



“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...” Matthew 28:20

Church of Christ • 13800 S. 4080 Road • P.O. Box 527 • Oologah, Oklahoma 74053

The Standard of Morality

Chuck Northrop

Each person makes decisions everyday which have moral and ethical consequences. A young person faces decisions concerning cheating on a school examination, lying to a friend, or whether or not to engage in sex. As people mature, similar decisions must be made such as cheating their employer, lying to an associate, or cheating on a spouse. All decisions have consequences, and people reap what they have sown. A poor decision concerning cheating may cause a person to lose a job, and an improper decision regarding sex may cause irreparable harm to loved ones. Thus, our moral and ethical decisions are important and should be considered carefully.

With this in mind, and when considering morals and ethics, there are two basic standards. First, some believe ethics and morality are founded within a person's own heart or conscience. This is clearly being advanced by many in the world. The scenario is presented of a young lady who is faced with the decision to have sex with her boyfriend. The person who advises her says she will just know when it is the right time. Such decisions are based upon subjectivism and human emotions. Second, others believe there is a standard of ethics and morality which is the standard found within the Bible. This is objectivism. The Bible is the objective standard. In the scenario above, the young lady's decision is based upon the objective standard. She must ask herself, “What does the standard, the Bible, say about sexual behavior outside of marriage?” Then, she must adjust her life accordingly.

Amazingly, the Bible says much about both basic standards. Concerning the first, the Bible says,

- “O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps” (Jeremiah 10:23).
- “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Proverbs 14:12).
- “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered” (Proverbs 28:26).

These verses should be sufficient to expose the foolishness of subjectivism. Concerning the objective standard of morality, the Bible says,

- “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Psalm 119:11).
- “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue” (2 Peter 1:3).
- “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls” (James 1:21).

Not only are there consequences of a person's decisions and actions in this life, there are also consequences in the life to come. After this life is completed, every person will ultimately stand before God in judgment (Hebrews 9:27). Paul wrote, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10). If the standard of judgment is subjective, then there is really no standard at all because what may be right to one person could be wrong to another or vise versa. Also, unless there is ultimate human accountability, there is no basis for ethics and morals. For there to be fair human accountability, there must be an objective standard.

Thus, instead of looking to yourself for moral and ethical decisions, turn to God's word for the answers. If you apply the principles set forth, the consequences of your decisions will be favorable for you most likely now and definitely in the life to come.

**“Open thou mine eyes,
that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”
– Psalm 119:18**

Which Church?

Jerry Dickison

It is easy to understand that there are many different churches. When we investigate what they teach, it is easy to understand they do not teach the same things. In fact, they often directly contradict each other in their basic doctrines. All the different doctrines create confusion for the person who is honestly searching for God’s truth. One thing the Bible is plain in its teaching is that God is not the one at fault for all of the confusion in the religious world. “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints” (1 Corinthians 14:33). All of these differences in doctrine did not come from the inspired men who wrote the Bible. These inspired men wanted complete unity concerning doctrine. “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Corinthians 1:10). If God and the inspired writers of the Bible desire and demand us to speak the same thing, why is the religious world so divided?

The Bible also teaches that God’s word is truth as our Lord prayed. “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17). We all know that truth will never contradict itself! If I am telling the truth on any subject, and you are telling the truth on the same subject, we will not be contradicting each other. God’s word is the standard for truth! “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

A very important question is, “How many churches does the Bible authorize?” Most people are surprised to learn that the Bible is very clear with regard to how many churches are authorized. There is but one body. “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling” (Ephesians 4:4). It is also plain what that one body is. “And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Ephesians 1:22-23). Notice the Bible states that the church (not churches) is the body. The concept of divided denominations does not fit this description because it contradicts another verse in the Bible! “Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing” (Philippians 3:16).

If God has authorized only one church, how do we locate that one church? It is simple. The New Testament also describes the church. All we have to do is find the church that fits all of the descriptions contained within the New Testament. We ask that you come and check out the church of Christ at the location on this publication. If you disagree with us, you have lost nothing; but if you find the truth, you have gained your soul.

Observations and Concerns

September 27, 2023

Welcome Visitors! Thank you for coming our way!

Praise in Psalm: “And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness *and* of thy praise all the day long” (Psalm 35:28).

Declaration of Appreciation: Let us all be thankful this week for the precious words which are sometimes quietly expressed to encourage and fortify us during times of trial.

There will be a **youth devo** on Friday, October 6th at 6:00pm at the home of the Swearingens. Please bring a side or a sweet to go with pulled pork.

Men’s Business Meeting is Sunday, October 1st after the evening service.

Remember in Prayer:

- ▶ **Sammy Gray** will be having medical tests conducted in the coming weeks.
- ▶ **Andy Hudson** was in a car accident and is recovering at home.
- ▶ **Nelda Hudson** had a Loop procedure on her heart last week and is doing well.

Extended Prayer List: **Jim Allison** – health concerns; **Ed Carmona** – health issues; **Joyce Cash** – health difficulties; **Dan & Marcella Dennis** – health issues; **Bill Dilks** – cancer; **Sammy Gray** – health concerns; **Nelda Hudson** – heart struggles; **Chuck Northrop** – blood disorder; **Vance & Darla Smith** – declining health; **Pat Taylor** – health issues; **Ed Dindy** – cancer; **Betty Jackson** – health issues; **Sam Orr** – health concerns; **LeAnna Shafer** – chemotherapy; **Jacob Webster** – dog attack.

October Birthdays: 12 – **Jim Allison**; 28 – **Sadie Swearingen**; 31 – **Chris Nelson**; Anniversary: 20 – **Nelsons**.

Please check the bulletin board for upcoming **Gospel Meetings** in the area.

| Schedule of Services | Assignments | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | | Wednesday, Sep. 27 | Sunday, Oct. 1 AM | Sunday, Oct. 1 PM |
| | Announcements | Chris Nelson | Chris Nelson | Ross Swearingen |
| | Song Leader | Doyle Jackson | Doyle Jackson | Bill Dilks |
| | Prayer | Paul Praschnik | Chuck Northrop | Chris Nelson |
| | Lord’s Supper (speaker) | | Ross Swearingen | Doyle Jackson |
| | Lord’s Supper | | Chuck Northrop | |
| | Lesson | Chris Nelson | Bill Dilks | Chuck Northrop |
| | Prayer / Door Attendant | Ross Swearingen | Chris Nelson | Ross Swearingen |
| | | | | |
| Sundays | | | | |
| Bible Classes. . . | 9:30 AM | | | |
| Worship | 10:30 AM | | | |
| Worship | 5:00 PM | | | |
| Wednesdays | | | | |
| Bible Classes. . . | 7:00 PM | | | |
| Website: oologahcofc.org | | | | |