

God's Plan of Redemption vs. Satan's Plan of Condemnation

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

- A. Morality vs. Amorality - 2Tim. 3:10-17
- B. The Bible provides a basis for decision-making, including moral choices.
 - 1. Sufficient in matters of morality, for every situation possible in life.
 - 2. That's a powerful claim!
- C. Current social reasoning claims that the Bible system of morality is invalid, archaic, filled with weaknesses, has retarded the progress of mankind, and has filled us with puritanical hang-ups.
 - 1. That's a strong indictment, too!
 - 2. How do we answer that?
- D. We need to begin defending the faith with actions as well as with words.
 - 1. Rom. 12:1-2 - Some are afraid to be different from the world.
 - a. Blur lines of moral distinction in behavior, speech, attire, entertainment.
 - 2. Morality is so basic to Christian character, that if we don't understand and practice moral behavior, we cannot expect to understand and practice deeper matters of doctrine.
- E. This is a defense of Bible morality.
 - 1. Use our minds to contrast the standards of men with the Bible system of morality.
 - 2. Determine which is the logical, workable, and reasonable system.
- F. I believe God's plan is the only rational, functional system.
 - 1. No human could come up with so perfect a system of behavior as God.
 - 2. In fact, the effective nature of the Bible plan for moral conduct becomes a proof of God's existence.
 - 3. John 13:34-35; 1Peter 4:3-4, 2:13-15
 - 4. Behavior that is not base becomes evidence of a higher purpose than merely existing.
- G. What are the standards of men, and do they work?

I. EVERYONE IS DOING IT! (The "Mom, all of my friends are..." Plan)

- A. If everyone around me is doing it, then it must be okay.
 - 1. Standard is the will of the majority.
 - 2. Common misconception in a Democratic society: "the majority is right."
- B. God's standard - Matt. 7:13-14.
 - 1. Majority is going to hell.
 - 2. Swimming in Mill Creek with the Nussers. "Want to be like the Nussers? They got a spanking too."
 - a. Go along with the majority, you will suffer will suffer the fate of the majority.
 - 3. Majority is frequently wrong; they killed Christ.
- C. The majority isn't committed to any definitive way.
 - 1. Everyone isn't doing it because they want to, but rather to go along with the few outspoken trendsetters.

2. 90% of German Nationals cooperated with the Nazis because of peer pressure.
 - a. Nazis were actually a minority party; they were just louder.
 3. Seems logical that if a statement by one man is foolish, then if 50,000 repeat it, it is equally foolish.
- C. Is "everybody's doing it" a reasonable system of morality?

II. AS LONG AS NO ONE GETS HURT. (The "It turned out ok" Plan)

- A. End justifies the means, situation ethics, victimless crime, consenting adults.
 1. The standard is results.
 2. Playboy philosophy - as long as there is consent.
- B. God's standard - Matt. 23:15; Rom. 3:8
 1. Good to make proselytes, but not with the wrong means.
 2. Why so much emphasis on the means, if you get good results?
 3. Lev. 10:1-2 - Nadab and Abihu.
 - a. Changing God's order is very "IN" - innovative, initiative, ingenuity.
 - b. Sacrifice could have gone well; convenient, stirring, etc.
 - c. Human reason says that it shouldn't make a difference as long as it went well.
 - d. God struck them dead; it wasn't what He asked for.
 - e. 2Tim. 1:13
 4. God's laws of morality bring consistency, not confusion.
- C. Which standard is the most workable, one that changes continually, or one that is fixed?

III. IT'S MY LIFE AND I'LL DO WHAT I WANT! (The "Who are you to tell me what to do?" Plan)

- A. The standard is self-interest. What I want; whatever promotes what I believe to be my own best interests; whatever I think I will enjoy at that moment. "I" am the standard.
 1. "I didn't ask to be born." "You're welcome."
 2. "I want to be free; too many restrictions; keep your nose out of my business." (Frequently heard from erring members)
 3. Reasoning: You want to be your own little god; don't need anyone else.
 5. Still believing the serpent's lie: self-determination confers godhood - Gen. 3:5
- B. God's standard - Jer. 10:23; Prov. 3:5-8; 1Cor. 6:19-20
- C. With you as the standard, you must be able to determine on the basis of your own ability and experience that there will be no bad consequences to your choices and decisions.
 1. Can one be so all-knowing and all-seeing, that he can know that there will be no bad results?
 2. Graveyards are filled with people who said, "I'll do it my way." I suspect hell will be filled with people who said that, too.
- D. Which standard is the most reasonable?

IV. TIMES ARE CHANGING (The "Get with it!" Plan)

- A. Reasoning: "21st Century technological age, new paradigm, don't need those old Victorian mores and tribal taboos."
1. The standard is whatever form of conventional wisdom is in fashion
 2. Remember Donohue? Moral conscience of the nation?
 - a. Collinsville discipline of Mrs. Guinn, an adulteress - "this is 20th century America; what's wrong with these people." Garland Elkins of Getwell Road in Memphis, TN.
 - b. Not very impressed by that statement.
 - c. "Why are you doing that?" "Well, it's _____ and this is _____."
 - d. "Huh?" "Get with it, it's _____ and this is _____."
 - e. "This is 21st Century America!" SO WHAT!!!
 3. Sin has been sin since Adam's day and it will be sin tomorrow.
 - a. Some will try this with God on Judgment day.
 - b. "Don't you know when I lived?"
 - c. Question this foolishness; intelligence, sanity.
- B. God's standard - Gal. 1:7-10; 2Tim. 4:3-4
1. Fashionable doctrines - new moral laws for a promiscuous society.
 - a. 1977 Lutheran council for a new sexually active society.
 - b. 1997 Methodist council for actively homosexual ministers.
 2. Ecc. 1:9, 7:10 - Questions and answers are timeless and universal.
 - a. Matt. 22:36-40 - Love God and neighbor remains the same.
- C. Which standard works? Bible morality is a place of security in a society that appears to be enthusiastically self-destructive.

V. I ONLY DID IT ONCE (The "Come on, chicken" Plan)

- A. I only did it once; never do it again; business man in a bind, teen among peers
1. "As long as it isn't repetitious, it's okay." Don't really believe it even as they say it.
 2. The standard is frequency
 3. Is that an excuse? Most people want to define morality by the exigencies of the moment
- B. God's standard - Matt. 12:30 - "He that is not with me, is against me."
1. A true child of God will not want to do it, even once.
 2. How many times do you have to do something for it to be wrong?
 3. How many times do you have to do something to suffer the consequences?
 4. How many people must one kill before being called a murderer?
 5. How many times do you have to engage in premarital sex before you sin and lose your virginity.
- C. Which is the more logical and reasonable standard: the vagaries of luck or stable consistency?

VI. I FEEL IT'S OK (The "It didn't bother me, why should it bother you?" Plan)

- A. Standard: Let your conscience be your guide. Reasoning: Subjective impulse-driven feelings

1. Same old wolf in vintage sheep's clothing. What of one with a poorly trained or no moral conscience at all?
- B. God's standard - Acts 23:1
 1. Paul lived in good conscience; did that make his murder of Christians acceptable?
 2. Nazi genocide; Israeli murder of Arab infants.
 3. Pathological liars; conscience can be educated or warped.
 4. Modern entertainers do not have the talent to write good books, make good movies, create good songs; so substitute sex, drugs, and violence
 - a) George Will - "There is nothing new about selling the talentless to the tasteless."
 5. Cheating on spouse - didn't bother them, so they ride all the way to divorce court singing always let your conscience be your guide.
- C. Is your subjective conscience a reasonable standard?

VII. I'M A VICTIM OF... (The "I can't help it" plan)

- A. Reasoning: I am helpless; I not only have no control over circumstances, I have no control over my own reactions to circumstances.
 1. Standard: Abdication of personal responsibility
 2. Aaron at Sinai - Ex. 32:21-24
 3. Saul, afraid of the Philistines, offered a sacrifice instead of waiting for Samuel - 1Sam. 13:8-12 - "I forced myself"
- B. God's standard - Ez. 18:1-4, 14-18; 1Cor. 10:13
- C. Which standard raises human beings to their potential: I can't help myself or I am in charge of how I react to outside stimuli?

VIII. I WAS TOLD IT WAS OKAY (The "My pastor said I could" Plan)

- A. Reasoning: I am too weak, ignorant, confused, inexperienced to discern right from wrong
 1. Standard: A higher regard for a religious leader than for God whom he professes to serve
 2. Matt. 15:13-14; 2John 9-11
- B. God's standard - Eph. 3:1-4; 1John 5:13, 19-20
- C. Which one works: a standard established by one who does not know you and your condition of life, or the standard that says you can know enough to be self-determining

IX. GOD'S STANDARD (Rom. 12:1-2)

- A. Things aren't true because they are in the Bible; they are in the Bible because they are true.
 1. Never heard any rational person saying that abstaining from drugs, alcohol, fornication, or stealing was immoral.
 - a. Have heard Joscelyn Elders, Gloria Steinem, and James Carville say that; but I did specify rational persons.
 2. Challenge anyone to improve on Matt. 5, 6, & 7 or Romans 12.
 - a. Impossible!

- b. The Bible is a system that works; a perfect standard for imperfect men.
- B. Illustration - on I376 going 80 MPH. Get a citation and go before the judge. How would he react if you told him:
 1. "Everyone is doing it, why are you picking on me?"
 2. "I didn't hurt anyone judge; nothing bad happened." Will he be impressed by that?
 3. "It's my life, who are you to tell me to go 65?!" What will he say to that?
 4. "Come on Judge you old foggy, times are a changin.' That's a state of the art 400 HP engine, and you want me to go 65?" Reckon how he'd take that?
 5. "Didn't bother me; why should it bother you?"
 6. "Just had to try 80 MPH once to see what it was like; what's wrong with that?"
 7. "My driving instructor told me I could." "Well, bring him in, too"
 8. Laughable, for no one would have the gall to say that to a judge.
 9. Yet how many plan to use these same arguments with the Lord on Judgment Day?
 10. How ridiculous, illogical, and inconsistent can one get?
- C. Why are all of the plans of man sadly pathetic failures and Bible principles of morality the most reasonable, logical, and functional system of morality?
 1. The Bible principles came from the mind of God.
 - a. Morality is proof that God has spoken to man.
 2. The plans of men came from the mind of the Adversary
 - a. It is obvious that He does not have our best interests in mind

Conclusion:

- A. Is your life a demonstration of God's moral plan?
 1. I see Christians living according to God's standards, and in spite of their trials, they are peacefully happy.
 2. I see others following human standards and their lives are as disordered and miserable as a soap opera.
- B. Prov. 8:32-36; 2Tim. 3:14-17
- C. Have the courage to follow God's standard of morality in a world gone amorally berserk.
 1. Kingsley Amis:
 - "That horse whose rider fears to jump will fall:
 - Riflemen miss if orders are unsure;
 - They only are secure who seem secure;
 - Who lose their confident voice, lose all."
- D. What answer will you have for the Judge if you stand before him unprepared?