

Choose What Is Right: A Study in Discernment

Lesson 3- What Is False Doctrine?



Today's Scripture passages are embedded in the body of the study. Please click the links in each question.

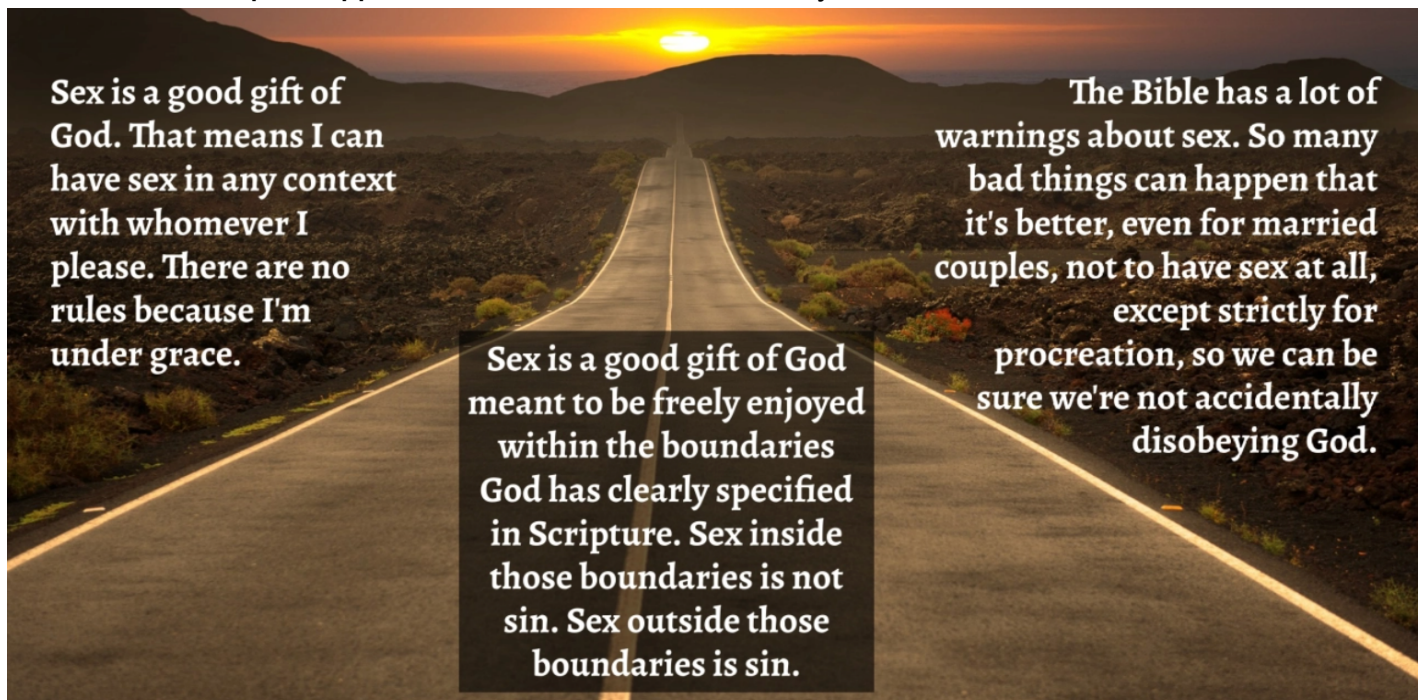
Questions to Consider

1. Have you ever studied the book of Judges? If you have, you know this book has a very clear theme which can be found in [Judges 17:6b and 21:25b](#). What is that theme? What does it mean to do what is right in your own eyes? Is *believing* what is right in your own eyes part of *doing* what is right in your own eyes? How and why? As Christians, how are we [supposed](#) (1 Corinthians 10:31, Ephesians 5:10, Deuteronomy 6:18) to live and believe? What are some ways Christians (or those who claim to be Christians) today do and believe what is right in their own eyes rather than doing and believing what is right in God's eyes?

How do we know the difference between what is right in our own eyes and what is right in God's eyes? What is our [standard](#) (Psalm 119:9, Psalm 119:169, Psalm 19:7-11, John 17:17) for answering that question? Our [authority](#) (**see link at end of lesson) for life and doctrine? If this is how we're to live and believe – submitting to the truth of God's written Word as our authority in life and our measuring stick for evaluating right actions from wrong actions, right beliefs from wrong beliefs – is it [biblical](#) (2 Timothy 1:13, 2 Timothy 4:1-2, Titus 1:9, 2 Thess. 2:15, James 3:1) to say that this is also how teachers are to teach?

2. When you get right down to the bottom line, there are two basic ways of doing and believing what's right in your own eyes – failing to rise to the standard of God's Word, and going above and beyond the standard of God's Word. Not being *as* restrictive as God's Word is, or being *more* restrictive than God's Word is. Too much "grace" or too much "law".

Consider this concept as applied to sex, and what the Bible says about it:



Which side of the road is the “too much ‘grace’” side? “Too much ‘law’”? Which view is the biblical view? (Notice that the biblical view is a “middle of the road” balance between the extremes of man-made “law” and “grace”. If you wander off the road you’re wandering off into darkness. The biblical view is the only one which leads to the sun (Son).

The theological term for “too much ‘grace’” is [antinomianism](#) (***) (also sometimes called “license” – as in, “a license to sin” – or “licentiousness”). The theological term for “too much ‘law’” is [legalism](#) (***) (showcased in the [Pharisees](#) (***) of Jesus’ day).



3. Antinomianism often fleshes itself out today as:

- “I’m saved and all my sins – past, present, and future – are forgiven, so why not sin as much as I want?”
- An “It’s no big deal!” approach to sin
- The idea that the sin in question is actually *biblical* (or loving / loving your neighbor, tolerant, compassionate, “what ‘Jesus’ would do”)
- Obeying what the Bible *actually* is says is legalism (“Pharisaism”).

[What does the Bible say](#) (Romans 6:1, Romans 6:15, Romans 3:8) about antinomianism? [What does God say](#) (Luke 6:46, 1 John 2:3-6, John 14:15) about people who claim to be Believers but don’t obey Him?

What are some specific examples of antinomianism that you’ve observed in evangelicalism, in your denomination or church, in your own heart and life?

5. Legalism is most often seen today in churches or individuals who make issues of preference, conscience, or [Christian liberty](#) (***) – which are neither prescribed nor prohibited in rightly handled Scripture – into “law”. They consider these “laws” equal to Scripture and believe that anyone who violates them is in sin. A few (generalized) examples:

- [KJV-Onlyists](#) (***)
- Women [cannot wear pants](#) (***) or makeup and must have long hair
- Christians [should not](#) (Colossians 2:8, Colossians 2:16-23) observe [Christmas](#) (***) (or have a Christmas tree) or Easter
- Christians [must observe](#) (Colossians 2:8, Colossians 2:16-23) Old Testament feasts and festivals

[What does the Bible say](#) (Matthew 23:4, Colossians 2:16-23, Mark 2:23-28, Colossians 2:8, Colossians 2:16-23) about legalism? What are some specific examples of legalism that you’ve observed in evangelicalism, in your denomination or church, in your own heart and life?

Would you say that antinomianism or legalism is the false doctrine most people tend towards today...

- ...in evangelicalism in general?
- ...in your denomination and / or your church?
- ...in your own heart?

6. If you believe falsely about God, sin, the gospel, etc., what impact will that have on your life and your worship?

Let’s look at some examples of unbiblical worship in Scripture. In each of these instances:

[Syncretism and idolatry in the temple](#) (Ezekiel 8-9)

[Ananias and Sapphira](#) (Acts 5:1-11)

[Nadab and Abihu](#) (Leviticus 10:1-7)

[The people worship Herod](#) (Acts 12:20-23)

[Taking the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner](#) (1 Corinthians 11:17-34)

[The Pharisees' beliefs and practices](#) (Matthew 23, Matthew 12:1-14, Mark 7:1-12)

7. Since God takes false doctrine / false worship so seriously, what is [His posture](#) (Matthew 18:6-7, Galatians 1:6-9, James 3:1) toward those who teach false doctrine?

8. Some Christians believe that **only** aberrant soteriology – a false gospel, unbiblical teaching about how to be saved – is false doctrine. Consider [these Scriptures](#) (Galatians 1:6-9, 1 Timothy 4:1-3, 2 Timothy 3:1-9, Colossians 2:16-23). Is this idea biblically accurate?

9. What is false doctrine? Carefully and biblically define this term in your own words.

Homework

Today's study includes passages from Judges and Ezekiel. You may wish to peruse the relevant parts of my Bible studies on [Judges](#) (***) and [Ezekiel](#) (***). How is the state of the church today similar to the state of God's people and the temple in Judges and Ezekiel?

Suggested Memory Verse



<https://michellelesley.com/2017/02/17/basic-training-the-bible-is-our-authority/>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/antinomianism.html>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Bible-Christian-legalism.html>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/pharisaical.html>

<https://awordfitlyspoken.life/podcast/christian-liberty/>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/KJV-only.html>

<https://michellelesley.com/2017/04/03/the-mailbag-may-christian-women-wear-pants/>

<https://michellelesley.com/2019/12/05/is-christmas-pagan/>

<https://michellelesley.com/category/judges-bible-study/>

<https://michellelesley.com/category/ezekiel-bible-study/>