

The Wrong Questions

Introduction:

- I. Sometimes what seem like the most difficult questions are asked and debated by Christians.
 - a. Not only is this an issue when discussing things such as drinking a little alcohol or smoking, or using smokeless tobacco, or things such as modesty in clothing, necessity of attending EVERY church service, etc., it is perhaps a much bigger problem when one person has no problem with these “questionable” things, while another is troubled by them.
- II. Usually these questions are phrased like so:
 - a. Is it a sin to _____ ?
 - i. This blank could be filled with any number of things: smoke, drink a little bit, say certain by-words, etc.
 - b. Do I have to _____ ?
 - c. This question is most often regarding church attendance, but could also refer to forgiveness, Bible study, and other things.
 - d. These are the WRONG QUESTIONS!

Discussion: These are the Wrong Questions Because:

- I. They reflect selfishness.
 - a. Especially in this country, because of our “unalienable rights,” we tend to look inwardly to think about what we should do, rather than looking at the needs of our fellow man.
 - i. I Corinthians 8 – Be careful that you do not cause the weak to stumble because of your “rights.”
 - ii. Even if YOU have no problem with the occasional drink or wearing clothes that reveal more than they cover, there are people who are deeply hurt by these!
 1. Notice verse 7 – Paul admits that those who had problems with FStI were just “weak” in conscience, BUT he also told those with the BETTER KNOWLEDGE to accommodate the weakness of their brothers!
 - a. APPLICATION – Even if your “occasional drink” only bothers someone who was once an alcoholic, it is still YOUR responsibility to accommodate them. Even if the way you dress only offends those you may call “perverts,” it is still YOUR responsibility to accommodate them!
 - b. Even beyond hurting those who have previously struggled with these problems, there are some who, because of misunderstanding of your beliefs, might lose respect for you as a Christian because of your actions!
 - i. They mistake your “understanding” of the issue at hand for a reflection of your entire spirituality.

1. i.e. Because you might enjoy an “occasional drink,” they may not trust you in other spiritual matters, like teaching Bible classes!
 - c. Here is the point: Paul has already chided the Corinthian church for going to court against one another. In that discussion he asks them, “Why would you not rather be defrauded? However, you are the ones that defraud your own brothers!” (I Corinthians 6:7-8).
 - i. In the case of our “rights,” when we do things we have no problem with and do not consider those who do have problems with them, we are defrauding them selfishly, rather than giving up a few of our rights to help them!
 1. Look at Paul as an example: I Corinthians 8:13; 9:3-7, 12
 - ii. In I Corinthians 6:12, Paul says twice, “All things are lawful for me.”
 1. This is equivalent to saying, “There is nothing wrong with these things.”
 2. However, he goes on to say, “Not all things are helpful.”
 - a. Helpful = to bring a benefit or to be useful
 - i. Used in Matthew 5:29 – Which is “BETTER?”
 1. Is it good to have both eyes? Is it good not to go to hell? Which is BETTER?
 2. There may not necessarily be a right or wrong, but there is ALWAYS a “better!”
 - d. Notice Paul’s motivation for all of this discussion on dealing with the “weaker brother.”
 - i. I Corinthians 8:11-12; 9:19-23; 10:32-33
 - e. We have one purpose, which will bring us to our other point: I Corinthians 10:31
- II. They reflect lack of submission.
- a. This is normally seen in those “Do I have to” questions.
 - i. We look like the little boy told to clean his room, who says, “Do I have to?”
 - ii. Paul refers to himself as a servant of Christ in Romans 1:1. That type of servant is a servant because he owes his master more than he can pay.
 1. If I do not behave as a servant, then I am saying, “I owe you nothing.” Will we say that to God?
 - a. Luke 17:1-10
 - i. Forgiveness is NOT a matter of how much faith someone has!
 - ii. It is your duty IF you consider yourself a servant of Christ!
 - b. I want you to notice a common thread that passes through all of these questions we’ve talked about today:
 - i. Is it wrong to: drink, use tobacco (smoked or not), dress immodestly?
 - ii. Do we have to: study daily, attend every worship service, forgive?
 1. They all are questions asked with an effort to make Christianity easier on us!
 - a. We like what drinking does to our feelings and popularity.
 - b. We like the relaxation we get from smoking or dipping.

- c. We like the looks we get when we dress a certain way.
- d. We don't want to give up MORE time to study.
- e. We don't feel like getting up that early to come to worship.
- f. We don't want to let go of wrongs committed against us.
 - i. THESE ARE ALL THINGS THAT SHOW A TENDENCY TO OBEY THE BODY'S DESIRES!!!
 - 1. Romans 8:5-8
 - a. Where is your mind set? This depends on the type of questions you ask!
 - i. Would I be more holy or faithful to God if I did this?
 - ii. OR, do I have to do this?
 - iii. See the difference?
 - b. Notice: If your mind is set on the body, you CANNOT please God!!!
 - 2. Romans 8:12
 - a. Remember why Paul was a slave of God? He was indebted to God!!
 - b. You are either living like you owe the body, or like you owe God!

Conclusion:

- I. Notice the cure for this worldly disease in Romans 8:13 – You must put to death the deeds of the body, by the Spirit!
 - a. Galatians 5:16-25
 - b. John 3:5 talks about the need to be born of water and of the Spirit
 - i. Baptism – Acts 2:38