in those around us. Manipulation is not operating in faith and voids out God’s purposes. Jesus Christ was an excellent leader. He never manipulated anyone to achieve Kingdom purposes. However, the Bible is full of those who walked in manipulation.

Here are just a few examples of individuals in the Bible who manipulated others.

- Satan manipulated Eve (Genesis 3).
- Eve manipulated Adam (Genesis 3).
- Sarah used her “authority” over Hagar and manipulated Abraham (Genesis 16).
- Laban manipulated Jacob for personal gain ((Genesis 29-31).
- Jezebel manipulated many people (1 Kings 19)
- Delilah manipulated Samson (Judges 16).
- David manipulated Uriah (2 Samuel 11).

The list goes on....Those who manipulate are not operating in Kingdom principles. Unfortunately, many leaders will manipulate others for personal gain. As Christians we are not exempt from this behavior and will often, willingly or unwillingly, operate in control or manipulation or under someone's influence of control or manipulation.

Lately, I have seen many people work hard to control or manipulate other people, events and circumstances all in the name of the Lord. They will spin the truth in order to control situations to their advantage and gain. When manipulation or control is at work it will overwhelm and overrule faith every time.

Today, check your heart and ask the Lord, "Are you manipulating others or are you allowing someone else to manipulate you?" Manipulation intentionally leaves out facts or doesn't tell the full story. By doing so, this is controlling what others see or don't see causing them to make decisions based on inaccurate information.

Be very careful in times of stress. They can either be an opportunity to trust God with all of your heart or they can become an incubator manipulation. It's easier during these times to operate in control or manipulation (or to be controlled or manipulated by someone else). Manipulation is like playing with fire and you will always get burned.

We all have times where we find ourselves manipulating others or others manipulating us. People who struggle with manipulation have control issues. We must purposefully allow truth to operate more our life. People who care more about the truth understand that they are capable of control which can result in manipulation, so they surround themselves with the truth.

Dr. Gina Cobb
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