



Power Play

"For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." Gen. 3:5

Nowadays, it feels like the push for power has come to shove! Chances are if you're not pushing, you're being pushed! Power plays are nothing new, and they're not limited to the workplace or the church! The first one took place between Eve and Satan in the Garden of Eden, God's special place. By promising, "you will be like God," the enemy pulled back the curtain to the throne room and Eve got her first glimpse of 'the power and the glory.' Whenever you see things like name-dropping, excessive bling and title touting, you realize we haven't changed much. It's still all about staying on top! And since manners can often take you where money can't, there are now classes that actually teach you 'power table manners' (can you believe it?). There you learn which manners have clout, and which are 'power failures'. Things like - never handing your plate to your server or stooping to retrieve dropped silverware. In fact, to insure your place on the ladder of upward mobility, a cardinal rule is never to stoop at all! Not even to help the needy, admit your mistakes, or give to those who can't repay you. Sound attractive? It did to Eve.

The pursuit of power always: (a) makes you think you deserve better (b) prevents you from serving others (c) causes you to seek prominence (d) makes you susceptible to flattery and resistant to honest counsel (e) leads you to isolation and non-accountability. God says, "A man's pride will bring him low, But the humble retain honor" (Proverbs 29:23). If the push for power is driving you today, stop and ask God for help before it destroys your life.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, remind me and teach me what it means to be a servant and to serve others as you did. In Jesus' Name, Amen



Growing in Faith

➤ **Baptism begins with Divine intervention**

"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow." 1 Cor 3:6

➤ **Baptism unites what the culture divides**

What divides people? Race, Politics, Ego, Pride, Greed, Fear, language

"We were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink?"

1 Cor 12:13

➤ **Baptism is the initial step of a faithful life**

"Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" v37

➤ **Baptism separates the Tire-kickers from the Car-buyers**

"Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" v37

Remember Your Baptism

- (1) Recognize God's movement throughout your life.
- (2) What is God revealing to you Today?
- (3) Make Baptism Transformational.

NEW BEGINNINGS

Acts 8:26-39

Philip and the Ethiopian

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” ²⁷ So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹ The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.”

³⁰ Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked.

³¹ “How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

³² The eunuch was reading this passage of Scripture:

“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before the shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants?

For his life was taken from the earth.”^[e]

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” ³⁵ Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

³⁶ As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. Why shouldn’t I be baptized?” ³⁸ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. ³⁹ When they came up out

of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.

Do not be too quick to condemn the man who no longer believes in God: for it is perhaps your own coldness and avarice and mediocrity and materialism and selfishness that have chilled his faith. -- Thomas Merton

Whoever strives to withdraw from obedience, withdraws from grace.
-- Thomas à Kempis

One of the first ways you can celebrate your new relationship with God is to be baptized in water because this act of faith is important to Him.

There are four key reasons to be baptized in water after you have become rightly relationship to God through His gift of salvation. By being baptized in water you are demonstrating that you now belong to God; your personal faith is expressed in this public service of commitment. You are showing your allegiance to God, and your desire to live your life in a way that honors your Lord, Jesus Christ. **Water baptism is a celebration of relationship between you and God!**