

So many of life's dilemmas have a parallel in Bible stories. In our modern society we tend to think that our situations are markedly different from those in the ancient world but the success of the Bible throughout centuries speaks to the contrary. It would have been forgotten or ignored if it wasn't relevant for all ages, including today.

After reading "Discerning Faces", the last book in my 'Romantic Devotions' series, a student of the Bible will recognize parallel stories in its pages. For example, the relationship a worker has to his master in the Book of Philemon is brought out in the case of a wayward son who works for his father. Likewise, the triangular situation between the main characters is familiar in the story of Abram, Sara, and Hagar. The characters in this book, in both cases, rely on counsel found in the Bible to solve their problems.

It's a shame in our modern culture that many Christians don't do the same. If they would follow Biblical advice all the time, many unsavory situations would be avoided. But polls show that we don't act significantly different from the population at large when we encounter problems. For example, in our marital relationships, we have the same divorce rate as the general public. In our business dealings, Christians as well as non-Christians are in prison for criminal practices. We would like to dismiss these facts by claiming Christian offenders aren't really Christians, that they only use the name when filling out forms. But we really don't know the truth of this claim because the relationship between God and an individual is fundamentally private. It is just as likely that they are believers who never read their Bible for its advice and have been influenced by their sin nature, unsavory peers, or amoral cultural trends. But that isn't what happens in my story.

In my story, the characters do consider what the Bible says and as a result, the outcome is better than you would expect from normal human reactions. The story's conclusion doesn't provide a perfect solution because real life rarely offers that. Instead, a compromise is reached that is acceptable to the families involved. And that should be our expectation as well, that we as Christians can resolve our different viewpoints by finding a solution that works in the real world. So ask yourself how you would react in situations faced by the main character or a supporting character that you identify with. If your response is ill-advised in the Bible, chances are very good it would eventually bite you in reality. After all, Solomon, the wisest of all men born in his time, concluded that nothing is really new under the sun and that seems to apply today as well.



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