

THE SIN OF TOLERANCE

ISAIAH 5:20

Intro: The pressure is on to accept behaviors that God has condemned in the name of tolerance. To not do so is to be condemned as intolerant, judgmental, and filled with hate. What are Christians to do?

²⁰Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. Isaiah 5:20

I. Tolerance Has Expanded and Become King of our Country

- **Tolerance has become one of the “_____” words of this age –**

Word Wealth – Tolerance – 1) to endure, put with beliefs or practices differing from or conflicted with one’s own without hindrance (Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary)
2) Politically correct – to accept, be sympathetic to, even celebrate beliefs or practices differing from or conflicting from one’s own (or God’s!)

Tolerance is a good word, but has been expanded over too wide an area and applied where it does not belong.

- **“P.C.” tolerance compromises _____ convictions** – To be “P.C. tolerant,” we have to yield ground upon important spiritual issues, such as 1) marriage – living together is okay, having children outside marriage is one’s personal choice, 2) divorce – if unhappy, dump your spouse, 3) religion – all religions are equally valid and lead to God, 4) morality – you decide what is right and wrong, 5) personal responsibility – do your own thing. If irresponsible, it is society’s fault and they owe it to you to help and support you. If you disagree with P.C. tolerance, you are narrow-minded, judgmental, and a “hater.”
- **But science, mathematics, and reality are _____ - _____** – There is no room for careless broad-mindedness in the laboratory or engineering workstation. In mathematics, 2+2 always equals 4, not 3 ½. This is not subject to majority vote.

II. Jesus is Intolerant About the Way to Salvation

- **In some things, Jesus was very broad-minded, in other things, very _____** – Jesus was very accepting and forgiving, but when it came to God, sin, and salvation, He was narrow-minded and intolerant. If you asked directions to Chicago and the response was, “Take any road you want, they all lead to Chicago,” you would question the person’s sanity and truthfulness. Yet, many have come to believe all religions lead to Heaven.
- **Jesus was _____ - _____ about the way to salvation (Matthew 7:13-14)** – Jesus points out there are two roads in life. One is wide, lacking in faith, conviction, and morals. It is easy, popular, careless, and leads to destruction. And in compassionate intolerance, He says enter by the narrow and difficult gate to life. Jesus, and only Jesus, is that narrow gate. Only Jesus is that narrow road of faith, conviction, and loyalty to Him as Savior and Lord. Jesus is the only way, the only truth, and the only life.
- **Jesus was so intolerant of our sin-filled spiritually lost world, He left His high and holy heavenly throne to enter this world to be our _____** – He became a man, suffered at the hands of evil men, and died on a cruel cross of suffering and shame to give us redemption.

Jesus was narrow-minded and intolerant!

III. Jesus is Intolerant Toward Sin

- **Jesus is intolerant toward sin because it is an offense to _____** – The great, loving, mighty, and holy God Who created us is angry at man’s rebellious independence and defiance of Him, His ways, will, and sin (Isaiah 1:16). The Son of God will not tolerate the sin against God. Jesus is not “P.C. tolerant.”
- **Jesus is intolerant to _____ sin** – Most sins are outgrowths of the core sin of selfishness where we want to be lord over our lives and control everything and everybody around us for our desires. This is the cause of so much distress and conflict within us and the world. Jesus said to deny our “selves,” take up our cross, and follow Him (Luke 9:23).
- **Though Jesus is intolerant to sin, He is _____ and loving to the _____**
– To the woman caught in adultery, He said, “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more” (John 8:11). Jesus hates the sin, but loves the sinner. Jesus is filled with hate – for sin and evil; but also filled with love – for people enslaved by sin.

IV. How to Avoid the Sin of Tolerance

²*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.*
Romans 12:2

- **Do not _____ God’s will and ways with the world** – This requires that all beliefs, actions, and “wisdom” be tested by God’s written word, the Bible. Believe and do what God clearly teaches, and don’t dilute it for the sake of popularity or personal gain.

¹*The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion. ²When a country is rebellious, it has many rulers, but a man of understand and knowledge maintains order.*
Proverbs 28:1-2

⁸*[Jesus said,] “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*
Acts 1:8

- **With spirit-filled love and wisdom, _____ stand for and speak out for God** – As God guides us and empowers us, we need to stand up and speak out for God’s will and values. This should be done with love and wisdom, but also boldly, clearly and without equivocation. We also need to speak out to the world, not just to our friends who already agree with us.

¹¹*“No one sir,” she said. “Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.”*
John 8:11

- **Hate the sin but _____ the sinner, the Jesus way (John 8:11)** – Like Jesus with the woman caught in adultery, we should not shun those who are in sin, but care for them. We do not accept the sin, and should not be afraid to wisely and lovingly stand for what’s right. We need to do unto others the way you want to be treated (Mat. 7:12).

Answers: I. In; Christian; narrow-minded. II. Intolerant; narrow-minded; savior. III. God; core; tolerant; sinner. IV. Compromise; boldly; love.

I am grateful to Reverend Billy Graham and his message, “The Sin of Tolerance” (Decision Magazine, October 2012) on which this sermon is based.