

When Tolerance Becomes Tyranny



punishment by law(s)!

Is it OK, or even possible, to agree to disagree with the deeply held beliefs of others anymore? You've heard the buzzwords: "hate speech," "psychological/emotional damage," "micro-aggressions," "campus Codes," "workplace codes," "offended feelings," "profiling," "damaged dignity," and the like. All the terms flag the kind of speech that has been deemed (by some) to be a verbal manifestation of the "sin" of INTOLERANCE. It's a sin deserving

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"My school has a zero-tolerance weapons policy.
I was sent home for having a sharp mind!"

Christians are (should be) people who care deeply (VALUE GREATLY) about **4 realities**:

- **The TRUTH.**

John 1:14; 8:31-32; 17:17

The Truth is found both in Scripture and in the Person of Jesus. The two always agree. (will set you free)

- **The core nature of PEOPLE.**

Romans 2:15; James 3:1-esp 9-12

People are MORAL by design. The work of the law (declaring some beliefs and/or actions to be right or wrong, moral or immoral) is written on our hearts. Everyone makes moral judgments. The question is, WHO'S morality are they using as the Standard of judgment?

- **The Transcendent Giver of ABSOLUTES.**

Isaiah 45:19

The Big "IF" about morality is: IF morality is based simply on personal preference, then the judgments of others carry no more weight than if they told you which flavor of ice cream they prefer. When someone says, "The God of the Bible is a moral monster," the question is, "On what basis do YOU make that judgment on God? Usually emotive ethics, where something "feels" right or wrong.

- **The changing idea of TOLERANCE.**

- The "Old School" tolerance is: "You have a **RIGHT** to your beliefs / opinions / preference; and I have a right to **DISAGREE** with our beliefs / opinions / preferences."

- The “New School” tolerance is: “I have the right to my opinions, and you have no right to **DISAGREE** with my opinions. And when disagree with me, your lack of agreement / *support* is an indication of **hostility** towards me (or that you **HATE** me).” Hate = not agree AND support me.

Those who push “new school” tolerance believe only certain groups of people should be allowed to express themselves in any public forum.

As much as we would like to change the “new tolerance” atmosphere in our culture, it is what it is, so how should Christians deal with the new normal?

1. RECOGNIZE the current **MORAL CODE being **IMPOSED** on our culture.**

- ALL law is an IMPOSITION of **SOMEONE’S** moral code! [speed limit sign... billboards]

“ . . . (the people I have met in New York) have a very finely honed sense of right and wrong. There are many things happening in the world that evoke their moral outrage. The problem is a problem with their moral outlook, however . . . people still have strong moral convictions, but it’s almost like their moral intuitions are free-floating, without any basis (other than themselves) as to why they find some things to be evil and other things to be good . . .) [Tim Keller, *The Reason For God*, pp 144, 145]

** The QUESTION is: WHO **DETERMINES** what is right and what is wrong? God or people? Does it begin with GOD, or does it begin with you and me? Some say “hate speech” laws do not Homos, trans, Islam, and and other “protected” group of people.

(Gen 3:5; Judges 21:25)

- There will **ALWAYS** be *some* moral code imposed on people! The question is, **WHOSE** moral code will it be?!? (Those who get the ear of the *media, academics, judiciary*, and elected officials) / AND, never underestimate the value of PERSISTENT and NEVER SATISFIED!

2. **PREPARE TODAY for the conversation / conflict coming **TOMORROW**.**

Jesus and the idea of the sword . . . Matthew 10:34. What does that mean?
(cf Challaies article)

Here’s a short list of “divisive” and culturally controversial beliefs Christians hold.

- Beliefs about **JESUS** and the **GOSPEL**. (**John 14:6**) divide us from universalists and cultural relativists.
World IS divided between the haves & the have NOTS **1 John 5:12**
- Beliefs about absolute, transcendent **RIGHT** and **WRONG** divide us from ethical relativists.
Genesis 3:5
- Beliefs about the **UNBORN** being actual people who have a right to life divide us from people who embrace “reproductive rights”. **Psalm 139:13-15** eg of survival of the fittest evolutionary mentality
- Beliefs about ALL people being treated with **DIGNITY, RESPECT**, and **JUSTICE** (as defined in the Bible, NOT as defined by some special interest group “Dey got \$\$ but dey gibbin none of that to uses”) divide us from people who believe in “protected groups” and who believe that some lives matter and others do not. **Micah 6:8**
- Beliefs about God **ASSIGNING** genders and **DESIGNING** sex to be expressed within the boundaries of a **HETEROSEXUAL** relationship known as **MARRIAGE** will divide us from those who want “freedom” in those areas. **Genesis 1:27; Exodus 20:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:3** Adultery fornication... (the elevation of FEELING above objective reality . . . and *it’s hard to argue against feelings...*)

3. **STAND UP AND PUSH BACK; but don’t get DEFENSIVE!**

- A great strategy always is to ask QUESTIONS and press for DEFINITIONS. Make people define their terms!

WWWWW&H = Jesus asked more questions than He answered.

It runs something like this: “What do you MEAN by _____, and WHY should I accept YOUR OPINION and not mine (or better yet, the transcendent Norms from God)?”

- Know your **HISTORY**. Look into **ORIGINS**. The “new tolerance” laws have historic origins in communism and fascism.
- When all is said and done, don’t be surprised if you **SUFFER** anyway. **1 Peter 4:12-19**