

## How to Decide RIGHT FROM WRONG

### Int.

1. Aim: To show how we tell the difference between right and wrong.
2. Text -Heb 5:13,14 **"For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."**
  - a. Two stages of Growth in Christians:
    - (1) Babes
    - (2) Full age
  - b. The last group have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Discern - decide "know right from wrong" = understand
3. This is a problem for sincere Christians — how to decide what is right and what is wrong.
  - a. We do not automatically know the answer
  - b. No person on earth has the authority to decide for you.
  - c. It is God's will that decides the matter. This lesson will help you to find God's will for right and wrong. What Does the Bible Teach ?

### Discussion

#### **I. THE BIBLE PLAINLY SAYS SOME THINGS ARE WRONG**

- A. A. Some sins are specifically mentioned.
  1. Gal 5:19-21
  2. Eph. 4:25-31 Eph. 5:3-6
  3. Col. 3:5-9
  4. I Cor. 6:9,10

| <u>4 Sexual Sins</u>         | <u>8 Sins of Disposition</u> | <u>3 Sins of Intemperance</u> |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Adultery                     | Hatred                       |                               |
| Fornication                  | Variance                     |                               |
| Uncleanness                  | Emulations                   | Murder                        |
| Lasciviousness               | Wrath                        | Drunkenness                   |
|                              | Strife                       | Revellings                    |
|                              | Seditious                    |                               |
| <u>2 Sins of Godlessness</u> | Heresies                     |                               |
| Idolatry                     | Envyings                     |                               |
| Witchcraft                   |                              |                               |

- B. Every sin is not mentioned by name, for the Bible would be endless if that were true.

- C. Some of the same sins are mentioned in the different passages

## **II. ACTS SIMILAR TO THESE ARE ALSO WRONG**

- A. Gal. 5:19-21 "such like"

1. "Things like these" WEB translation
2. When we are uncertain about an act, we may see if it is LIKE any sins specifically mentioned.
3. If it is similar then we know it is wrong. That settles it.

- B. Write down two lists of things:

1. Those things approved / Those things condemned
2. Then anything not specifically mentioned can be compared to these lists and see which it is like: Things Approved or condemned ???

- C. Example #1 — Gambling

1. Gambling is not mentioned in the Bible
2. It is included in "such like"
3. Why? It is like "envying" [Gal. 5: 21] ,
4. It is like: "thieves" and "covetous" [I Cor. 6: 10]
5. Lotteries, Raffles, buying a chance are forms of gambling

- D. Example #2 - Dancing

1. Dancing is not specifically mentioned
2. Lasciviousness [Gal. 5:19] - "wanton (acts or) manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females, etc." [Thayer p.79]
3. Dancing is defined by the word and would be like several other sins - "revellings" [Gal. 5:19]

### **III. ANY ACT WHICH VIOLATES YOUR CONSCIENCE IS WRONG**

- A. Rm. 14:23 **"whatever is not of faith is sin"**
1. Anything "not of faith" refers to conscience
  2. The conscience is not a perfect guide, but it must not be violated.
  3. Conscience is that part of us which tells us when we have done something contrary to what we have been taught is right.
  4. How the conscience acts, depends upon WHAT we have been taught.
- B. If we abuse our conscience it cannot help us do right.
1. God describes this condition as **"having the conscience seared with a hot iron"** - I Tim. 4:2
  2. They are like dead nerves with no feeling.
  3. The conscience that has been abused will not warn us of wrong doing.
  4. Example — cards — dice — marbles "eating in building"

### **IV. ADVICE OF OTHER CHRISTIANS CAN HELP**

- A. "Full age" Christians
1. They can better discern good and evil than babes
  2. Experience teaches lessons that cannot be learned any other way.
- B. This is why the help of older Christians is needed
1. I Kings 12:6-20 Rehoboam was young and he made mistakes
  2. A young king shows that he did not value the advice from older experienced people.  
He was foolish !
  3. Elders, teachers, preachers are some you may consult
  4. Tit. 2:3,4 Older women are to teach the younger women
  5. We do not have to learn everything our self [the hard way] - we can benefit from the experience of other people!

## **V. CONSIDER THE EFFECT OF AN ACT ON OTHER PEOPLE**

- A. Christians must think of their influence on others.
1. We must think of our influence on non-Christians
  2. People are not converted wholly by proving what is right doctrinally by the Bible
  3. The manner of life we live has a strong influence -
  4. I Tim.4:12 "**Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.**"
- B. We must consider our influence on Christians
1. Any act is wrong which has the effect of causing another Christian to sin or become discouraged or make weaker.
  2. I Cor. 8:8-13 "**Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.**"

## **VI. CONSIDER THE EFFECT OF AN ACT ON YOURSELF**

- A. We have two parts
1. Physical - body
  2. Spiritual - soul
- B. I Cor. 6:13-20 V.19-20 "**What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20. For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.**"
1. Our Body is "for the Lord" - It is the "temple of the Holy Spirit"
  2. We are to "glorify God" in our bodies / This implies taking care of the body
  3. Lk. 2:52 - Jesus took care of the body "**And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.**"

- C. It is more important to know the effect on our Soul / Spirit
1. Some acts cause people to become less interested in worship, in Bible study, and in Christian living.
  2. Ps. 101:3 **"I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me."**
  3. Some acts not wrong in themselves, may take up so much time that they interfere with worship, Bible study, or doing good works.
  4. Hobbies - recreation
  5. Mt. 6:33

## **VII. DOES IT INVOLVE WASTE OF TIME OR MONEY**

- A. Christians are "stewards" of their time/ money and all that God has given
1. Steward — manager
  2. We are required to use what God has given us and be able to give good account to Him for it.
  3. Mt. 25:14-30 - "talents"
  4. Eph. 5:15, 16 emphasizes good use of our time. **"See then that we walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise. 16. Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."**
- B. Many of us WASTE enough time to read the Bible through several times a year.
- C. Rest and relaxation are not a waste, because they prepare the mind and body for doing our best work. Jesus rested. He attended a wedding feast.

**VIII. WOULD JESUS DO IT ?**

- A. When you know what Jesus would do you should do it. He is our Example.
1. If you cannot decide for sure about a certain act then ask "Would Jesus do it?"
  2. If deep in your heart you know He would not, it is probably wrong.
- B. Parents give that "look"
1. Sometimes when children are about to do something wrong their parents can "look" at them in a certain way and they will stop.
  2. Remember that Jesus is "watching" us with keen and intense interest at all times.
  3. Ps 139:1-4 **"O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. 2. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. 3. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. 4. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether."**
  4. When writing to various churches he told them "I know thy works" - Rev. 2:2, 9, 13, 19

**IX. DOES IT GLORIFY GOD ?**

- A. We are to do all things to bring glory to God
1. Mt. 5:16 **"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."**
  2. Rom. 15:6 **"That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."**
  3. I Cor. 6:20 **"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."**

B. If these actions do not glorify God then we should not do them

1. To glorify God is to exalt and honor Him as worthy of the highest praise and most faithful service.
2. We must strive to learn God's will and then do it
3. Do only those things that will bring glory to God.

### **Conclusion**

1. We must discern [understand] what is right and wrong.
2. These things will help you decide to do right.
3. Heb. 5:13,14
  - (1) Some things condemned
  - (2) Things like them
  - (3) Violates conscience
  - (4) Advice from others
  - (5) Effect on others
  - (6) Effect on self
  - (7) Waste of time or money
  - (8) Would Jesus Do it?
  - (9) Does it Glorify God ?
4. Decisions must be made every day about right and wrong