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Divisions in our Society

In modern society, there are numerous examples of widespread divisions. A division can be viewed as an absence of agreement or consensus on a particular issue. Divisions are present in nearly every aspect of life. Families, neighbors, communities, countries and larger regions are often hopelessly divided. What causes these divisions? There are various reasons as to why such divisions exist. Historical reasons and grievances, religion and ethnicity are often the reasons behind such divisions. However, it can be argued that the greatest and most widespread cause of division is wealth, or more accurately the unequal distribution of wealth. One party being unreasonable, Wealth is a fantastic divider. Yet there are so many people who dedicate their lives to pursue wealth, with this pursuit causing even further division.

Wealth creates divisions in every aspect of society. On the familial level, how many times have we seen families torn apart by disagreements over inheritances. For there to be an inheritance, there must be a death. Inheritances seem to create massive divisions and tensions usually involving property and money. These issues can become paramount and the deceased family member is often of secondary importance. Competing family members are often appear more preoccupied in jockeying for advantageous positioning as opposed to being concerned with the fact that loss of life is occurring. Sibling rivalry is a term most often used to describe competitiveness among children. Full blown sibling rivalry among adults can be the most bitter

and nasty type of division, particularly when motivated by considerations of wealth and money. Divisions within a family are often irreversible and outsiders often limit contact with both the warring parties, lest they be seen to be taking sides. The division usually extends well beyond the homeplace and is often spread out among communities.

Wealth tensions does not just divide families. Countries are often divided by disputes that can often be condensed down to issues of wealth and wealth distribution. Look at the Oil Crisis of 1973. As a retaliation and punishment to the United States for aiding Israel, OPEC imposed an US oil embargo. This created international tensions and divisions. The West desperately needed the oil for their economies as they were scarce on oil resources themselves. There are good grounds for believing that the quest for oil has been the motivation behind wars involving middle eastern countries. Professed concerns with regard to national security and human rights abuses are often a thinly veiled cover for military actions that many believe have more to do with economic health and wealth issues. Other international disputes are often rooted in wealth issues such as territorial mining rights and maritime fishing rights. From Chinese and Japanese disputes over islands in the East China Sea to heated tensions along the Gaza Strip, countries are going head to head with one another over what they would value as wealth creation opportunities. It is noticeable that poorer regions of the world do not have the same level of International attention bestowed on them.

In addition to International disputes over wealth, there are many examples of division and social unrest within the same country. Unequal distribution of wealth has caused massive strife and division here in the US. Many claim that the American dream is long since dead. The use of statistics such as the one that shows the lower-income 50 percent of the American population

owned about 1.1 percent of the total wealth, while the 1 percent top-earners were in possession of about 35.5 percent of the wealth. This is bound to cause huge division that often manifests itself in rioting and looting in poorer areas. This in turns results in additional and imbalanced police attention which creates further division between police enforcement and these poorer communities. As we all know, wealth creates classes. In some areas there are children being driven or driving to school in fancy cars, while in nearby ares children are hopping on and off city buses? I other ares children walk or cycle to school as their families cannot afford the bus fares. And in other nearby areas there are the children who do not go to school at all. Society has a habit of labelling people and categorizing them into different classes. The primary dividing tool used is the possession of wealth. Divisions and mistrust often ensues among neighboring communities and this often gets compounded with the passage of time and the advent of new generations. Some are motivated to try and move up the social ladder. Others fail and often slide back down further. Once more, it is the perceived injustices of unequal distribution of wealth that can be the major source of tension and division.

Opinion on how wealth should be distributed is, in itself, a great dividing point. Here in the US, it is always a hot topic and a frequently debated issue. However this is not a new debate with divisions on the issue dating back to 1848 with Marx and his Communist Manifesto. In his proposed vision of society, there was no class division. There was absolute equality, with the even distribution of wealth. Although his vision had its flaws, it outlaws the divisions created by wealth. To counter this viewpoint, there is the extreme capitalism belief in the “rich get richer, while the poor get poorer” opinion. The capitalist argument contends that socialism and communism is a Utopian ideal and cannot function effectively in society. Capitalists argue that

those who work hard will be most rewarded. Then the money will trickle down through the various layers of society and everybody will benefit eventually. Although these two viewpoints represent two extreme views of society, they are not far off the liberal conservative divide today. This issue has certainly contributed to the polarization of America's political parties. Looking at the 2016 election, this issue was a clear divisor in the two political campaigns. There are many examples worldwide where capitalist and socialist countries have been judged by historians to have been sparkling successes and abject failures in equal measure.