

Lesson 4: Moral Right & Wrong

A. Example Issues:

1. Is crime simply a programmed response to environmental stimuli? Is it a disease?
2. Why should actions that do not harm others (in fact may avoid pain, cause pleasure, or produce beneficial results) be judged as wrong?
3. Should the church be engaged in preaching against national trends toward immorality?
4. What is the Christian's individual responsibility to influence or correct those who are practicing gross immorality?
5. How should the Christian view individuals (e.g. Dr. Laura) and organizations (many of which are religion-based) whose goal is to promote morality? (e.g. Focus on the Family, MADD, Promise Keepers, and other movements to: oppose gay rights, oppose adult entertainment, fight racism, stop teen pregnancy, etc.)

B. The Christian's World View

1. Was man created with opportunities to do wrong (sin)? Are there now even more opportunities? Do we make choices to do wrong or not, independent of the direct, irresistible control of God or nature? Are we influenced by them both?
 - a. Is each man drawn toward both evil and good? (Rom 7:21-23; I Pet 5:8,9; Jas 4:7)
 - b. It is always possible to do right. (I Cor 10:13)
2. Is what is right or wrong (immoral) defined by a standard that is external to the individual? (I Jn 3:4; Jn 12:48) Does it matter if it "hurts someone else"?
 - a. Who are sins really against? (Acts 5:4; II Sam 12:13 & Ps 51:4; Gen 39:9...)
 - b. Does ignorance change the rightness or wrongness? (see, for example, Gen 20:6)
 - c. Does immoral behavior sometimes have harmful consequences on the individual (Rom 1:27) and others (Rom 1:28-32)?
3. Who is the judge of the individual actions? (Rom 1:32; II Cor 5:9,10)
4. How will justice finally be carried out? (Eccl 11:9; Matt 16:26,27; II Cor 5:10; Acts 10:42; Acts 17:30,31; Rom 2:5-9,12,16; II Thes 1:6-10)
5. How does the Christian relate to an immoral world?
 - a. Are we to live among (near) the evil?
 - i. I Cor 5:9,10
 - ii. I Jn 5:19
 - iii. II Tim 3:12-14
 - b. Are we to take part? (Eph 4:17-24; 5:3-7) - [Note the basis for this abstinence.]
 - c. What kind of separation & reaction is required? (Eph 5:11-14; II Cor 6:14-18)
 - d. What responsibilities does the Christian have to judge the evil in the world? (I Cor 5:12,13; I Pet 4:4-6; II Pet 2:9,10). Note the response in II Tim 3:12-14; 2:24-26.
6. What approach must be taken by the Christian to address immorality in the world?
 - a. What is the real solution? (I Cor 6:9-11; Rom 7:24-8:2)
 - b. What is the proper sequence? (e.g. Paul in Thessalonica: I Thes 1:9, then I Thes 4:1-8)
 - c. What was Paul's primary concern about evil men? (II Thes 3:1,2, and cf Rom 1:18)
7. Are there direct influences we are to exert on the unsaved and immoral?
 - a. Matt 5:16
 - b. I Pet 2:15
 - c. Jn 13:35
 - d. Acts 5:13
8. Are we responsible to mend, as it is possible, the consequences of evil? (e.g. Jas 1:27)

C. Applications

1. For all their absolutism, do moralists such as Dr. Laura have substantial authority for the moral direction they give? In the advice that is given, what is the power (motive and strength provide) for change within the individual? Is there a real solution for the consequences of the immorality (e.g. guilt) provided with the advice?
2. What is the ultimate goal of most behavior-changing organizations, such as MADD, DARE, and Promise Keepers (i.e. is it spiritual or physical)? For those that have a religious base or infrastructure, is their doctrine consist with the Bible? Is it consistent across all members of the organization?
3. For both of the above groups, is the primary effort aimed at teaching the “depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God” (Rom 11:33), or at a more shallow (behavioral) level of instruction?
4. In what ways might a Christian address these circumstances:
 - a. Painful and public marital problems in the family next door.
 - b. Charges of racism within the company in which he works.
 - c. Requests for support and fund-raising for DARE at schools.
 - d. An adult entertainment establishment may open in the neighborhood.
 - e. Teenagers at school are known to be using drugs.

Lesson List	Lesson 4
Moral Right & Wrong	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Man was Created with Opportunities to Sin.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• He Is Drawn Toward Both Good and Evil.• He Is Accountable to God (With Consequences) for Sin.• Ignorance Doesn't Excuse Disobedience.2. Good & Evil are Determined by God's Revelation.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Men have Some Inherent Moral Knowledge.• God's Revelation is the Basis for Personal Decision & Judgment of Others.3. Christians Cannot Tolerate Immorality in the Church.4. Christians Live Among Immorality in the World.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must Reprove, but Have Little Direct Control.• Influence Can be Exerted by Our Good Behavior.5. Immorality Can be Remedied Only by the Gospel.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislation, Coercion, Force are Ultimately Ineffective.• A Character Change, through the Gospel, is Required.	
Christian World View - mmbjr	Lesson Logic