

*A Christian seeks the Truth*  
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**Introduction:** It is truly a difficult thing to seek and know the truth.

- A. Everyone can identify with Pilate as he was on the “hot seat” to judge and declare the truth.
  - 1. Pilate however was not dedicated to the truth as a result what was clearly knowable became “shades of gray.” (**Jn 18:37-38**)
  - 2. Even when he did speak out in his words he did not back them up with action.
  - 3. Are you one of those who Jesus described when He said: “Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice.”
- B. God has created within man a moral nature that can see “good and evil.”
  - 1. Adam and Eve came to know “good and evil” after their sin. (**Gen 2:9; 3:5,22**)
  - 2. Every child that is allowed to grow up will one day reach an age where he can know “good and evil.” (**Deut 1:39; Rom 7:9**)
- C. We then must choose between “good and evil” and that choice will determine our lives!
  - 1. Your associates will be determined by this. (**Psa 1:1-4**)
  - 2. Those who you associate with (fellowship) on a religious basis will be determined by this.
  - 3. Your relationship with God will be determined by this. (**1 Pt 3:10-12**)
  - 4. Your eternity will be determined by this.

***I. We must want to know right from wrong***

- A. Satan wants you to see the “advantage” of not knowing.
    - 1. Satan wants to lead you into “darkness” (ignorance) while God wants to lead you into “light” (God’s truth). (**Jn 3:19-21**)
    - 2. Darkness allows you to avoid the short-term pain of knowing the truth and paying the price to change. Satan calls this a bargain.
    - 3. He also will deceive you about the long-term consequences. (Ex. Lady who became nervous while driving.)
  - B. We come to want to see right from wrong because we come to know a living God.
    - 1. When we come to have a fear (reverence) of God then we want to see. (**Psa 36:1-4**)
    - 2. Because I trust in a God who knows me and will take care of me then I will set aside the fear that pushes me towards darkness. (**3 Jn 11; Psa 52:1-4**)
- “The Cross is God's truth about us, and therefore it is the only power which can make us truthful. When we know the Cross, we are no longer afraid of the truth.”
- 3. Solomon asked God for help in knowing “good and evil.” God was well pleased with this desire and blessed Solomon greatly. (**1 Kgs 3:9**)
  - 4. Some think it is “spiritual” and “wise” to flee from an open study of right and wrong concerning “controversial” issues.
- C. Knowledge of right and wrong come from a lifetime of seeking and struggling.
    - 1. God will test us to see if we really want the truth. (**Jn 7:17**)

2. What do we really want in our lives? This is not just a matter of what we say.
3. Ask yourself this question: “Do these verses describe me?” (**Mt 5:6; Amos 5:14-15; Prov 11:27**)
  - a. Hungering and seeking the truth is an “acquired” taste.
  - b. We must maintain this desire. (**Rom 12:9; 16:19**)
4. An evil heart also comes from a lifetime of choices. (**Jer 4:22**)
  - a. I have known Christians who later adapted a lifestyle that they would have never dreamed of. This did not happen overnight.
  - b. Your choices in time will become your character. (**Jer 13:23 NIV**)
  - c. The lazy, unchallenged person will in time be found in Satan’s camp.

## ***II. It is possible to know right from wrong***

- A. God commands us to study His written word so that we can come to “discern both good and evil.” (**Heb 5:12-14**)
  1. While it is possible it also requires diligent effort.
  2. When was the last time you struggled with a Bible issue?
- B. Satan offers substitutes for God’s way.
  1. Some of the most arrogant “moralists” are Satan’s! (**Isa 5:20-21**)
  2. Satan will appeal to emotions. (**Prov 14:12**)
  3. Satan will appeal to smooth speakers who preach “positive Christianity.” (**Isa 30:9-10; 2 Tim 4:2**)
  4. Satan will appeal to numbers, tradition, “scholarship,” and money. (**2 Cor 11:13-14**)
  5. Satan will appeal to outward success as evidence of what is right. (**Rom 3:8**)
  6. What kind of teaching is found where you attend?
- C. Knowing right from wrong is often very hard.
  1. It is not because of the power of truth but because of the contents of our hearts. “Spiritual truth is discernable only to a pure heart, not to a keen intellect. It is not a question of profundity of intellect, but of purity of heart.” - Oswald Chambers
  2. Many do not want the truth because they fear the consequences. (**Ps 38:20**)  
 “For the truth-teller and truth-seeker, indeed, the whole world has very little liking. He is always unpopular, and not infrequently his unpopularity is so excessive that it endangers his life. Run your eye back over the list of martyrs, lay and clerical; nine-tenths of them stood accused of nothing worse than honest efforts to find out and announce the truth.” - H. L. Mencken
  3. There have been many refuse to accept and stand on God’s truth out of a fear that they might be forced to leave the church they attend. (**Jn 9:20-23**)
  4. The battle over marriage-divorce-remarriage is a good example of this.

## ***III. Are our lives reflecting a love for the truth?***

- A. Some talk of “the truth” but in fact are promoting sectarianism. (**Jn 7:48-49**)
  1. One creates a sect when their loyalty shifts to a group of men and not the Lord. (**2 Cor 10:12, 18**)
  2. Those within a sect are fearful of disappointing the leaders. (**Jn 12:42-43; 9:22**)
  3. When you are in a sect you may oppose error that your leaders direct you to

oppose. However you must turn a blind eye to the errors of your leaders.  
(Mt 23:1-3, 13-14, 23-24)

4. When one is in a sect they will use canal weapons to achieve their end. Personal attacks made in the background is a favorite weapon of Satan.
  5. Often the sects will fight each other just like the Pharisees and Sadducees.
  6. We need to fight sectarianism and not join it in the name of militancy.
- B. We can in the name of “the truth” be promoting the work of Satan.
1. We can under the deception of Satan be tearing down the work of Christ.  
(Gal 5:13-15)
  2. It is too easy to become embittered and recruit others to the cause of bitterness.
  3. We counter this by forgiveness and the love of God.
  4. It may take someone close to us to be militant in pointing out the attitudes within our hearts and calling us to repentance! (Ex. Nathan the prophet)
  5. If we are not on the battlefield fighting Satan then we can easily turn to playing or fighting each other.
- C. When we love the truth we will seek to bring others to know it! (2 Tim 2:24-26)
1. Can you picture the Lord saying these words? (Lk 10:2; Jn 4:34-35)
  2. Do you know how to use the harvesting equipment?
  3. Consider the opportunities we have at every age level.
- D. The more militant we are for “the truth” the more Satan will throw at us.
1. Why would Satan bother us when we are quietly letting the battle go by?
  2. Watch out for what happens when we begin to influence the hearts of those captured by Satan. (Acts 4:18-20)

#### ***IV. There will be consequences to the choice you make***

- A. You must decide to live by principle and righteousness. (Josh 24:15)
1. If you live by what is right then God will be “with you.” (1 Pt 3:10-12)
  2. Those who are truly merciful are those who stand by principle. (Prov 14:22)
  3. Because of principle you could not be a member of the churches of men.
- B. Those who take the easy road will also face consequences. (Prov 13:21)
1. Your home will be affected. (Prov 17:13)
  2. You will change your views with the changes in the current culture.
- “The more men suppress the truth of God which they know, the more futile, even senseless, they become in their thinking. - John R. W. Stott
3. Your eternity will be affected. (Jn 5:29-30)

***Conclusion:*** Will you have the courage to choose good?

- A. The short-term pain will lead to forgiveness and later joy in heaven.
- B. Your stand may well lead others to stand for the Lord as well.

The Dry Rot of Moral Relativism  
Jere Frost

One of the more disturbing aspects of random murders by young people is that, after they are apprehended and convicted, many of them show absolutely no remorse. Life is becoming increasingly cheap in the eyes of our youth. Their best hope for some moral stability, and their only hope for salvation, is hearing the gospel of Christ. The gospel

needs to be declared from housetops and in the highways and byways with a renewed fervor. *Moral relativism* has destroyed our youth's moral compass. It denies the existence of God. It denies that the Bible is a proper standard. It openly challenges traditional morals. *Values Clarification* is the course in our public schools that instructs children to avoid making moral judgments. Nothing is right or wrong, black or white, in an absolute moral sense. They are taught to decide their own values independently of all religious and home instruction. The process quickly becomes self-feeding. Hitler killed over six million Jews in the holocaust. A professor of 30 years at Hamilton College, Robert Simon, was reported (Reader's Digest, Feb., 1998) as never having had a student who did not believe the holocaust happened. But he has had many who would *not* say it was "wrong." He quoted one student as saying, "Of course I dislike the Nazis, but who is to say they are *morally* wrong?" He doesn't believe in "judging." Such is the dry rot of moral relativism. It is shocking at first. But combine a few factors, and it is natural and understandable. (1) *The void of religious instruction*: they do not believe there is a divine standard of right and wrong, and life is just animal life whether it be that of an ant, cow or human. (2) *The humanist diet in public schools*: they are taught that man is only an animal (evolution) and there is no such thing as "sin" for that is a religious myth. Right and wrong are to be determined by each person; if others have a different standard, don't judge them. (3) *Abortions, the killing of the unborn*: We have killed more helpless, innocent babies than Hitler killed Jews. Its clinical respectability enhances the perception of the cheapness of life. (4) *The featuring of violence purely for entertainment, and in the daily news*: it has virtually no shock value. It is the expected, the norm. A holocaust? "Yes," they say. Wrong? "Who am I to say?" they reply. There is a desperate need to convict men of sin. Gospel truth does that. (John 16:8; Eph. 5:17) "Repent or perish" must ring out. (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30) There is a God, and every one of us will give an account to Him. We will be judged. (Romans 14:10,12) You - and I - will spend an eternity somewhere. We will spend eternity in heaven or in hell. (Matt. 25:46) These simple but profoundly important truths need to be declared to every creature. (Mark 16:15)

### ***Two Men React To Teaching On Morals***

Bill Hall

Two men listen to lessons on practical Christian living, but their attitudes differ greatly.

The first man views all such teaching as arbitrary "church" rules. Warnings concerning dancing, mixed swimming, general immodesty, divorce for every cause, drinking, etc. are all looked upon as "Church of Christ" standards, traditions being sustained by the old-timers of the church who are out of touch with more up-to-date thinking on morals.

The second man is brought to understand that all such teaching is an outgrowth of genuine respect for the Bible; that warnings concerning the evils mentioned above are based on such scriptures as Matthew 5:27, 28; Gal. 5:19-21; I Tim. 2:9; Matt. 19:9; and Rom. 13:12-14; that they, therefore, are not arbitrary church rules, but are indeed a true picture of God's will for His people.

The first man hates this teaching. Of course he does! Doesn't he have just as much moral perception as another? Why should he allow some other man to decide what's right or what's wrong for him? He'll do what he pleases. Nobody will bind his thinking on him.

The second man, recognizing that the standards under consideration are God's and not man's, gladly complies. Jesus Christ is his Lord and King. He will live whatever life his Lord wants him to live. He will make every sacrifice his Lord wants him to make. His conformity grows out of a desire to please God, not man.

The first man may take the form of a teenager rebelling against parental authority; or the form of a man "raised in the church," whose church loyalty is beginning to wane; or the form of a new convert who is having difficulty defining modesty, decency, and lasciviousness in practical terms. The fault may lie within the person himself. He may be wanting to break away from all restrictions, thus refusing to view objectively Bible principles behind the teaching he is rejecting. Or the fault in some cases may lie in those who teach. They may be guilty of "establishing" their points along these lines through pulpit beating and foot stomping, rather than through sound reasoning from the scriptures; of unconsciously seeking for "church" loyalty or "preacher" loyalty rather than loyalty to the Lord. Either way, we are concerned for our first man's soul, for he is wrong in his thinking.

Let no one misunderstand. We strongly oppose every evil mentioned above. But the truth is--no man is obligated to bow to anything we teach because we teach it; but, on the other hand, he is obligated to live by every principle that is truly established upon the word of God. It is the duty of every teacher, then, to warn of these evils, not on the basis of his own authority, but on the basis of God's authority. It is the duty of every hearer to consider them in the light of scripture. Greater God-consciousness--on the part of both teacher and hearer--is the need.