

Right And Wrong

It is an unfortunate thing in our society, but all too real--people are trying to blur the lines between RIGHT and WRONG. In times past, nearly everyone would agree that lying is WRONG and "honesty is the best policy." Today, folks will say that it is okay to lie in some situations if it will not "hurt" anyone. Likewise, it used to be that religious people would universally condemn pre-marital sex. However, in the present many of our neighbors turn a "blind eye." It seems that as the years go by, there are few things that are definitely RIGHT or WRONG. One of the problems is that we have been fed the line of "situation ethics"--what is RIGHT for you may not be RIGHT for me. We have been told that truth is relative. All of this comes from men and has been put into religion, contrary to what God says.

God sets a definite standard and expects people to live up to it. He has a plumbline to which all men are to align themselves (cf. Amos 7:7). God says there is a right and a wrong way of living, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:13-14). The right way is Jesus Christ. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn. 14:6). The WRONG way is anything else (cf. Jn. 8:24).

Further, the RIGHT way is not exclusively limited to an intellectual assent to the belief of Jesus as the Christ (cf. Jas. 2:14-26). Some men believed but would not confess (Jn. 12:42; Lk. 12:8-9). They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God, and for that, they were condemned in their sins (Gal. 1:10). The parents of the blind man believed, but would not confess for fear (Jn. 9:19-23). The Bible declares that these kind of people will burn in hell, "But the FEARFUL...shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8). It takes more than just a belief in Jesus to be saved. We must also confess his name, repent of our sins, be baptized to have past sins washed away, then remain faithful (Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 3:19; 2:38; 22:16; Rev. 2:10).

Religion

The right way in religion is marked out by God's inspired Word (2 Tim.

3:16-17). It contains all that we need in order to live a righteous and godly life (2 Pet. 1:3). Thus, we see John's sharp point when he said, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 Jn. 1:9-11). A person MUST live within the teaching of Christ in order to have fellowship (salvation) in Christ (cf. 1 Jn. 1:3-7). We see a parallel statement made by Paul, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Gal.1:8-9). There is a true gospel and all else is a perverted gospel, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ" (Gal. 1:6-7).

Dear reader, do you agree that not everything that is being taught by churches is according to the gospel of Christ? Do you agree that not everyone who claims to be a proclaimer of the Word, actually is? Do you agree that those who do not accurately teach the truth are outside of Christ and are to be rejected (2 Jn. 9-11)? If so, you agree with what the Bible teaches.

Immorality

Is homosexuality RIGHT? Some in our society are saying it is, and there are even some scientists trying to prove it is genetic, like the color of our skin. However, the Bible says it is WRONG! "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness...For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet" (Rom. 1:26-27; cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

Is it RIGHT to commit adultery? Some have suggested that an illicit affair can "spice up your marriage." Yet, the Bible says it is WRONG! "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and

adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:4).

Salvation

Is salvation by faith alone RIGHT? The Methodists' Book of Discipline says, "...we are justified by faith, only,...a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort" (Part II, paragraph 68, Article IX). The Bible says this is WRONG! "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and NOT BY FAITH ONLY" (Jas. 2:24; cf. Heb. 5:9).

What we want to realize is that there is a RIGHT and WRONG. We are to ACCEPT THE RIGHT and abide in Christ, and REJECT THE WRONG to remain pure and free from the doctrines and commandments of men (2 Jn. 9-11; Matt. 15:7-9). The standard for determining RIGHT and WRONG, is not our own fallible judgment or deceptive feelings, but the objective standard of God's everlasting Word (Jer. 10:23; Prov. 14:12; 1 Pet. 4:11). Therefore, when the Bible says to believe, repent, confess Christ, and be baptized, we know it is RIGHT (Jn. 3:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 10:9-10; Mk. 16:16).

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