

On Being Broadminded

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Broadminded connotes an ample tolerance of beliefs and/or behaviors other than one's own. Modern philosophers have created a culture that exalts this trait regarding morals and all religions (i.e., apart from those claiming Bible connections!). Is this trait a virtue, or could it be a vice? Let us consider *broadmindedness* in various contexts.

- **Personal preferences:** Such matters involve no right or wrong, but “everyday” choices (make of car, color of carpet, Coke or Pepsi, et al.). In the home, at work, and in other settings, tolerance of the choices of others is a virtue and contributes to peace and harmony.
- **Objective facts:** Such absolutes as $2+2=4$ or the law of biogenesis are not altered by sincerity of belief or sweetness of personality. Hebrews 3:4 states two objective facts: “For every house is builded by someone; but He that built all things is God.” Regardless of the field of study, objective facts and incontrovertible evidence leave no room for “tolerance” for honest and rational minds. Broad-mindedness towards all such matters is not a virtue, but a vice.
- **Moral issues:** The merchants of super-tolerance insist on broadmindedness relative to every form of behavior. Fornication, adultery, and homosexual behavior are excused as mere “alternate lifestyles.” However, the Word of God identifies them as sins that, if unrepented of and unforgiven, will cause one to be lost forever in Hell (1 Cor. 6:9–10). The Holy Spirit does not allow broadmindedness concerning such evils.
- **Options in religion:** The New Testament urges broad-mindedness toward things that are of no spiritual or eternal consequence. In such cases, we have options, and the opinions of others should be valued. The Lord commanded His people to take the Gospel into all the world (Mark 16:15), but the mode of travel or of communication are inconsequential. In hundreds of such matters, narrow-mindedness is a vice, and broad-mindedness is manifestly a virtue.
- **Obligations in religion:** The New Testament also sets forth doctrines and practices that are **not** optional and from which we **may not** rightly vary. For example, Mark 16:15 authorizes the preaching of only one religious message—the Gospel (as the New Testament reveals it and defines it). To receive the salvation that it alone provides (Rom. 1:16), Jesus also said (Mark 16:16) that one must believe it and be baptized to be saved. Neither men nor angels have any right to be broadminded concerning this statement or such things as the Deity of Jesus, God-pleasing worship, His plan of salvation, Jesus' one church, or numerous other issues (Gal. 1:6–9).

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