

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

Morality vs. Amorality

- 2Tim. 3:10-17
- The Bible provides a basis for decision-making, including moral choices.
- 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
- How do we answer that?

Morality vs. Amorality

- We need to begin defending the faith with actions as well as with words.
 - Rom. 12:1-2 - “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”
- Some are afraid to be different from the world.

God's Plan Is The Only Rational, Functional System

- John 13:34-35 - “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”
- 1Peter 4:3-4 - “For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles-- when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. 4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.”

God's Plan Is The Only Rational, Functional System

- 1Peter 2:13-15 - “Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, 14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. 15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men”
- Behavior that is not base becomes evidence of a higher purpose than merely existing.
- What are the standards of men, and do they work?

BUT EVERYONE IS DOING IT! (The “Mom, all of my friends are...!” Plan)

- Reasoning: If everyone around me is doing it, then it must be okay.
 - The standard is the will of the majority.
- God's standard
 - Matt. 7:13-14 - “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”

BUT EVERYONE IS DOING IT! (The “Mom, all of my friends are...!” Plan)

- The majority is going to hell
- The majority is frequently wrong
- The majority isn't committed to any definitive way
- Is “everybody's doing it” a reasonable system of morality?

AS LONG AS NO ONE GETS HURT. (The “It turned out ok” plan)

- Reasoning: end justifies the means, situation ethics, victimless crime, consenting adults
 - The standard is results.
- God's standard
 - Matt. 23:15 - “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.”
 - Rom. 3:8 - “And why not say, ‘Let us do evil that good may come?’ -- as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.”

AS LONG AS NO ONE GETS HURT. (The “It turned out ok” plan)

- Why so much emphasis on the means, if you get good results?
 - Lev. 10:1-2 - “Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. 2 So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.”

AS LONG AS NO ONE GETS HURT. (The “It turned out ok” plan)

- God's laws of morality bring consistency, not confusion.
 - 2Tim. 1:13 - “Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.”
- Which standard is the most workable, one that changes continually, or one that is certain?

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

- Reasoning: You want to be your own little god; you don't need anyone else.
 - The standard is YOU
- Still believing the serpent's lie: self-determination confers godhood
 - Gen. 3:5 - “For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

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

- God's standard
 - Jer. 10:23 - “O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.”
 - Prov. 3:5-8 - “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. 7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil. 8 It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones.”

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

- God's standard
 - 1Cor. 6:19-20 - “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.”

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

- 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.
- Which standard is the most reasonable?

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Previously

- Morality vs. Amorality
- God's Plan Is The Only Rational, Functional System
- BUT EVERYONE IS DOING IT! (The “Mom, all of my friends are...!” Plan)
- AS LONG AS NO ONE GETS HURT. (The “It turned out ok” plan)
- IT'S MY LIFE AND I'LL DO WHAT I WANT! (The “Who are you to tell me what to do?” Plan)

Conclusion

- TIMES ARE CHANGING (The “Get with it!” Plan)
- I ONLY DID IT ONCE (The “Come on, chicken” Plan)
- I FEEL IT’S OK (The “It didn't bother me, why should it bother you?” Plan)
- I'M A VICTIM OF... (The “I can't help it” Plan)
- I WAS TOLD IT WAS OKAY (The “My pastor said I could” Plan)
- GOD'S STANDARD

TIMES ARE CHANGING (The “Get with it!” Plan)

- Reasoning: “21st Century technological age, new paradigm, don't need those old Victorian mores and tribal taboos”
 - The standard is whatever form of conventional wisdom is currently in fashion

TIMES ARE CHANGING

(The “Get with it!” Plan)

- God's standard
 - Gal. 1:7-10 - “...there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. 10 For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.”
 - 2Tim. 4:3-4 - “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.”

TIMES ARE CHANGING (The “Get with it!” Plan)

- Questions and answers are timeless and universal
 - Ecc. 1:9 - “That which has been is what will be, That which is done is what will be done, And there is nothing new under the sun.”
 - Ecc. 7:10 - “Do not say, ‘Why were the former days better than these?’ For you do not inquire wisely concerning this.”

TIMES ARE CHANGING (The “Get with it!” Plan)

- The important questions and answers are timeless and universal
 - Matt. 22:36-40 - “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? 37 Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”
- Which standard works?
 - Bible morality is a place of security in a society that appears to be enthusiastically self-destructive

I ONLY DID IT ONCE

(The “Come on, chicken” Plan)

- Reasoning: “I only did it once; never do it again; business man in a bind, teen among peers, as long as it isn't repetitious, it's ok.”
 - The standard is frequency
 - Most people want to define morality by the exigencies of the moment
- God's standard
 - Matt. 12:30 - “He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.”

I ONLY DID IT ONCE

(The “Come on, chicken” Plan)

- How many times do you have to do something for it to be wrong?
- How many times do you have to do something to suffer the consequences?
- Which is the more logical and reasonable standard: the vagaries of luck or stable consistency?

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

- Standard: Let your conscience be your guide.
 - Reasoning: subjective, impulse driven feelings
 - What of one with a poorly trained conscience or with no moral conscience at all?

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

- God's standard
 - Acts 23:1 - "Then Paul, looking earnestly at the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."
 - Acts 26:9-11 - "Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. 11 And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities."

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

- "There is nothing new about selling the talentless to the tasteless." (*George Will*)
- Is your subjective conscience a reasonable standard?

I'M A VICTIM OF... (The “I can't help it” Plan)

- Standard: Abdication of personal responsibility
 - Reasoning: I am helpless; I not only have no control over circumstances, I have no control over my own reactions to circumstances.
 - Aaron at Sinai - Ex. 32:21-24
 - Saul, afraid of the Philistines, offered a sacrifice instead of waiting for Samuel - 1Sam. 13:8-12 (“I forced myself”)

I'M A VICTIM OF... (The “I can't help it” Plan)

- God's standard
 - Ez. 18:1-4, 14-18
 - 1Cor. 10:13 - “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”
- 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?

I WAS TOLD IT WAS OKAY

(The “My pastor said I could” Plan)

- Standard: A higher regard for a religious leader than for the Lord he professes to serve
 - Reasoning: I am too weak, ignorant, confused, inexperienced to discern right from wrong
 - Matt. 15:13-14 - “But He answered and said, Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. 14 Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.”

I WAS TOLD IT WAS OKAY

(The “My pastor said I could” Plan)

- Standard: A higher regard for a religious leader than the Lord he professes to serve
 - 2John 9-11 - “Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; 11 for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.”

I WAS TOLD IT WAS OKAY

(The “My pastor said I could” Plan)

- God's standard
 - Eph. 3:1-4 - “For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles-- 2 if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, 3 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)”

I WAS TOLD IT WAS OKAY

(The “My pastor said I could” Plan)

- God's standard
 - 1John 5:13, 19-20 - “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God... 19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. 20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.”

I WAS TOLD IT WAS OKAY

(The “My pastor said I could” Plan)

- Which one works: a standard established by an arbitrary man who does not know you and your condition of life, or the standard established by an all-knowing God who says you can know enough to be self-determining?

GOD'S STANDARD

- Rom. 12:1-2 - “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”
- Things aren't true because they are in the Bible, they are in the Bible because they are true.

Illustration: You are on I376 going 80 MPH; get a citation, go before the judge. How would he react if you told him:

- "Everyone is doing it, why are you picking on me?"
- "I didn't hurt anyone judge; nothing bad happened."
- "It's my life, who are you to tell me to go 65?!"
- "Come on Judge you old fogey, times are a changin.' That's a state of the art 400 HP engine, and you want me to go 65?"
- "Didn't bother me; why should it bother you?"
- "Just had to try 80 MPH once to see what it was like; what's wrong with that?"
- "My driving instructor told me I could."
- How many plan to use these same arguments with the Lord on Judgment Day?

GOD'S STANDARD

- 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?
 - The Bible principles came from the mind of God.
 - Morality is proof that God has spoken to man.
 - The plans of men came from the mind of the Adversary
 - It is obvious that He does not have our best interests in mind

GOD'S STANDARD

- Prov. 8:32-36 - “Now therefore, listen to me, my children, For blessed are those who keep my ways. 33 Hear instruction and be wise, And do not disdain it. 34 Blessed is the man who listens to me, Watching daily at my gates, Waiting at the posts of my doors. 35 For whoever finds me finds life, And obtains favor from the LORD; 36 But he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; All those who hate me love death.”

GOD'S STANDARD

- 2Tim. 3:14-17 - “But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

GOD'S STANDARD

- Have the courage to follow God's standard of morality in a world gone amorally berserk.

“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.”

(Kingsley Amis)