

## TRAGIC TRAITS OF FAUSTUS IN MARLOWE'S DR. FAUSTUS: AN ACUTE STUDY

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### Abstract

*This article is an analysis of the destruction of the protagonist named Dr. Faustus in Christopher Marlowe's play The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus. Dr. Faustus is a morality play which revolved around the goods and evils for the downfall of the human spirit. In this play, Faustus was selected by Lucifer to give away his soul to the devil and led his life doom eternally. Dr. Faustus is a witty person in the field of law, divinity, logic and medicine, but he is not satisfied with his knowledge, he wanted to learn beyond the human limitations. This article deals with the sins committed by Dr. Faustus in this play. A whole shipload of sins, between them pride, despair and covetousness were work together for Dr. Faustus's damnation. The evil spirit tempted him to fall for his own. He refused God and he gave his ears to the evil angels. Current research addresses the tragic sins of Doctor Faustus*

**Keywords:** Downfall, Sin, Tragic, Temptation.

### INTRODUCTION

Christopher Marlowe, also known as Kit Marlowe, was an English playwright, poet and translator of the Elizabethan era. Marlowe is among the most famous of the Elizabethan playwrights. Christopher Marlowe, the greatest of Shakespeare's predecessors and one of the most prominent figures of the English Renaissance, was born in 6 February, 1564 in the old cathedral town of canterbury. His father being a poor shoemaker, the boy was sent to Cambridge by a patron. He was died on 30 May, 1593 at the age of 29 in Deptford, Kent, England. His notable works are Hero and Leander, Tamburlaine the Great, Edward the Second and The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus.

Marlowe is the most famous English tragic writer, known for his blank verse. The Main purpose of this book is to preach and echo the teachings of the church. Events in his life were sometimes as extreme as those found in his plays. Reports of Marlowe's death in 1593 were particularly infamous in his day and are contested by scholars today due to a lack of good documentation. Six dramas have been attributed to the authorship of Christopher Marlowe either alone or in collaboration with other writers, with varying degrees of evidence. His plays were enormously successful, possibly due to the imposing stage presence of his lead actor, Edward Alleyne.

For his contemporaries in the literary world, Marlowe was above all an admired and influential artist. Shakespeare was much influenced by Christopher Marlowe. Marlowe has been used as a character in books, theatre, film, television and radio. His second work, *Doctor Faustus*, though a hero-play like *Tamburlaine*, is cast on more subtle lines. This is the story of the life and death of a medieval scholar who barter his spirit to the devil in reciprocity for twenty-four years of power & pleasure. Like *Tamburlaine*, this play also aspires after the unattainable only to meet with defeat finally.

The play had a good deal of scope for large discussions on human will and fate, but Marlowe did

not fully exploit the possibilities of his subject. He also wrote a poem entitled, “*Hero and Leander*” in which, apart from the drama, the Renaissance movement is seen at perhaps its highest point in English poetry. *Doctor Faustus* is a morality play where the themes revolved around the fight between evil and good for the destruction of the human spirit. The play in which the characters personify moral qualities such as charity or vice. Actually, the concept of seven deadly sins was composed by William Dunbar.

### HISTORY OF SEVEN DEADLY SINS:

The Seven Deadly Sins can be thought of as propensity towards sin and separation from God. The deadly sins were the most popular theme in the morality plays, literature and art of the Middle Ages in Europe. Seven Deadly Sins were also called as Seven Capital Sins or Seven Cardinal Sins in Romantic catholic theology. Seven Deadly Sins were first established by Pope Gregory I (the great) in the 6<sup>th</sup> century and elaborated in the 13<sup>th</sup> century by St. Thomas Aquinas. They are Pride, Lust, Envy, Gluttony, Wrath, Sloth and Greed. Each of these can be overcome with the seven corresponding virtues of Humility, Charity, Chastity, Gratitude, Temperance, Patience and Diligence.

The corruption of the soul through sinful thoughts and actions literally disgraces the perpetrator during his or her sojourn on the earth. Having fallen out of grace with God during life, the person is in peril of damnation after death. In all instances the sinner is deduced to be alive in some form after death in order to experience the agony and despair.

Pride	– Broken of the wheel
Envy	– Encased in freezing water
Greed	– Boiled in oil
Anger (Wrath)	– Torn apart, limb from limb – Roasted by fire and brimstone
Gluttony	– forced to eat rats, snakes, spiders and toads.
Sloth	– Thrown into snake pits.

The Main themes of this play are the madness of ambition, true versus illusive power and good versus evil. Faustus’s aimed to give way to pranks and entertainment, showing the lunacy of his desire to reach for power over human limitations. The Major theme talked here is the Seven Deadly Sins in the *Doctor Faustus*.

The Theme of the play is the sin of excessive ambition. In this article, Faustus’s destruction of life has been revealed. German scholar, Doctor Faustus, does not use his power sensibly. Finally, he is carried away to his eternal damnation. For the downfall of Faustus, Lucifer sends Mephistopheles, prince of the underworld. He is responsible for bringing Faustus to Lucifer, he serves him for 24 years.

The duty of the fallen angel, Lucifer, is to bring souls away from God. Meanwhile, Good Angel tries to take Faustus away from the influence of Lucifer. Bad angel urges him to be true to his contract with Lucifer. When Good angel tries to save Faustus, Mephistophilis and Lucifer parade the seven

deadly sins before him in order to divert his mind.

After learning all black magics, he starts to commit sins in his life like jokes, tricks and calling for a beautiful woman. Others and himself harm themselves in this play through sins, so far, he has the option of preservation all through the play. This magic made him to commit sins, to achieve his lusts and desires in life. He forgot about his commitments and authorities to God. He was in a tragic series of greed. At last, he lost his trustworthiness.

Though the Good Angel always reminded him to get back to God, but the bad angel was appetizing him, he had a big curse on him, and he will not return to God anymore. The hunger of wisdom made him to commit sins against God. In the initial stage, Faustus plans to use magic for the good of humanity, providing silken clothes for poor scholars, driving out all the aggressors and building up Germany into an invincible nation. Faustus degenerates as years pass by. He is quite delighted with the procession of the seven deadly sins which show how impure his mind has become.

Faustus's falling for the spirit of Helen that he has raised marks the depth of his degradation. Kissing her, he commits the unforgivable sin of demonality, that is bodily contact with spirit. This is one of the sins made by Faustus in this play. Lucifer's conjuring of the seven deadly sins has the desired effect, as it puts an end to Faustus's repentance and turns him back to the Evil angel. The first sin committed by Doctor Faustus is Pride. Pride is one of the seven deadly sins. Pride is the first source that which led him to commit other sins. After committing the first sin, the hunger of knowledge gives him the sin of greediness. He is not grunted with what he gained. Faustus wants to know beyond the limitation of human knowledge, this the sin of greediness.

As we are human being, we have to control ourselves and we have grunted ourselves with what we have. If it is not, like the Fallen Faustus, we too meet our disaster in our life. This is a great message given by Marlowe. He was not interested to take the religious issues seriously, he laughs at the parade of the seven deadly sins in Act 2, Scene 3 of this play.

"That sight will be as pleasant to me as Paradise was to Adam to first day of creation". Pride is the sin that becomes root cause of Faustus's fall. Magic is might. To control others, to achieve his desire, to reach heights behalf of other spirits, Faustus need magical powers. This decision destructed him into the earth. With the use of Black Magic, Faustus emphasizes the importance of trustworthiness and transparency to functioning capitalist economic exchange.

Faustus is a super-smart scholar whose starvation of mastery led him to exploit his life. In the current, this like of starvation towards knowledge, wealth and power takes a man into a best way in life and the worst way in life too. This resembles the person with sin of greedy in this play Doctor Faustus. Faustus's soul payment in 24 years with his own blood. After the contract, he hangs out most of his time frame is earning his own amusement and advantages. He started committing sins after this. The supreme being of this world gives him a lot of slot through Good Angel, but he gives his ears to the Bad Angel.

The pull off more sins by Faustus caused by pride and ambition, is absolutely that what happened in the Garden of Eden. At first, Doctor Faustus doesn't have a sleep for eight days. This shows that in 'Macbeth', Lady Macbeth can't have a sleep because of her conscience. Here, it implies Faustus was in deep trouble that automatically assess. He cheats on a horse-courser with his wealth and power. The theme of this play is, sins of Excessive ambition, his needs the power beyond human

limits. Because of Disobedient to God, Faustus dares to make pact with Lucifer, this is the ultimate sin in this play.

“The cost of sin is always higher than its potential benefits” this is the message from this play. Faustus’s soul was destructed at last, met with a downfall in his life. Though he had more chances to change, he doesn’t move to Christ because of his endless desire and starvation of knowledge. This interpretation is the cause of sin in destruction of our life. On the final day before the damnation of Faustus, his mind is filled with fear and remorse. He begged for mercy and forgiveness from God, but it is too late. At midnight, a bundle of devils appears and carries his soul off to hell. This is the damnation of Doctor Faustus. After that, scholars were decided to hold a funeral for him. In his final soliloquy, Faustus’s self-assertive spirit collapses into a desire for extinction; his aspiration to divinity into a longing for annihilation as he seeks desperately to escape from the ‘the heavy wrath of God’.

Students of English literature are familiar with this play because Faustus is an example for them who would not be like him. After detaching from God, he is tempted by bad angels. The sins made by Doctor Faustus show that how the person with high expectations would be.

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