



# Biblical Perspectives in Everyday Life

## Politics as Usual...

### Pride, Greed, & Lying

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Is the Bible relevant for today's world? If so, it should deal with every aspect of life and relationships, including the political realm and, specifically, the people involved in politics. Three indisputable characteristics of "politics as usual" plague every government in the world and have created havoc throughout history. Scripture minces no words in dealing with these self-centered aspects of human nature.

**Pride**—haughty assumption of superiority, typically revealed by condescension to others, especially to those with differing viewpoints

*Opposite of pride—humility*

**Greed**—excessive, self-centered desire for wealth and associated prominence, driven by covetousness with minimal regard for others' welfare

*Opposite of greed—selfless generosity*

**Lying**—a deliberate attempt to put one's self or perspectives in a more favorable light by presenting false information or by revealing part of the truth and withholding pertinent facts.

*Opposite of lying—bringing everything to light*

#### **POLITICAL EXAMPLES OF PRIDE, GREED, & LYING**

The following descriptions are merely representative of many more detailed examples. Proud politicians demand their own way, disregard perspectives different than their own, and demonize their opponents by partisan "name calling." For proud politicians, prominent position or notoriety is everything. Greedy politicians use their position for personal financial advantage, not only for themselves but also for those who can maintain or advance their careers. As a result, their votes and influence are always "up for sale" and "payback" is at the heart of their political decisions instead of "the most good for the most people." Lying politicians are masters of "double speak" and can distort factual information as smoothly as a magician can perform a trick. Politicians who lie are not proponents of "the whole truth and nothing but the truth" but, instead, use only facts that buttress their viewpoints while hiding or misrepresenting any material that undermines their point of view.

It is indisputable that pride, greed, and lying are detrimental to honest dialogue, beneficial planning, and wholesome relationships. Even those who use these negative traits for self-advancement try to camouflage these personal flaws. Yet, politicians throughout history have purposefully "furthered their careers" and established their political agendas by pride, greed, and lying.

#### **PRIDE, GREED, & LYING INFECTS MORE THAN POLITICS**

Many people outside of the political realm—in business, sports, education, religion, media, marriage or any relational endeavor—also "get their way" through pride, greed, and lying. These three character flaws pervade every aspect of life. Why is that? The answer is forthrightly presented in the Bible, which addresses the "heart" of the matter.

Jeremiah 17:9, The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

Mark 7:21-23, "For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

No matter who is in power in any country, boardroom, locker room, or bedroom, the most significant component is the spiritual condition (the "heart") of each person involved. With every person's natural self-orientation, there is always the potential for pride, greed, and lies to negatively impact any aspect of life. With this impact, there are consequences, many of which are mentioned in the Bible.

Proverbs 16:18-19, Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. It is better to be of a lowly spirit with the poor than to divide the spoil with the proud.

Proverbs 15:27, Whoever is greedy for unjust gain troubles his own household, but he who hates bribes will live.

Proverbs 21:4-6, Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, are sin. The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty. The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a fleeting vapor and a snare of death.

Proverbs 14:25, A truthful witness saves lives, but one who breathes out lies is deceitful.

Psalms 7:14-15, Behold, the wicked man conceives evil and is pregnant with mischief and gives birth to lies. He makes a pit, digging it out, and falls into the hole that he has made.

### THREE RESPONSES TO PRIDE, GREED, & LIES

Some consequences of pride, greed, and lying may come to fruition quickly. Others may not be evident for years. No matter what the consequences, there are at least three scriptural responses to pride, greed, and lying. These responses are designed to diminish the detrimental impacts that pride, greed, and lying produce and to redirect hearts toward loving God and others.

The first response would hopefully be that those who exhibit pride, greed, or lying would confess these wrongdoings and repent. Realistically, confession and repentance will not occur in a completely truthful manner apart from a life transformation. This transformation (a heart change) results from trusting Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sins and then, by the power of the Holy Spirit, obeying God's Word for all aspects of life and relationships

John 3:16, For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Ephesians 1:7, In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.

2 Corinthians 5:17, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

2 Timothy 3:16-17, All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

The second response is to confront false claims and perspectives of others that are based on distortions and half-truths (lies). Truthful exposure involves bringing everything to light, no matter how total disclosure might impact eventual conclusions. (See [Unmasking Lies that Masquerade as Truth](http://www.wordtruth.net) at [www.wordtruth.net](http://www.wordtruth.net))

Proverbs 24:25, but those who rebuke the wicked will have delight, and a good blessing will come upon them.

Ephesians 5:11, Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

The third response is to communicate with God about everyone and, specifically, for those in authority. Politically powerful people can be very beneficial but can also create great distress for many through the sins of pride, greed, and lying.

1 Timothy 2:1-2, First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.

### POINTS TO REMEMBER

Pride, greed, and lying are firmly entrenched in the hearts of billions of people. The wars that have scarred this planet throughout history as well as the daily crimes and community strife around the world give uncomfortable tribute to that reality. Politics are merely one aspect of life that can be ruled by the pride, greed, and lies of fellow humans. With the pervasiveness of these sins across the globe in every facet of life, it is easy to point fingers at others' failures and forget our own shortcomings. God's Word reminds us of that danger.

Matthew 7:1-5, "Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."

From the above passage, it is evident that each of us should be faithful to judge ourselves if we are to see clearly the faults of others. In the following passage, God’s Word reveals the reason that some of us are so quick—even accurately so—to point out the flaws of others.

Romans 2:1, Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things.

The reason that some of us see specific sins so clearly in others’ lives is due to our personal familiarity with those same sins in our own lives. This fact should give us further impetus to judge ourselves in those same areas with a view to becoming more like Christ.

There is yet another warning from Scripture for those of us who compare ourselves with others. If we make that comparison, usually to put ourselves in a better light, we prove to be very foolish indeed.

2 Corinthians 10:12, Not that we dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who are commending themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding.

#### **FINAL THOUGHT**

There is no creed or religion or standard of conduct in the world that encourages pride, greed, or lying. Isn’t it amazing how much these three sins are practiced by millions of people each day to “get their own way” at the expense of others? If you want to overcome these three sins in your life, then dying to self is a prerequisite. As mentioned previously, this transformation requires divine help, which God provides through His Son Jesus, His Spirit, and His Word. May His grace and strength be yours in abundance as you respond to His plan for your life, putting aside pride, greed, and lying as you grow in Christ.

(See [\*Becoming a Christ-like Servant\*](#) and [\*Christ Crucified: The Solution to Self Dependency\*](#) at [www.wordtruth.net](http://www.wordtruth.net))