

The Natural Defense Mechanisms of One's Core Values: The King David's Reaction

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One begins to attempt dealing with his intrapsychic conflicts, which are the internal conflicts between both components of self (subjective experiences and objective truth) and also between one's core values and his internal expressions of self (thinking, emotions, and belief system) from an early age by the unconscious employment of defense mechanisms. These mechanisms serve to facilitate the individual's adaptation to his environment, and his protection of "self" or resistance to readapt to the environmental challenges. Collectively, all defense mechanisms are mental operations of the ego. Often titled "*ego defenses*," they are a dynamic and interactive process, which evolve naturally by the psyche, and it is through their evolution and operation that the development, adjustment, and integration of personality becomes its unique and animated self.

Again, to reiterate Freud's postulation initially presented in the "Who I Am" section of the Core Values Model, psychoanalysis shows human beings are less moral than they had believed themselves to be by demonstrating the reality of unconscious wishes, which people consciously repudiate and deny. It has demonstrated on the other hand that there are more and stricter moral demands and prohibitions in each one of us than we have any conscious awareness of.¹ This understanding is a critical component within the Core Values Model because it demonstrates the truth regarding the condition of man's heart, and the conflict between his inherent depravity, the values upon which he is trained and objective truth, which is the standard superior to both.

Again, as the prophet Jeremiah stated, "*The heart is more deceitful than all else, and is desperately sick; who can understand it?*"² Even from a secular perspective, Freud understood this basic principle of man's nature. One's inability to distinguish his own deceit demonstrates the unconscious mind protecting itself from the knowledge of his degeneracy, which also makes it difficult for him to see the need for redemption and conversion. In order for one to protect self from his internal depravity, defense mechanisms are needed to ameliorate, repress and protect the mind from the ensuing conflict of who one actually is, as opposed to who he would prefer to think himself to be.

Titled "*character armor*" by Wilhelm Reich, defense mechanisms are protective styles one uses to safeguard self from internal impulses and from

¹ Freud, *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, 127

² Jer 17:9

interpersonal anxiety that arises in relationships.³ Laughlin defines a mental defense mechanism as:

A specific defensive process, operating outside of and beyond conscious awareness. It is automatically and unconsciously employed in the endeavor to secure resolution of emotional conflict, relief from emotional tension, and to avert or allay anxiety. A given dynamism is evoked by the ego as an attempted means of coping with an otherwise consciously intolerable situation.⁴

In actuality, the human mind often triggers *several* mechanisms to serve as primary, secondary and tertiary defenses. The circumnavigation of defense mechanisms can be compared to a challenging game of chess, as each move by one's environment is met by another mechanism strategically guarding the ego from distress. Laughlin recognizes twenty-two *major* defenses, which are commonsensically distinct, and can be identified and distinguished fairly accurately. In addition, he also lists twenty-six other *minor* ego defenses. Depending upon age and intellect, the defenses work together cooperatively and effortlessly, but often to a fault.⁵

The Core Values Model recognizes the complexity of the defenses, and attempts to work with those mechanisms by understanding their function of protecting one's core values. As they are being challenged in the light of objective truth, or light, which shines into the darkness of every man's soul seeking to bring each into conformance with God's will. It is a difficult task to explain how the defenses fortify and protect one's ego and the elements of self. Nevertheless, the hierarchy is being presented as such to simplify and explain their dynamic.⁶

Surrounding each of our established core values lays several rings of defense mechanisms, which serve to protect our deeply held perception of reality, self-view, personal identity, ethics, interpretations and judgments. This hierarchy protects one's value system so that he can accept himself with enough confidence to function and interrelate within his environment. Albeit postulation, one can reasonably assume that each set of defenses grows more complex and difficult to change as he moves closer to the core self.⁷

The defenses that are most easily challenged and changed are those that are based on how one feels. Feelings are usually situational and temporal.⁸ Even though they are rooted into one's core values, and interwoven into how we think and what we do, they are very suggestible. Feelings may first arise as intuition or subtle emotional cues that one may experience when he interacts with his environment, or as an emotional response to his action or thinking. One has the ability to change

³ Wilhelm Reich, *Character Analysis* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1980), 254.

⁴ H. P. Laughlin, *The Ego and its Defenses* (New York, NY: Jason Aronson Publishers, 1979), 6.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Appendix B.

⁷ Appendix B.

⁸ Karen LaPointe & Thomas Harrell, "Thoughts and Feelings: Correlational Relationships and Cross-Situational Consistency" *Cognitive Therapy and Research* 2, no. 4 (1978): 311-322.

many of his emotional responses when he chooses to accept other insights, either from his own value system or another, so that he may view his situation differently, hopefully more objectively.

One's behaviors, or responses to another person's behavior, are more complex and ingrained. Behavior is the external expression of one's internal values; thus, the defenses involved are those that serve to protect the ego during interaction with his environment. Because one's behavior is interactive, his unconscious defenses will be more vigilant as they help to filter information that might challenge his value system. Also, one's responsive defenses may also serve to reinforce other coping mechanisms because of behavioral reinforcement, which would make them more challenging to modify.⁹

Where one's emotions and behaviors are *externalized* expressions, the defenses of cognition are unconscious or preconscious *internal* processes, thereby difficult to recognize let alone regulate. How one thinks is often based on cognitively reinforced patterns that effortlessly determine his perceptions, attitudes, interpretations and judgments. Because these components of cognition primarily function unconsciously or preconsciously, they are obviously more deeply engrained.¹⁰ After one's thought filters through his defenses, that formulated thought is accepted as a situational conclusive belief, where again, a deeper level of defenses weigh this inference against his core values.

One's value structure and identity function within both components of subjective experiences and objective truth, and different values are continually challenged, consciously and unconsciously, as the ego seeks to gain syntonic agreement. Core values are also being challenged by one's cultural practices, which develop socially patterned value structures every person instinctively lives within. This may also create a potential conflict in both the core values system and in each area of self-expression.¹¹ As one matures, he develops a combination of rules and regulations unconsciously from his environment. As he observes his surroundings and how relational experiences unfold, he stores these patterns in his repertoire of subjective experiences.

One typically holds his experiences to be factual on an unconscious level, as the accumulation of new occurrences and interactions weave into one's previously formulated experiences, simply because they have not been challenged by objective truth or his environment. This ever-growing collection of subjective experiences provides a substrate for his self-evaluations and self-directions, and continues to accumulate as he matures into and throughout adulthood.

Internalized rules and regulations also develop one's foundation for setting standards, expectations, and plans of action. Together, they influence how one perceives right and wrong, and how that standard applies to him and others. This

⁹ Shalom Schwartz, "Value Priorities and Behavior: Applying a Theory of Integrated Value" *Hebrew University of Jerusalem* 18, (1996): 119-143.

¹⁰ Rachlin, "Autonomy from the Viewpoint of Teleological Behaviorism," 245-264

¹¹ Schwartz, "Value Priorities and Behavior," 119-143

standard also impacts how one will interact with his environment, especially on the interpersonal level. One also seeks to resolve *extrapsychic* conflicts, which are conflicts between a *consciously* recognized aspect of oneself, and some demand or requirement from the external environment, or society that is requiring him to conform or change. Again, the function of these processes is to avoid emotional pain and discomfort through the resolution of emotional divergences.¹²

Although Laughlin limits his definition of conflict resolution to the emotional expression of self, several prior examples noted in the Core Values Model's expressions of self have already been specified demonstrating that conflicts are not limited to emotion, and do in fact include cognitive, behavioral and spiritual divergences as well.

Further validation of this assertion can be recognized in the life of King David, who expressed how many ways his internal conflicts disturbed him stating:

Be gracious to me, O Lord, for my *bones* are dismayed. And my *soul* is greatly dismayed... Return O Lord, rescue my *soul*; save me because of Thy loving kindness... I am weary with my *sighing*; every night I make my bed swim, I dissolve my couch with my *tears*. My *eye* has wasted away with *grief* [italics mine].¹³

David continues by voicing,

I am *poured out* like water, and all my *bones* are out of joint; my *heart* is like wax; it is melted within me. My *strength* is dried up like a potsherd, and my *tongue* cleaves to my jaws; and Thou dost lay me in the dust of death [italics mine].¹⁴

Therefore, conflicts have the potential to explicate themselves within either of one's expressions because they in fact originate within the values system. Even still, these internal clashes are only defined as such because of one's *perceptions*, which are based in his prior subjective experiences, genetic and biological factors, and personality, and occur when one is challenged or confronted from internal divergences or environmental provocation. Interestingly, in continuing a prior thought, one of the minor defense mechanisms is named after King David, and called "*The King David Reaction*."¹⁵ This defense is actually a complex combination of several mechanisms and reactions working together including *repression*, *projection*, *identification* and *rationalization*. Each of these defense mechanisms will be defined to demonstrate the interwoven nature of every aspect of one's personhood, including his defense mechanisms. Laughlin defines the King David Reaction as "*unrecognized personal attributes reacted to in others*," or the projected aspects of one's self-appraisal.¹⁶

¹² Laughlin, *The Ego and its Defenses*, 8.

¹³ Ps 6:2-6

¹⁴ Ps 22:14-15

¹⁵ Laughlin, *The Ego and its Defenses*, 6.

¹⁶ Ibid. 246.

From the palace rooftop, David spied the beautiful Bathsheba bathing. Her husband Uriah was away at war in his king's service. David took Bathsheba for himself, and arranged the circumstances so that this loyal soldier from David's inner-circle of mighty men would be killed in battle so that the king could cover up his sins of adultery and impregnating his friend's wife. The prophet Nathan convincingly pointed out to the king his selfishness, cruelty and destructiveness by telling him the following story called "*The Parable of the Ewe Lamb*:"

There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. The rich man had a great many flocks and herds. But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb, which he bought and nourished; and it grew up with him and his children. It would eat of his bread, drink of his cup and lie in his bosom, and was like a daughter to him. Now a traveler came to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd, to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him; rather he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him. Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the Lord lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die. And he must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion." Nathan then said to David, "*You are that man!*"¹⁷

There is a close relationship between the qualities of one's self-estimation and his self-approval. In the King David Reaction, approved or disapproved aspects of the self, which are not consciously recognized, are reacted to in the second person. The interesting aspect of this defense is illustrated by David's overreaction to the obvious selfish situation in the parable by condemning the rich man to death because he took a poor man's ewe. In reality, David's initial strong reaction was directed at this concealed image he held of himself unconsciously, which was intentionally elicited by Nathan's trickery.

Herein, one can see David's self-portrait, which he disliked and projected onto another. Although the process functions on the unconscious level, the emotions are expressed consciously—often strongly. These resulting negative feelings are also referred to as "*King David's Anger*" or "*Royal Anger*." So then, the *negative* phase of the King David Reaction is an intrapsychic defense process through which the condemnation and hatred of consciously disowned aspects of the self become experienced as dislike for another person.¹⁸

Another literary example of this interesting defense pattern is observed in Shakespeare's Hamlet, where his fury at his uncle Claudius was magnified because of his disowned Oedipal aggression toward his father and attraction towards his mother. Hence, when Claudius came to possess the same feelings toward the king and queen that Hamlet had consciously disowned, the latter's anger was evoked and became consciously experienced as hatred toward Claudius. Subsequently, Claudius

¹⁷ 2 Sam 12:1-7

¹⁸ Ibid. 248.

fulfilled Hamlet's unconscious desire of killing his father the king, and marrying his mother the queen.

Since Hamlet intensely hated in Claudius what perhaps unconsciously existed within himself, he had to *repress*, because the consideration was unthinkable. The strength of his feelings toward Claudius was proliferated by the presence of his own similar yet repressed emotions. Thereafter, Hamlet's consciously experienced anger allowed some outward expression of his internal feelings in a more acceptable form, albeit disguised, since they were projected onto a substitute, namely Claudius, which helped to maintain the repression. Hamlet's hatred drove him to murdering Claudius, while he unconsciously held the real contempt for himself.¹⁹

A present-day application of this dynamic may be noted where a latent homosexual holds severe distain toward the homosexual community because of their lifestyle, while he holds similar repressed feelings within himself. Understanding the condition of depravity within mans' heart, one can also see similar intense feelings of judgment projected onto another who is guilty of almost any sin, including adultery, covetousness, or several other behaviors, while at the same time he unconsciously harbors similar lusts within himself.

This complex process can also be experienced conversely, where the self-appraisal is consciously experienced as friendship, affection or love for the other person because he unconsciously experiences the same feelings in himself. Within the *positive* King David Reaction, an individual with repressed, and thereby latent, homosexual drives might come to admire the traits exhibited by another who is outwardly homosexual, even though his sexual orientation might not be obvious to the one with the latent drives. In such an instance, the attraction could easily be *rationalized* on the grounds of personal or social graces, and the added defense mechanism Identification is also engaged.

As previously recognized, *Repression* functions on the unconscious level and is the precursor of all the ego defenses. *Repression is the term for an automatic and consciously effortless kind of memory loss.* Through the operation of repression ideas, impulses and feelings that are consciously repugnant, and thereby intolerable, are assigned to a deeper layer of the psyche, the unconscious. The unconscious then, becomes a depository for many thoughts, drives, impulses, experiences, etcetera, that are too painful for one to process through other defenses such as Fantasy or Ideation, or to understand in actual experience. Accordingly, the working definition for Repression is the process of assignment to the unconscious.²⁰

Even though repression unconsciously prevents one from recognizing his impulses, drives, feelings and thoughts, it does not stop God, who sees the inner most workings of a person's heart. This universal and objective standard of truth is made evident throughout the Scriptures. Both the Old and New Testaments affirm God's unlimited love, omniscience and omnipotence. The author of Hebrews clearly pronounced the truth that God knows all and sees all, and He communicates and

¹⁹ William Shakespeare *Hamlet* (New York, NY: D.C. Heath and Company, 1917)

²⁰ *Ibid.* 358.

changes the heart of man through His Word, stating in the fourth chapter, verses 12-13:

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and lay bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

It is often by His written Word, through the Spirit of Truth, that God's conviction brings one's repressed sin to conscious awareness so that it might be confessed and forgiven. It is God's desire and intention to transform the human heart from being a self-protecting and selfish hardened stone to one that is living flesh and free. The prophet Ezekiel eloquently this in his 36th chapter, verses 25-27 stating:

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all of your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to follow my laws.

One can see the power of God's objective truth working to challenge man's faulty core values, which were established and fixed in the flesh, in order that He might transform them by His Spirit, reestablishing those values to be forged in truth. It is an undeniable fact that God loves us and deeply desires a relationship with mankind so that we might know Him in His fullness. But one must first surrender the authority of his brokenness to God's Son, Jesus, who is full of grace and *truth*.²¹ Furthermore, Christ is to be honored and worshipped in spirit and *truth*.²² John 8:32 states, "*And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free,*" and Jesus made the exclusive claim that He is truth incarnate saying, "*I am the way, and the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father, but through Me.*"²³ Thus knowing Jesus, who is Truth, will make one free. Moreover, the Apostle Paul testifies that the Gospel is *truth*.²⁴ And the Scripture as a whole is *truth*.²⁵ Therefore, studying the Gospel and Scriptures allows God's truth to continue its work of transformation in one's life.

Here we see both Jesus the Son of God and the Bible both called truth, which is the truth. They are both also called the Word, because words are the way in which a person reveals or unveils who he is. The Greek word used here, "*logos*," is not implying the simple written or spoken word. Rather, it is communicating the

²¹ Jn 1:14

²² Jn 4:24

²³ Jn 14:6

²⁴ Gal 2:5

²⁵ 2 Tim 2:15

mind or thought behind the word. So then, we have the thought or mind behind the expression.

We see a similar thought in Hebrews 1:3, which states, “*He (Jesus) is the radiance of His (God) glory, and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.*” Just as Christ shines (light) the glory of God, He is also the expression (Word) of God’s nature, mind, thought and character. God always unveils, or reveals Himself through Jesus Christ. Jesus is the only knowable, visible expression of who God is. Thus, God is always revealed through the second person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, who is the source of objective truth.

As we continue to examine defense mechanisms in the light of objective truth, it changes one’s perspective of their ultimate purpose of protecting one’s ego from change. Repression plays a significant role in all of the neuroses, personality disorders, and psychosis. Because of its ego-sustaining and protective effects, it also plays an important role in maintaining emotional health. Thus Repression is indispensable to both mental health and mental illness.²⁶

Projection is also a defense of psychologic avoidance by avoiding internal conflict via. “*Ascribing that which is personally intolerable to others.*”²⁷ Through Projection, one imputes to others motives and emotional feelings, which are consciously unacceptable and disowned. A plethora of emotional manifestations might unfold including anxiety, shame, anger, resentment, hostility, overwhelming responsibility and guilt, which become mirrored back at the agitator as though it was reflective of him. From a broad point of view, Projection is the unconscious throwing of something outward and forward. Through the operation of this intrapsychic process, one may attribute his own intolerable wishes, emotional feelings, or motivations to another person. Unwittingly, these emotional assignments appear real to the person receiving the projection.²⁸

Projection might refer to any active emotional extrusion from the body. Like its opposite *Introjection*, it can have constructive and healthy uses as well as negative or maladaptive. One may project feelings of kindness and benevolence to another, and when combined with the defense of *Identification* (Projective Identification), one may empathize, or see the world from another’s perspective. This term entails most of the social virtues, kindly attitudes toward others, and interest in their concerns.²⁹ Through Introjection and Projection either love or hate in addition to several other types of affect can be unconsciously turned inward one moment, than outward onto another in the next. Projection also plays a significant role in the evolvment of serious psychopathological formations such as hallucinations and delusions as well.³⁰

²⁶ Laughlin, *The Ego and its Defenses*, 358.

²⁷ Ibid. 220.

²⁸ Ibid. 221.

²⁹ Ibid. 222.

³⁰ Ibid. 224.

Identification is also a very important ego defense to be understood as it plays a critical role in character development. “*Through the unconscious operation of Characterlogic Identification, one takes over or develops attributes, traits or attitudes which are in various degrees like those of another significant person.*”³¹ It is through Identification that acceptance, love, recognition, security, and ego-enhancement can be unknowingly developed or secured. Identification can be defined as when one makes himself like another, thus identifying with the other person. The result is the unconscious taking over of various aspects (values) of the other person including: goals, behaviors, thoughts, mannerisms, reactions, attributes and character traits.

Identification is the unconscious remolding of oneself. It is an intrapsychic Identification with someone (or a given aspect) of primary importance. One can see how this plays out between parent and child relationships, as previously discussed. The child endeavors to conform to the ideal as it is perceived, motivated by the deep and foundational needs for acceptance, approval and love. This mechanism plays a vital role in emotional health. Early childhood Identification (and Idealization) with loved objects is critical for healthy personality development and emotional integration.³² As the child develops, his world grows larger, ergo his objects of Identification do as well. Although most objects of Identification are with healthy and positive figures, over the past few decades, society has witnessed a change in who they admire. Henceforth, the type of role models people are choosing at present confirms the erosion of social morals, which perpetuates the chronic undermining of societal and personal values.

Identification also occurs on the conscious level when one imitates or mimics another's attitudes or behaviors. The clearest example of Imitation, both consciously and unconsciously, applies to the follower of Jesus Christ. When one accepts Christ as his Savior, he is immediately justified and *adopted* by God the Father, *identified* and *united* with Jesus, and *filled* with the Holy Spirit who indwells every believer. Thus, the process of salvation embraces all three persons of the Trinity, and each person plays a special and specific role within the Believer's life. Regarding Christ, we are identified with and joined to Him.³³ This is only possible by the power of God working through His Spirit, who continually works the process of sanctification to transform His adopted children into the image of Jesus. In the words of Max Lucado,

*“Can you think of a greater gift than to be like Jesus? Christ felt no guilt; God wants to banish yours. Jesus had no bad habits; God wants to remove yours. Jesus had no fear of death; God wants you to be fearless. Jesus had kindness for the diseased and mercy for the rebellious and courage for the challenges. God wants you to have the same.”*³⁴

The Apostle John shared about the attraction the first Disciples of Christ had toward Him in John chapter 1. Initially following John the Baptist, John and Andrew

³¹ Ibid. 134.

³² Ibid. 135.

³³ Rom 8:1; 1 Cor 6:17; Gal 2:20; Eph 1:3, 6, 7; 2:1-6, 13

³⁴ Max Lucado, *Just like Jesus: living in the heart of the Savior* (Nashville Tn. Word Publishing, 1998), 172-173.

turned their attention to his cousin Jesus, and followed after Him instead. Lucado writes,

“Rabbi,” they asked, “where are you staying?” Pretty bold request. They didn’t ask Jesus to give them a minute or an opinion or a message or a miracle. They asked for His address. They wanted to hang out with Him. They wanted to know Him. They wanted to know what caused His head to turn and His heart to burn and His soul to yearn. They wanted to study His eyes and follow His steps. They wanted to see Him. They wanted to know what made Him laugh and if He ever got tired. And most of all, they wanted to know, *Could Jesus be who John said He was—and if He is, what on earth is God doing on the earth?*³⁵

Rationalization is one of the most universally and frequently used defenses. As humans, we have all inherent anxieties, and we also try to avoid them, or at least minimize their effects. Some control over one’s anxiety is essential to successfully secure and maintain integration of the different aspects of one’s personality and core values.³⁶ As one’s superego sets rules, standards and demands, it also seeks conformance. The id in turn seeks satisfaction and pleasure through the gratification of inner needs that are often unacceptable to his ego, therefore society as a whole. In seeking to resolve these conflicting forces, the ego mediates between the superego’s standards and the id’s impulsive need for pleasure. Rationalization is often called into service to mediate and bring reconciliation to accomplish this end, thus the incompatible becomes compatible.

Rationalization is the conscious attempt to explain away or to justify something that is unacceptable (either personally, interpersonally or socially) by making it more unobjectionable or credible. It can be defined as the ego’s attempt to justify or modify otherwise unacceptable impulses, needs, feelings, behaviors into ones that are consciously bearable or acceptable.³⁷ Rationalization is also very similar to Justification, except the former typically lacks the bases or legitimate rationale that the latter possesses. There is also a connection to Repression in that both seek to supply something acceptable for an otherwise unacceptable motive or wish. The Repression of consciously intolerable motives or needs is facilitated; hence, the nonrational but more acceptable and credible is made to seem accurate and rational.³⁸ Again, the heart of man is deceptive and bent on meeting its own selfish desires. Without an external and objective standard of truth, one can justify or rationalize almost anything.

As one bases his choices on subjective experiences, Rationalization is necessary to keep equilibrium and ameliorate the inherent conflicts that develop from wanting what he cannot have, especially when one’s desires are sinful and confront objective truth. Repression, Projection, Identification and Rationalization

³⁵ Ibid. 168-169.

³⁶ Laughlin, *The Ego and its Defenses*, 251-256.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

working in unison allowed King David to unconsciously justify choices that brought him to adultery and murder. The slippery slope of selfishness, lust and desire forever changed his life and legacy. What was permissible for the neighboring kings was not allowed for the king who was a man after God's own heart because David and the people of Israel were to be set apart. But David was the king. He was great as a warrior, and brought prosperity to his people. If David could rationalize his sin could not anyone?

Defense mechanisms are an inherent component of one's psyche, and serve man by integrating information internally, ameliorating anxieties and allowing people to interact with a level of fluidity. They are critical elements to function and process information and other stimuli every day. Yet in contrast, defense mechanisms also have the capacity to keep one from realizing his sin and true needs that can only be met by truth.

Again, David stands as a testimony of how one's defense mechanisms have the ability to lead one down a dangerous road where he can live out his desires without feeling remorse or concern about consequences. Even though David knew God personally, and had the Holy Spirit's indwelling, he still compromised truth for temporal desire and pleasure, and suffered the consequence for his choices for the remainder of his life. Objective truth must be continually pursued and applied to challenge the natural propensity of man, which often gravitates to the lowest and most detestable sins that reside within self.