

Black and White

“For every one that partaketh of milk is without experience of the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But solid food is for fullgrown men, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil” (Hebrews 5:13-14).

Various opinions exist concerning what constitutes good and evil. The question of black, white and gray areas, regarding morals and ethics, are continually being debated. Questions such as: “Is lying wrong?,” “Are premarital relations sinful?,” “Is there a heaven and a hell?,” “Will those who ‘obey not the gospel’ be condemned?” Countless questions and countless answers occupy the mind, and the ultimate question overriding them all, is, “Am I sure that what I believe is right?”

Whether or not we are able to answer the question in the affirmative is based upon one’s standard of right and wrong. Let us approach the subject from two standpoints.

1. No, I cannot be sure that what I believe is right, morally and ethically, if I am my own standard. Many in our society are involved in premarital relationships. They ask the question, “What’s the big deal, it’s only a piece of paper and a ceremony?” The same argument could be given in regard to a hunting and fishing or driver’s license, yet, those who would reject the law, in regard to the marriage relationship, submit to the obtaining of other licenses, because a failure to do so would result in imprisonment and financial ruin. So, is it “just a piece of paper,” or are there other considerations that keep some men and women from complying with the law? The Apostle Paul, said, “For being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God” (Romans 10:3).
2. Yes, I can be sure that what I believe about morals and ethics is right, if God is my standard. Jesus said, concerning the Father, “Thy word is truth” (John 17:17), truth being, “the actual facts of a case.”

How many times have you heard, or maybe even said yourself, “I know what God says, but I just can’t accept it? The words of the Lord, revealed by the Apostle Paul, condemned the Gentiles because they reasoned in the same manner as those who know what God says, but deny it in their lives, saying, “because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools” (Romans 1:21-22).

Do you know that you are right in what you believe and practice? It's not the big things necessarily, but the little things, i.e., your manner of dress, your place in the home, your duties on the job, or your responsibility to the government. Are they all governed by the word of God, or have you rationalized why what God says isn't applicable to you? The Hebrew writer said, "Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled" (Hebrews 13:4). Yet, the society seems to have a difficulty defining premarital relationships or the so-called common law marriages for what they really are: fornication.

Mankind will always have reasons for not doing what God tells them to do. When God instructs, man begins to rationalize what God says with human wisdom, and when it's all said and done, God comes out to be the one in error. The Apostle Paul, said, "Let God be found true, but every man a liar" (Romans 3:4).

Remember the words of the Psalmist, saying, "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore, I hate every false way" (Psalms 119:104). ret