

All That God Wants Us to Be

I. Introduction

A. When it comes to who God wants us to be, the *complete* teaching of God's Word must be studied and applied. Error often results from seeing *part* of what God expects of us and using this part of the picture to "justify" avoiding other aspects of what He desires. It's important to avoid this and pursue the totality of His will. For instance, consider the need we have to...

II. Speak the Truth and Speak in Love

- A. While some people feel justified for compromising the truth in order to "show the love of Christ," others feel justified for speaking hatefully, as long as what is said is truthful. Instead of falling into either of these two traps, God desires us to be "speaking the truth in love." **Ephesians 4:15**
- B. Jesus' conversation with the rich young ruler well-exemplifies both sides of this. Jesus told the man something he clearly didn't want to hear. He didn't do so in a spiteful way, though, but out of genuine love for the man's soul. **Mark 10:21-22**

III. Be Peacemakers and Sincere

- A. This ties in with a second example: our need to be both peacemakers but also sincere. Speaking the truth is not an excuse for being contentious, as God's Word shows that we must seek peace. **Matthew 5:9; Romans 12:18**
- B. Though this is true, being a peacemaker doesn't mean seeking to have no one "at odds" with us at any cost. Compromising truth in the name of "peace" is *not* what Romans 12 is commanding. **Romans 12:9; James 3:17**

IV. Be Moveable and Immovable

- A. The wisdom from above is not only "first pure, then peaceable," but it's also "easy to be entreated" (ASV), "willing to yield" (NKJV), or "open to reason" (ESV). This alludes to the fact that we are to be *moveable*.
James 3:17; James 1:21
- B. Though we should be moveable in a sense, we should also be *immovable*. While steadfastness must not be used as an excuse for failing to change as needed, a willingness to yield must not be used as an excuse for spiritual shakiness. **1 Corinthians 15:58**
- C. We must be eager to move in ways that draw us closer to God, but steadfastly resist moving in ways that pull us further from Him. **1 Corinthians 5:7**

V. Zealously Pursue Good and Cautiously Avoid Evil

- A. A fourth example is seen when considering the zeal we should have for good works. **Titus 2:14**
- B. This zeal must be "balanced" with a caution for avoiding things the Lord disapproves of. **Romans 10:2**
- C. Instead of omitting what the Lord requires for fear of committing what He forbids (or vice versa), we should be both eager to pursue what He requires *and* cautious to avoid what He forbids. **James 3:1; 2 Timothy 2:2**

VI. Be Holy and a Soul Winner for Jesus

- A. God also teaches the need we have to not be conformed to the world. Part of this involves watching who and what is influencing us. **Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 15:33**
- B. While such holiness is imperative, God doesn't expect us to avoid any possible negative influence at any cost. Christians must be both "in the world," *and* "not of the world." **1 Corinthians 5:9-10; Hymns for Worship, Song 568; John 17:15**