



VAMPIRE 2: The Incredibly Manipulative

Opening.

Every one of us has dealt with manipulative people at different times in our lives. However, identifying manipulators is not an easy task because a good manipulator has usually been honing their craft for a long time, and they have learned to disguise their intentions well. Therefore, discerning when you are being manipulated is of the utmost importance. Do you know what the tools of a manipulator are, and how they use them against you? Can you detect when someone is actually trying to manipulate you?

Let's look at three instances in the Bible:

JACOB MANIPULATED ESAU (Genesis 25:29-34).

WOMEN MANIPULATED HEROD (Mark 6:21-26).

DELILAH MANIPULATED SAMSON (Judges 16:15-16).

Key Scriptures

PROVERBS 2

My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, 2 turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding—3 indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, 4 and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, 5 then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. 6 For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. 7 He holds success in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, 8 for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones. 9 Then you will understand what is right and just and fair—every good path. 10 For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul. 11 Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you. 12 Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse, 13 who have left the straight paths to walk in dark ways, 14 who delight in doing wrong and rejoice in the perverseness of evil, 15 whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their ways.

Look closer.

- Manipulators have two greatest weapons: threats and guilt. Why are threats and guilt such powerful weapons?
- Manipulators have one goal: to get what they want from you. In the case of Jacob manipulating his father, what was his motivation? In the case of Herod, what did the women want? In the case of Samson, who manipulated the manipulator?
- Why does God want us to wise up follow the Holy Spirit and not be manipulated? Read Jeremiah 7:23.

Share your insight.

- How do you know you are being manipulated?
 - You can't say "no" to a certain person.
 - You always feel guilty when you don't give them what they want.
 - You feel ultimately responsible; you have this fear of letting them down.
 - You compromise your values to please them. (spiritual/moral/relational/sexual) Can you relate to any of the above?
- How do you break the power of manipulation in your life?
 - RECOGNIZE WHEN SOMEONE IS TRYING TO CONTROL YOU.
 - MAKE A DECISION THAT THIS IS NOT GOING TO WORK ON YOU.
 - REDEFINE THE RELATIONSHIP YOU HAVE WITH THEM (if necessary, stay away).
- How do you distinguish a manipulator from someone who sincerely desires what's best for you?
- Spiritual wisdom allows you to distinguish between manipulation and spiritual conviction. Read Galatians 5:16-18.
- Proverbs 2 gives instructions on how we can wise up.

Spend time to pray.