

Sample essay on the tragic history of doctor faustus

[Society](#)



Faustus began his early life a very contented man. As a knowledgeable scholar, he found enough justification to live happily. The chorus at the very beginning offers an insight of how he (Faustus) was raised and groomed by his parents and kinsmen to achieve a doctorate in theology. "Of riper years to Wittenberg he went, whereas his kinsmen chiefly brought him up. So soon he profits in divinity, The fruitful plot of scholarism grac'd, 4, That shortly he was grac'd with doctor's name, Excelling all those sweet delight disputes In heavenly matters of theology;" (Marlowe, 5). This part of the text provides us a basis for our argument that in search of knowledge, one feels privileged not only in resolving disputes that encompass his/her scholarly ability but also finds divine delight in it. The question that lingers in mind thus is how such a man who was so contented and wise could within a fraction of a second, make a pact with the devil in search of power than knowledge. Is it such a scenario that can be termed as the adverse effects of limitless knowledge?

How one decides to sacrifice his/her divinity for the material earthly belongings and power is something that has historically condemned human beings in their lifetime endeavors. The lust for power and glory lead to an automatic transformation of man into an entity that seems beyond eternal reach. There is a tendency to forget the goals that one had in life and focus on the new lavish life that is associated with man. However, it is hard to know where the blame lies. Thus, there are only two other aspects on which the blame can be laid. It's either the society that transforms a good man to evil or either it's a natural transformation that was predefined during the creation days. The latter would mean that the blame is in the creator. That is

God. The former would revolve around societal beliefs associated with power. This argument would, however, not hold any strong argument considering that it is the same society that raises a good man. Similarly, history can trace for good men who ascended to power and remained true to their ideologies.

Thus, there is only one option left, that man has unbound limits to make their own decisions and suffer their consequences. Looking at Faustus, the decision made has its benefits. In one way, his aspiration was to use the magic power to acquire wealth. However, he did not realize that the time limit of the pact for the twenty four years would be short. Indeed, the search for petty celebrity resorted to nothing but a fame-seeking Faustus (Tromly, 136). He could travel far and wide to perform his magic to influential people, the pope and Charles V being among his most notable audience (Marlowe, 99). His dream to acquire wealth was all but fading with each passing day. At the peak of his magical powers, he could overwhelm even the low class citizens with his magic. At times, it seems as though he is overwhelmed by the possibilities. Served by Mephistopheles the devil's agent, Faustus is condemned to a life that seems unimaginable to such a great scholar. How he lost his values and ability to think beyond limits as a scholar is bound to controversy.

This marks the beginning of his wickedness. His pledge of loyalty to Lucifer and withdrawal of the same from God means that he has shunned his own knowledge, rebuked the powers that have all along made him a renowned scholar and ignored his own ideologies as pertains to divinity. This beginning of committing sins marks a never ending cycle of regret. While Faustus

recognizes that his powers are bound by time, he seems to have been embroiled in turmoil as he fights his instinct led by a good angel against the demands of Lucifer (Marlowe, 101). He realizes that there is no turning back from the path he took. This implies the frustrations that accompany a human in frustration. While there is an urge for self-redeem, the chances are that as time goes, they become negligible.

At such an instance, an individual realizes that they made a grave mistake by committing to sin and averting from the natural and divine way of life. The conflict between inner self and the demands placed by the newly found ally (in Faustus' case, the ally being Lucifer) force one into a state of dilemma. On one hand, there are consequences, and on the other, there is redemption. It is a matter of weighing the benefits and the demerits. As can be attested by the story of Faustus, there is a time when he decides to seek heavenly virtues but at the same time, the powers that be with Lucifer and hell seem to overrule (Ruickbie, 15).

“ The Tragic History of Doctor Faustus” takes a shift from the normal Christian view of redemption, forgiveness and eternity. In a Christian view, as long as one is alive, there is a chance for redemption as well as forgiveness before eternity. There is one theme that can be built from here. While the intention of ending the story in this perspective may have been influenced by the need to have a dramatic ending of the story, there is one moral lesson to derive. That once an individual shifts from the morally, acceptable ways of life especially through defiance of the highest eternal powers, there is bound to be a consequence that will follow one to eternity. One cannot escape the consequences of human weakness in making

decisions. This is simply because; the eternal powers offer us a guiding angel who drives our instincts; thus any defiance is likened by the powers as an intentional and absolute ignorance of their own existence. Punishment is due, and this punishment is deserved. It does not overrule the importance of the conventional understanding the divinity of these powers (Ruickbie, 21). Thus, while knowledge is a tool for ascent o power, there are limit upon which humans should consider utilizing their knowledge. The limitless ability to think is a blessing to mankind; it opens the doors to innovation that can benefit the society. However, when characteristic of knowledge is abused, the antagonists should be held accountable even to eternity. It is such a thinking that can enable humans to utilize the ability to think and gain knowledge limitlessly. With such consequences entrenched in people's minds though virtual, there are higher chances that knowledge and its associated powers are utilized responsibly. This would ensure that people realize the daring consequences that may accompany them even to eternity. It would create a society that would be governed not just by religious principles, but universal principles that recognize the importance of a peaceful eternity.

Works Cited

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