

Live and Let Live

- According to those who haven't studied it we have often been told how the Bible is so clear when it comes to judging others. As though they are the experts on the subject, taking passages out of context to prove their point. In most of those cases it had to do with a moral person taking a stand against immorality and those who practice it. As though the Christian is to be intimidated by a lie for even voicing his disapproval based on scripture in the first place. Obviously we are to hate the sin and love the sinner. But many will say "you're not a real Christian when judging others" because "God loves everyone" and "God is love" and "we're all God's children". These are often the phrases spewed by advocates who stand on a liberal understanding of what the Bible really teaches. It is true that God loves everyone since He is the epitome of love and all are His children because we all came from Him. Their use of such phrases are taken so much out of context though, since they forget that He is also a just God and will punish His children for our own good when we don't follow His moral regulations. It's the mentality of the 60s when it was all about "love" and "free" love and "to each his own". If only these people, most of which grew up in that era and have such a world view, would dig a little further into what the inspired writings really teach. But then again, as in so many cases, they often rework or discount scripture as though they are above inspiration concerning truth. As though they are on His level or are smarter than God or He is to be beholding to them for their wisdom in how they interpret His thoughts.

Isa 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. 8 For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways My ways, saith the LORD. 9 For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.

- Truth to them is relevant and is according to what the individual **wants** to believe.

Pro 12:15 The way of a fool *is* right in his own eyes: but he that hearkens unto counsel *is* wise.

Pro 14:16 A wise *man* feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rages, and is confident.

- The unwise individual condemns a wise person by doing the very thing he stands against, speaking negatively against other people. Of course he's the one who is wrong and is so confident in his ignorance by boldly defending it. With such an attitude he proves his wisdom is vain since it has no foundation, it is based solely on worldly wisdom.

1Co 3:18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. 19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. 20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

- When we rely on our own wisdom, without reference to established and proven "wisdom from above" (*Jas 3:17*), we end up thinking we have all the answers. But when those ideologies don't agree with the truth, factions begin to develop. Thus the beginning of denominationalism.

Denominationalism.

- Sadly there are so many denominations that were once more conservative in their ethical beliefs but have, in this day and age, changed even their stance on the issues concerning morality. “Live and let live” is their battle cry. It’s all about the numbers, and ultimately “the mammon of unrighteousness” (*Lk 16:9*). They build their following on the idea that the wealth they bring to the denomination will sustain them into the future. Their judgment is clouded by their desire for security.

Mar 10:24 And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, **Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!**

Within the church.

- The whole “live and let live” philosophy, when it seeps into the local church, can and will disrupt unity. As we’ve been studying on Wednesday evenings, when we see another brother or sister in sin we can’t just look the other way. “Oh but that would be judging and who are you to ‘cast the first stone?’” (*Jn 8:7*). Obviously none of us are without sin. As we approach others who are in sin we need to first be conscious of whether we ourselves are doing anything that would be considered sin, thus we would come off as being hypocritical. But, once we understand fellowship and how discipline is “the ultimate expression of fellowship”, only then can we approach another **Christian** concerning their transgression. If we are afraid to approach another, especially when it is a matter of salvation or loss, or we think of it as being someone else’s duty, our motto then would have to be “live and let die”. In the end though, unless repented of, we will all be held accountable for any and all chances we either did or did not deal with when it comes to knowing of another’s sin.

Jas 5:19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; **20** Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

- If we truly practice what the concept of love means, we cannot look the other way, allowing a soul to be lost. Love demands that we look to another’s good and what’s best for them. “So now you’re trying to lay a guilt trip on me.” Did **Jesus** go around laying guilt trips on those who listened to **Him**? Of all the times the word “hell” is mentioned, or the idea of condemnation for not abiding in truth, **Jesus** used these concepts more than all the **New Testament** writers combined in the **KJV**. (*16-7 for the word hell alone.*) And just because we might think they are used in parallel passages doesn’t mean **He** didn’t use them even more.

Joh 21:25 And there are also many other things which **Jesus** did (*including what He said*), the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

- The only way the church will ever grow, spiritually and/or numerically, is through love according to the truth and truth according to love.

Eph 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into **Him** in all things, **Who** is the head, *even* **Christ: 16** From **Whom** the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that

which **every** joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of **every** part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

- Those with the attitude of “live and let live” are under the false belief and assumption that no matter what path you chose you will ultimately go to **Heaven** when you die. Then they tag on the phrase “that is if you are a good person”. But who says who’s good and who’s bad to begin with? What compass or with what guide do they use to determine where morality begins; what’s the basis for being a good person? What was once evil is now good in the eyes of many and it’s only getting worse.

2Th 2:10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the **love** (*Gk.26- affection*) **of the truth**, that they might be saved. **11** And for this cause **God** shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: **12** That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. **13** But we are bound to give thanks alway to **God** for you, brethren beloved of the **Lord**, because **God** hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the **Spirit** and **belief of the truth**: **14** Whereunto **He** called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our **Lord Jesus Christ**.

- As **Jesus** taught and lived, truth **cannot have a bias** or it is not truth at all. Even those who tried to trap **Him** in **His** speech unwittingly recognized **Him** for **His** lack of respect of persons.

Mat 22:15 Then went the **Pharisees**, and took counsel how they might entangle **Him** in **His** talk. **16** And they sent out unto **Him** their disciples with the **Herodians** (*Gk.2265- Herod’s partisans*), saying, **Master**, we know that **Thou** art true, and teachest the way of **God** in truth, neither carest **Thou** for any *man*: for **Thou** regardest not the person of men.

- How often have there been members in the **Lord’s** church who have tried to disclaim a certain teaching against a certain sin when one of their own was practicing it? Isn’t that “favoritism” and “partiality”? And how often have certain sins been swept under the rug because those involved were members with “tenure”, those faithful to the assembly for many years? And attendance is not to be considered the ultimate test of our salvation even though it does play a major role.

Heb 10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: **25** Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, **as ye see the day approaching**.

- If we aren’t meeting on a regular basis how can we encourage each other toward being here for worship? To forsake the assembly is to desert the worship of **God** and fellowship with **His** people. Therefore it is sin. And it is the duty of **every Christian** to lovingly, with wisdom, personally and privately expose the sin of another in order to save a soul.

1Jn 5:16 If any man see his brother sin a sin *which is* not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. **17** All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

- When a **Christian** dies in, or as the result of his or her sin, we can no longer pray for them once they’ve gone into eternity. Once we leave this life **our fate has been sealed**. We can’t “pray someone into **Heaven**”. So to die after **purposefully** forsaking the assembly,

unless repented of then, would be considered “a sin unto death”. When we see a fellow **Christian** who has repeatedly forsaken the assembly, or who consumes alcohol, smokes or participates in any dangerous, self-harming activity, or any sinful activity that would influence others in the church, and have the attitude of “live and let live” we may just as well hammer another nail in their coffin. Any sin that leads to death is a sin that prayer will no longer have an effect on. Such a death will not bring glory to **God**. And if it was known by others, it **could** bring judgment on those who knew of it. The phrase “unto death” literally means death was a result of the action. Just as **Jesus** pointed out concerning the sickness that brought about the death of **Lazarus**.

Joh 11:1 Now a certain *man* was sick, *named Lazarus*, of *Bethany*, the town of *Mary* and her sister *Martha*. **2** (It was *that Mary* which anointed the **Lord** with ointment, and wiped **His** feet with her hair, whose brother **Lazarus** was sick.) **3** Therefore his sisters sent unto **Him**, saying, **Lord**, behold, he whom **Thou** lovest is sick. **4** When **Jesus** heard *that*, **He** said, **This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.**

- The purpose for **Lazarus'** sickness wasn't just that he should die because in the end it was to bring glory to **God** through his resurrection at the hand of **Jesus**. Ultimately, our own eulogies should bring glory to **God**. But a **Christian** who dies in sin would only bring reproach on the **Lord** and **His** church. Thus the importance of not just living and let live. After all, we are our brothers' keepers. Even though we are not responsible **for** each other's sin, we are responsible **to** each other to warn a brother or sister against “a sin unto death”. Our cry then would be to “live and **help** live”.

Rom 1:32 Who knowing the judgment of **God**, that they which commit such things are worthy of (*the second*) death (*Rev 20:6*), not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

- Not warning a fellow saint of their sinful behavior could be considered the same thing as approving it. And approving the sin of another is akin to participating in it.

Warning is not condemning.

1Co 4:14 I write not these things to shame you, but **as my beloved** sons I **warn** you.

- Warning another is an act of love. Any **Christian** that feels good about approaching another concerning a certain transgression has a heart problem. It should never be considered an easy task but one that **must** be done. And not just by the preacher or other “perceived” leaders in the church either. Every one of us has the responsibility to deal with another's sin when we come to know of its existence. That is, if we love that person's soul. To warn someone is to do good which is often a difficult task to perform.

The non-Christian.

- What is our duty to the non-**Christian**? **Jesus** gave **His** disciples the great commission to go out and make disciples who would in turn make others (*Mat 28:18-20*). Such has been the case, for going on two millennia. Not that everyone is to preach or teach since those would be abilities that not everyone would possess. But, there are other works that can be accomplished since the body has “many members” (*Rom 12:5*). So what about the other parts of the body?

1Co 12:14 For the body is not one member, but many.

- If the church only consisted of preachers to whom then would they preach? If the church only consisted of students, who would teach them? Obviously we've all been given gifts, talents and abilities to help in the growth of the local congregation. No one is exempt. If a brother or sister is uncomfortable with teaching a lost soul they could introduce them to someone in the church who **is** comfortable with teaching. They will have done their part in the great commission by making such an introduction. Or to open a home for a **Bible** study. Our homes are gifts from **God** to be used to **His** glory. So everyone has a part in the workings of the body. A seed will not grow if it isn't planted and watered in order to bring forth fruit.

Luk 8:11 ...: **The seed is the word of God.**

1Co 3:6 I have planted, **Apollos** watered; but **God** gave the increase. **7** So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but **God** that giveth the increase. **8** Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. **9** For we are laborers together with **God**: ye are **God's** husbandry, *ye are God's* building.

- Whatever we do as “laborers together **with God**” we will receive a reward for the part we played as “**God's** husbandry”, no matter how small the task. To just “live and let live” without doing anything is a sluggard's way of dealing with things. No one ever said a **Christian's** life was to be easy. And neither should it be.

Pro 20:4 The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; *therefore* shall he beg in harvest, **and have nothing.**

- There is a thing called “**delayed gratification**” and every saint should practice it since this life is not all there is and our personal level of faith shows how much we believe that. We are to work now, rest later.

Heb 4:10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as **God** *did* from **His**. **11** Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

- If we aren't laboring in **God's** vineyard we may end up falling as so many have. So how do we understand who is the “**good ground**” (**Mat 13:8**) since we wouldn't want all our efforts to be wasted on someone who refuses to listen to the message of the gospel?

Making Judgments on Unbelievers.

- The saying “you can't judge a book by its cover” might also be stated “you **shouldn't** judge a book by its cover”. After all, what right do we have to assume that we can retain what only **God** possesses; the ability to see the inner person?

Heb 4:13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in **His** sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of **Him** with **Whom** we have to do.

- Obviously, through experience, we can get a first impression from what a person wears, their outer appearance, their speech, demeanor and attitude. But we shouldn't stop there. Sometimes a person's outer appearance is only an expression of what they lack inwardly. What are they, knowingly or unknowingly, trying to draw attention to? What's missing? The answer: **God** has placed a hole in every one of us that needs filling, whether we believe in **Him** or not. **His** desire is for us to seek **Him** and fill the emptiness with **His** holiness. But the desire is there no matter what a person decides to fill it with. That emptiness is the result of **His** love for **His** creation when **He** gave us free agency, that ability to choose. It is a powerful force within each of us to belong, to be a part of something, to have purpose. Who am I? What am I here for? Where did I come from? Where am I going? Is there life after death? Do my actions, my lifestyle, my world view, determine where I'm going?

Act 17:24 **God** that made the world and all things therein, seeing that **He** is **Lord** of **Heaven** and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; **25** Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though **He** needed anything, seeing **He** giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; **26** And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; **27** That they should seek the **Lord**, if haply they might feel after **Him**, and find **Him**, though **He** be not far from every one of us: **28** For in **Him** we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also **His** offspring.

- Again, we all have that hole within us to fill it with something. We can either fill it with what the world has to offer or with what **God** has made available through **His** word. The world has to offer only temporal pleasures that are but for the moment but the word has within it the way to the eternal joys of **Heaven**. Because of **His** love for us **God** has given us the ability to choose between the two. That choice, to seek **Him** or not, will determine our present attitude and actions toward others and our ultimate fate, as it did with **King Rehoboam**.

2Chr 12:14 And he did evil, because he **prepared not his heart** to seek the **LORD**.

Preparing the Heart.

- In preparation for life eternal we are not to just "live and let live" without doing our part in the great commission. Again, every one of us has some part in the spread of the gospel. Our language, the way we dress, our lifestyles, are all important if we wish to make an impression on others who **will judge our faith accordingly**. And if our heart isn't right in any way, our actions, speech, moral conduct and general attitude, **will show it**. So how do I get my heart right before **God**? First, I need to love **God** with all my being.

Mar 12:30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

- And then I need to put self aside and put others before me.

Mar 12:31 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

- If I focus on loving **God** and others first my heart has been prepared to seek **Him** and the truth **He** has made available to all. And my love for **God** and others demands that I make decisions based on **His** holiness and my obtaining it. And not just for me alone, but that others may also have a part. This is why I can't just "live and let live". We cannot go through life without having a part in it, without having some say in stopping the world from its rapid moral decay. And that requires decision making, it demands that we...

Joh 7:24 Judge (*Gk.2919- decide*) not according to the appearance, but judge righteous (*Gk.1342- equitable, innocent, holy*) judgment (*Gk.2920- justice [specifically divine law]*).

- Remember, judging is not condemning when we do so according to truth and out of love for our fellow man. Even though the same English word is used where different glosses represent the true meaning in the context, proper use should be mandated.

Mat 7:1 Judge (*Gk.2919- condemn*) not, that ye be not judged. 2 For with what judgment (*Gk.2917- a decision: -condemnation*) ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

- This passage is too often taken out of context by those mentioned in the beginning of this lesson. If only they did their research. Once again, if they did they would have to either stop using such passages out of context or continue using them with the idea that "if you tell a lie often enough it will be believed as the truth". It would make null and void their world view of "live and let live". But that's not the way the church is to believe. If we did there would be no need to proclaim the message of salvation.

#1.Have you heard that God sent His only begotten Son to die in your stead?

#2.Do you believe? Rom 10:14 How then shall they call on Him **in Whom they have not believed?** and how shall they believe in Him **of Whom they have not heard?** and how shall they hear without a preacher?

#3.Have you repented? Luk 15:7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

#4.Have you confessed Jesus as the Christ? Mat 10:32 Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father Who is in Heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in Heaven.

#5.Have your sins been washed away? Mar 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

#6.If you've done all these things, have you remained faithful? Joh 15:10 If ye **keep** My commandments, ye shall **abide** in My love; **even as** I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.

#7. Are you growing? Eph 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, Who is the Head, *even* Christ:

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