A Choice Between Destiny And Dignity

This message is aimed at encouraging all to make the right choice of destiny over dignity and having done so to constantly overcome the obstacles of dignity on their path to destiny. God created man with destiny in mind. The road to destiny is often laced with accolades of dignity which become sources of distraction / deviation.

Destiny has to do with one's ultimate purpose or life's destination, whereas dignity is obsessed with getting Self-respect, honour, self-esteem, appreciation, etc. Although not an evil on itself, an obsession for dignity can become a stumbling block to true spirituality and destiny; because like a poisoned chalice it can offer temporary satisfaction without long term benefits. It is preferable to attain destiny in full dignity, where possible. However, life often brings one into situations of choice between the two – resulting in a difficult dilemma. Dignity expresses its desires in such forms as:

- 1. Search for approval, praise, respect and adoration. Herod's love for praise resulted in his untimely death through divine wrath (Acts 12:21-24). The dignity of earthly possessions hindered the rich young ruler from a heavenly destiny (Matthew 19:16-27).
- 2. Taking glory for success (even when achieved through the help of others or by wrong means); and blaming others for failures, while excusing themselves from it doomed Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 4:29-33).

- 3. Highly opinionated and self exonerated people who want to win at all cost, and be seen as "always right / innocent in everything" even when clearly they are not.
- 4. Conflict between the desire to be respected than be right (i.e. saving face). In today's world saving face is of greater priority than being right. Such people avoid counselling for fear of their ignorance being exposed. They take offence at corrections and ideas or suggestions that differs from theirs. They prefer to retain strong convictions on error and suffer therein than make amends. They would rather be stubbornly committed to folly than bear to be known as somebody that changed. Jonah's example is worth learning from. He was a prophet that clearly heard the voice of God, but the crave for dignity stood in the way to obedience. He valued people's perception more than God's glory—a sure recipe for disaster (Jonah 4:1-4, 9-11).
- 5. The crave for dignity prevents honesty, transparency, repentance and restitution (e.g. the father who found it difficult to apologise to the son he wronged because of tradition). When David was confronted with his sins, he admitted, repented and wrote about it in Psalms 51 thereby recovering his destiny. The exact opposite was the case for King Saul, who when Samuel confronted admitted "I have sinned: yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God". (I Samuel 15:30). Instead of repenting, he sought to cover his sins with religious activity. The honour of the elders was of more importance to him than his relationship with God. Unfortunately, the

situation with many Christians in similar circumstances is not different – as they can lie, manipulate, and do any thing to cover up their sins for the sake of reputation.

The crave for dignity saps true spirituality and quench the Holy Spirit. To some, a well structured and orderly but frigid worship, where the Holy Spirit is not allowed to interfere is classed as "dignified". It is worth noting that the nine fold fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23 does not include dignity! Dignity is not an appropriate response to the message of Christ crucified. It is safe to conclude from the foregoing that the more a person craves for dignity the greater the danger of that person not reaching his/her God's ordained destiny!

The divine prescription for this malady is humility. Peter admonished early Christians ".... Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:" (I Peter 5:5,6).

Hagar's story (Genesis 16:5-10) highlights the danger of choosing dignity at the expense of destiny. Faced with a dilemma, she selected dignity (i.e. to flee) rather than destiny (humility), and by so doing endangered not only her life but also that of her unborn child. What a price for dignity! Is it not the same today that many people throw away their destiny of good career, stable family, future happiness and prospects for making heaven because of temporal dignity? Such people should soberly reflect on

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this question – "What shall it profit a man, if he gains all the dignity in the world and lose his destiny?" It is instructive to note God's solution to Hagar's problem - "And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands" (Genesis 16:9). Is God not saying the same today to children, students, wives, employees, and all in similar situations?

Human ways are different from God's. It is to our eternal advantage that we heed Isaiah's admonition - "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9). As Christ our perfect example, was humble (Philippians 2:5-10), let ways walk in humility and esteem destiny of greater value than dignity. It is not wisdom to jeopardise destiny for dignity! It is like playing a game of chicken with one's life downhill and accusing the first person who touches the controls to prevent an accident of being a chicken). It is simply not worth it!

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Your spiritual welfare is our concern. For further help, please contact: VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

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