

A Standard for Truth

How do we know what's right or wrong? I posed that question to a group of college students.

ME: Why is killing wrong?

CLASS: The Bible says it is.

ME: For the sake of argument, I am an atheist and I don't believe the Bible. Now tell me why killing is wrong.

CLASS: We're not to take a life that's not ours.

ME: Why not? Doesn't evolution teach "the survival of the fittest?" If I'm more fit than someone else, what's wrong with taking his life?

CLASS: Everyone knows it is.

ME: But who says so?

CLASS: Well ... there's a law against it. It's a crime.

ME: So what if we changed the law? We pass a law that killing others is OK.

CLASS: Who would agree to that?

ME: It has happened before. In the 1930s the Germans set out to kill the Jews. In fact, it was against the law to *help* the Jews.

This exchange went on for a few minutes until one young lady said in exasperation, "I CAN'T TELL YOU WHY KILLING IS WRONG. I JUST KNOW, DEEP DOWN, IT'S WRONG!"

That's the point I wanted these students to get to. There is something innate in us that tells us some things are right and some things are wrong. No one has to explain it to us; we just know it's the right thing to do (or it's the wrong thing to do).

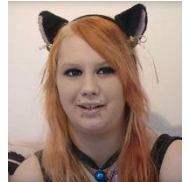
"When Gentiles, who do not by nature have the law, do what the law demands, they are a law to themselves even though they do not have the law. They show that **the work of the law is written on their hearts**. Their consciences confirm this" (Rom. 2:14-15).

For those who've never cracked open a Bible or know anything about the Ten Commandments, they still know right from wrong. The most brazen thief knows deep down he's not supposed to take what isn't his.

Yet we live in a culture that wants to redefine what is right and wrong. It's the postmodern mantra that each one of us is allowed to define truth. *"Your truth may not be the same as my*

truth. Therefore, your definition of right and wrong may be different than my definition."

The most obvious example of that today is the redefining of sexual orientation. Men want to redefine themselves as women, and therefore, want the law to allow them all the rights afforded a woman (i.e., use the public restroom with a picture of a skirt on the door). The notion that "your truth is whatever you make it" allows a man to say he identifies as an six-year-old girl and allows a woman to say she identifies as a cat.



If we buy into today's cultural mindset, who are we to argue with them?

Yet reality remains: there is a standard for right and wrong—and it is a standard that is true for all people at all times and in all places.

Of course, there are those who would scream and shout that I'm wrong to make such a statement. It's as if those who have bought into this "new reality" can shout loud enough, they will drown out that still small voice that says they're wrong. While Paul said "their consciences confirm this"—at one time they knew deep down what is right—they've worked hard to convince themselves otherwise and they are now those "whose consciences are seared" (1 Tim. 4:2).

We can rant and deny the truth all we want, but it is still truth. There is a knowledge of God that comes with embracing truth and acknowledging a standard for right and wrong. We ignore that truth and standard to our own detriment.

"Because they did not think it worthwhile to acknowledge God, God delivered them over to a corrupt mind so that they do what is not right" (Rom. 1:28).

There has to be a standard—that which is true for all people in all places at all times—but who says what that standard is? I'm convinced that standard is found in the Bible. Many people want to dismiss the Bible because some parts are hard to understand, hard to accept, or hard to follow, but it is the only book that truly lines up with reality. The Bible has an amazing consistency to it, even though it involved 40+ writers over 1500 years.

So argue with me all you want about "your truth" that doesn't line up the Bible. But it doesn't change reality: there is a standard that is true for all people at all times and in all places.

"For though they knew God, they did not glorify him as God or show gratitude. Instead, their thinking became worthless, and their senseless hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools" (vv. 21-22).

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