

A Weighty Principle

Dub McClish

Paul urges, “But I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple unto that which is evil” (Rom. 16:19b). There is a weighty principle of truth in this inspired exhortation.

We are encouraged to be wise (being well informed, exercising discernment, practicing good judgment) concerning things that are good. Only by knowing and having definite convictions of the things that are good is this possible. We are also urged to be simple (harmless, innocent, unadulterated) concerning evil matters. Let’s explore some applications of this great principle.

Paul’s primary application concerns divisive false doctrines of which he warns in verses 17–18. This is Paul’s subject in this paragraph. We are instructed to mark the false teachers and turn away from them for they only serve their own lusts and will lead the undiscerning astray if they are not so dealt with. Before we can identify the bad teachings and their bad teachers, we must be so wise in the good teaching that we can discern what is the “good” and the “bad” (Heb. 5:14). If we are wise to the good and sound doctrine, we will not allow false opinions of men to go unchallenged under the cloak of an ungodly tolerance. But we are also urged to be unadulterated by – uninvolved with – the evil of false doctrines. If we would but heed this truth, we would never stray from the Truth nor defend those who do. It is the case far too often that people are wise to the damnable doctrines of men because they are searching for something complex, emotionally exciting, or more sophisticated than the simple Gospel. Thus, many of the elect waste their time and money on some religious “best seller” written by someone who has no more Scriptural concept of God’s plan of redemption or the church than a billy goat. Conversely, such people remain “simple” to the Truth because it is too unexciting and unsophisticated for them and they will neither study it nor listen to it preached for long.

This mighty principle applies to moral issues, too. The Lord wants us to fill our minds and our lives with things that are good, pure, righteous, and unquestionable before God and men (Phi 4:8). He also wants us to be unadulterated by the evils of the world. It is better for us to not even know of some of the ungodly things in the world, much less practice them.

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it was published in *The Edifier*, weekly bulletin of Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, TX, July 29, 1982, of which I was editor.]

Attribution: From *thescripturecache.com*; Dub McClish, owner and administrator.