

God's word is our guide

Anyone who thinks it is always easy to know what is right has probably not had much experience making decisions. For every clear-cut situation covered by an explicit commandment of God, there are many more situations where the right thing to do is not clear, and these situations tax the wisdom of even the most sincere person.

When those tough situations arise, we sometimes consult every source of authority except the right one. We consider what our own previous practice has been. We look at what others have done in the past or are doing now. We ask the “experts.” We check what our family believes. We investigate what position “the church” has taken.

It's hard to imagine how people who are Christians could do this, but even those of us who are Christians often forget that **God's word is our guide**. That is the only authority that will never fail us, and we need to meditate on the importance of letting the Bible make our decisions for us.

Generally speaking, most of us spend too much time comparing our own practice to that of other people. Rather than soberly studying the Scriptures, determining what is right, and then taking a courageous stand on our convictions, we keep at least one eye cocked in the direction of the other fellow. We want to know how he is doing, and whether his practice compares favorably or unfavorably to our own actions.

And as if that were not bad enough, we tend to go to two extremes with our comparisons. Either we judge that our neighbor is doing better than we are and we become jealous, or we judge that we are doing better than he is and we become proud. In all of these comparisons, we tend to forget that the only thing that really matters is what God's word says.

Whether we or anybody else has been doing right or wrong up in the past, we can be sure that the Scriptures reveal the infallibly right course of action for everybody right now. Steering by an uncertain, error-prone standard will not get us to the destination we desire. Only the perfect authority of God's truth will do that. Before it's too late, let's resolve that, whatever anybody else may be doing, we will search the Scriptures to settle matters of right and wrong.

Monday: Jeremiah 10:23

Key Idea: What people think is right may turn out to be wrong after all.

Questions for Family Growth: What does it mean that “the way of man is not in himself”? What can happen to us if we always go by what someone else thinks is right? Consider **Prov. 14:12**. What is the safe standard to go by in every circumstance?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 24:26**.

Tuesday: Genesis 4:1-16

Key Idea: We should not compare ourselves to others and then become angry about it.

Questions for Family Growth: What would you say was the problem Cain had when he compared himself to his brother and then became angry about the comparison? If someone else obeys God and we do not, what should be our attitude about that?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 24:27](#).

Wednesday: Luke 18:9-14

Key Idea: We should not compare ourselves to others and then become proud about it.

Questions for Family Growth: When the Pharisee compared himself to other people, what was his attitude about the comparison? How was the attitude of the tax collector different? If we obey God and someone else does not, what should be our attitude about that?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 24:28,29](#).

Thursday: Matthew 15:1-9

Key Idea: The commandments of men are not a safe standard to go by.

Questions for Family Growth: What is a “tradition”? If a group of people has been doing something in worship to God for a long time, does that make it right? Does that make it wrong? What are some things that might make a particular tradition displeasing to God?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 24:30-34](#).

Friday: Psalm 119:9-16, 33-40, 97-104

Key Idea: No matter what others are doing, God’s word is always good and right and reliable.

Questions for Family Growth: In [v.9](#), what does it mean for a young person to “cleanse his way” (NKJV)? How does God’s word help us do that? Why should we appreciate God’s commandments, and even go so far as to love them?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 25:1,2](#).

Gary Henry — WordPoints.com