

Have You Lost Your Mind?

Philippians 2:5, Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus...

Intolerant Toward Sin

We know that Jesus was tempted, but lived a sinless life in the flesh (Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:22). He masterfully used the Scriptures to show us how we can defend ourselves against temptation (Matthew 4:1-11). It is clear from an examination of the Scriptures that the Lord was intolerant toward sin in His life. But what about in the lives of others? What was His attitude?

Read Matthew 9:9-13. To whose house did Jesus go? Who sat at the table to eat with Jesus? What was the reaction of the Pharisees? What was Jesus' response to their question? Does this mean that Jesus accepted these people *in their sin*? If not, what does it mean?

Read John 8:1-12. What was this woman's sin? By not condemning her right then and there, was the Lord condoning her sinful behavior? What is the force of verse 12 as it relates to sin? Can one follow Jesus and walk in the darkness of sin at the same time (Matthew 6:24)?

Why did the Son of God come into the world? Read John 3:16-21. It was not Jesus' purpose to condemn people; His goal, His mission, His desire was to save them. The sinner was already condemned; Christ came to offer salvation from sin. Those who come to Christ must put away their sinful behaviors, because Christ cannot tolerate sin. Read Romans 6:16-18.

How are we different from Jesus? While we strive to imitate Him and "let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus," we fall short, don't we? We mess up, we make mistakes, we commit sin. How can we be intolerant toward another's sin while we continue to sin ourselves?

Read Matthew 7:1-5. Does this passage teach that we are never, under any circumstance, permitted to point out sin in a person's life? If not, what does it teach? We do not have the

authority to judge one's salvation or condemnation. But we do have the ability to discern whether one is living according to the Word by their actions. But before we can effectively help those in spiritual need, we need to take care of our own spiritual condition first.

Examine ourselves, acknowledge our own sins, confessing and repenting. It is then and only then that we can assist others who are in need. And we do have the responsibility to help those who are in sin.

Read Galatians 6:1. With what spirit must we approach a brother who has been "overtaken in any trespass"? Why is this necessary? What temptations might we face?

Read James 5:19-20. Our motivation in helping a brother or sister with spiritual needs is not selfish. Our motivation must be to lead them to salvation, so that they can spend eternity in heaven with God.

What if the person who is openly sinning refuses to repent? Read 1 Corinthians 5:1-7. These brethren were so "loving" and tolerant that they even allowed this sexually immoral man to fellowship with them. Paul says, "Your glorying is not good." They should have been intolerant toward the sin, urging the sinner to repent so that he could be saved. And if he still refused to repent? Read 1 Corinthians 5:11. There comes a point when one must draw a line, or risk his own soul. If one who had once obeyed rebels and refuses to repent, we must "not keep company...not even eat with such a person."

Jesus, addressing the church of Ephesus, commended them in that they "cannot bear those who are evil" (Rev. 2:2). On the other hand, the church at Pergamos tolerated some who held to the doctrine of Balaam and the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, and they were commanded to repent (2:14-16).

Society promotes tolerance toward sin. Christ makes it clear that we cannot tolerate sin in our lives, nor can we condone it in the lives of others. Rather than condemning others who are caught up in sinful behaviors, however, we should point them to the truth of God's Word so that they may experience the grace of God, through an obedient faith.