

The Power Play

Have you ever noticed how a brand new relationship is so sweet and innocent?

- **You will do anything for the other**
- **Give up your seat**
- **Give you coat on a cold night**
- **Save the best bite of food for the other person**

I guess the word I'm looking for is sacrifice...

Fast forward a few years in a relationship, it becomes more of...

- **What can you do for me...?**
- **Hey, that's my seat...**
- **Get your own coat...**
- **Eat all of the cashews out of the can of mixed nuts...**

What happens?

In a class I was just in, the professor was talking about the release of Serotonin and Dopamine, Chemicals in the brain that give that euphoric feeling and passion associated with love. Called it

- **The Love Cocktail**
- **New love fresh and exciting**

But they said that "Love Cocktail" only last 12-36 months...

- **Then reality sets in!!!**

All of a sudden, you start to notice

- **The trash needs to be taken out**
- **Dishes need to be washed**
- **Diapers need to be changed**
- **Where did the bliss go!!!**

What about a different relationship that you experienced...

Do you remember when you first fell in love with Jesus?

And you were

- **Willing to do anything for Him**
- **Give away anything you had**
- **Be at church all the time**
- **Read The Bible every day**
- **Pray for hours**
- **Cry listening to worship music**

I want to show you a couple of people in The Bible when they first entered into a relationship with Jesus...

Luke 19:8

8 Then **Zacchaeus** stood and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.”

- **Zacchaeus the chief tax collector...**
- **Most hated man in town**
- **Chief sinner**
- **Cheated everyone**

Now here he is, falls in love with Jesus and willing to give it all back and give away what is honestly his....

- **That’s love!!!**

Mark 5:18-19

18 And when He got into the boat, **he who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him.** 19 However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.”

- **This man possessed by many demons delivered by Jesus**
- **He falls in love with Jesus and wants to follow Him everywhere**
- **Ready to give all to Him**

But there are two people in particular that I want to point out to you today... And share about their relationship with Jesus

Matthew 4:18-22

18 And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called **Peter, and Andrew** his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. 19 Then He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” 20 **They immediately left their nets and followed Him.**

21 Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, **James the son of Zebedee, and John** his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, 22 and **immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.**

James and John

- The sons of Zebedee
- The sons of Thunder

Zebedee was an influential figure in the community

- A prominent business owner
- Considerably wealthy
- His sons would be expected to take over the family business...

But they fell in love with Jesus and walked away from it all

- Family name
- Nice home
- wealth
- Willing to follow Jesus, with no money, home, food, ...
- They were all in!!

And along with Peter, James and John were the closest to Jesus

- The inner circle of the 12 Disciples
- They shared with Jesus, prayed with Him, were taught by Him

Can you even imagine having that close personal relationship with Jesus!!

- What else could you ask for!!

Well, did I tell you that in every relationship, things tend to slow down, maybe even fizzle out after a while...

- I wish I could say things were different in our love walk with Jesus...
- But there came a time where the focus shifted from Jesus to James and John....
- Instead of “we will do anything for you”...
- It became “what’s in it for us”....

First, let me show you a couple of other examples...

Matthew 20:1-16

The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2 Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3 And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, 4 and said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.’ So they went. 5 Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. 6 And about the

eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day?’ 7 They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.’

8 “So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first.’ 9 And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. 10 But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. 11 And when they had received it, they complained against the landowner, 12 saying, ‘These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.’ 13 But he answered one of them and said, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? 14 Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?’ 16 So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen.”

- **The landowner hired workers for the vineyard**
- **Some at the beginning, more throughout the day**
- **Paid them all the same wages**
- **The first workers though they deserved more...**
- **They had been there longer**
- **Made more personal investment....**

I like to call this “**The Power Play**”

People try to push Jesus around based on

- **Length of service**
- **Financial investment**
- **Or position**
- **All to get their way!!**

Of course, Jesus used this as an illustration...

- **“For the kingdom of heaven is like**

I believe He’s saying that **The kingdom is not a “Seniority based system”**

- **The last and the least are as great as the first and the best....**
- **The doors are open and you are welcome to become a part today**
- **(16) So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen**

I wanted to use that illustration before I got back to James and John...

Let's read just below this parable in the same Chapter:

Matthew 20:20-21

20 Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him.

21 And He said to her, "What do you wish?"

She said to Him, "**Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom.**"

Here's "**The Power Play**"

- You do know who we are, right?
- We are the "Zebedee's...."
- And you know my boys have been with you since the beginning...
- They sit in your inner circle....
- I think it's high time they are recognized for who they are, and what they do...
- They need to be the shot callers in Your ministry....
- Actually You need to do things the way they want

If you really read this, allow The Spirit to lead, you will see this....

- They wanted to have their way
- And they went home and got Mama to speak for them

Just to read the rest of this...

22 But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

They said to Him, "**We are able.**"

23 So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father."

24 And **when the ten heard it, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers.**

25 But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You **know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them**, and those who are great exercise authority over them. 26 Yet **it shall not be so among you**; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. 27 And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave— 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

What happened?

What happened to:

- I'll do anything for you Jesus
- Jesus You are all I want, all I need
- Jesus I'll follow you anywhere

When did it start becoming;

- About our way instead of His Will...?
- I'm just a sinner saved by grace.. to "I'm better than you..."

There's an old song called "You've Lost That Loving Feeling"

- But I believe Jesus was singing that song first...

Revelation 2:2-5

2 "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; 3 and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary. 4 Nevertheless I have this against you, **that you have left your first love.**

5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.

Altar Call: Have you lost that loving feeling?

Song: Heart of Worship