

EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

“...FOR THE EQUIPPING OF THE SAINTS FOR THE WORK OF SERVICE...” ~ EPHESIANS 4:12

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A SIMPLE VERSE ABOUT RIGHT AND WRONG

By Frank Himmel

“...abhor what is evil; cling to what is good” (Rom. 12:9). This short verse (actually, it is just the second part of the verse) would be a fine one to commit to memory. It states or implies at least three vital points.

First, there is such a thing as good and evil. People used to understand that. We used to know that one is supposed to keep his word, that greed is a bad thing, that marriage is for life, that homosexuality is a perversion, etc. Now, several generations have grown up listening to denominational preachers say that it does not matter what you believe, thereby undermining Bible authority.

We have heard libertarians rationalize any and every kind of conduct. We have grown accustomed to comedians making daily fodder of sin of every kind. Is it any wonder people are confused? Come to think of it, this is nothing new. Long ago Isaiah wrote, **“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; ... who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight”** (Isa. 5:20-21).

Second, it is both possible and necessary to discern good and evil. Personal preferences and moral relativism leave us adrift. There is a fixed standard. It is God. He is right or righteous. **“A God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright is He”** (Deut.

32:4). His word, His self-revelation, is the yardstick by which all conduct is measured. It is the standard by which we shall be judged (John 12:48).

Discerning right and wrong begins with the “thou shalt/thou shalt not” passages. We must also take into account principles of conduct, such as maintaining a clear conscience (Rom. 14:22-23), not putting other things before God (Matt. 6:33), leaving off questionable things that would lessen our influence for good (Matt. 5:16), etc. Paul often prayed that Christians would grow in this area of distinguishing conduct (Phil. 1:9-11; Col. 1:9-12).

Third, we must act in keeping with the quality of any given behavior. If a thing is good we are to cling to it. The original verb in our text is from the Greek noun for glue; be glued to it. On the other hand, if conduct is bad, we are to abhor it. Abhor is from the Latin word for horror, which literally means to shudder. We should shudder at the very idea of some kinds of behavior [misbehavior].

Simply put, Romans 12:9 tells us to use God's word and draw the line between good and evil. Once that line is drawn, do not see how close to it you can get without stepping over; stay as far away from evil and as close to God as you can.

WHO IS GOD?

By Daniel S. Dow

Who is God? Is God nothing more than just man's imagination? Is God just a thought or concept conceived in the mind of man, or is God a reality? Is God a living and breathing being? Can we see God? Can we know that God

exists today? Is God dead? All of these questions are being asked today. As a Christian, can you answer these questions? Peter admonished us in 1 Peter 3:15, **“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear...”** (ASV). There are those in the world today groping for answers to these questions. The world does not know God, because their sins have separated them from God.

To understand who God is we must turn to His Word, for He reveals Himself to us through the Scriptures. In Psalm 102:12 we learn that God is an eternal being. He had no beginning and will have no end. Job said, **“The number of His years is unsearchable”** (Job 36:26). God does exist, He is not the product of a wild imagination. Man cannot deny the existence of God because Romans 1:20 tell us that He is **“clearly seen.”** **“For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse.”**

God is not flesh and blood like us. John 4:24 tells us that **“God is Spirit.”** Not only is God a Spirit, but He is Deity. He is not dependent on anyone or anything. Rather, man in his own feebleness, is constantly at the mercy of God. Our Almighty God is all powerful and possesses infinite wisdom (Matt. 19:26; Rom. 11:33). There is nothing God can't do. In Genesis chapter one God created the world we live on and throughout Old Testament history He performed many great wonders and even today, God's unseen hands are certainly involved in the affairs of this world. God's

greatness does not end here. He is all knowing, all seeing and is ever present (Psa. 139:7-10). So, we can never hide from God, rather we are always in His presence (Heb. 4:13).

We often fail to ask the question, "Who is God?" Because of this neglect our respect and understanding for God takes a backseat to all of life's affairs. Let us not forget God, but thank Him for all He has done. He has given man a plan whereby sin can no longer control him. So let us praise and respect God, holding His name reverent always.

NOTES: _____

AM LESSON:
Haven't You Heard?

PM LESSON:
The Church's Responsibilities
Toward Her Elders

**“GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES...”
(MATTHEW 28:19-20)**