

Loving what is right requires more than simply hating what is wrong

Living as we do in an age when even the most heinous sins have become so public that they no longer shock us as they once did, it is somewhat of a challenge to maintain our indignation against sin. The tendency is for us to get used to immorality and degradation, so that these things just don't seem as horrible to us anymore. If we're not careful, we'll end up like those of Jeremiah's day who had forgotten how to blush ([Jer. 6:15; 8:12](#)).

But lest we become proud of our righteousness, there is something we need to be reminded of. ***Loving what is right requires more than simply hating what is wrong.*** True goodness consists of what we're actively for and not just the things we happen to be against. The Pharisees, for example, had a long list of the sins they were against (mostly the sins other people were guilty of), but Jesus said that their righteousness was insufficient: "For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" ([Mt. 5:20](#)). To be the Lord's disciples, we will have to do better than the Pharisees.

One of the most thought-provoking stories in all of Jesus' teaching is that of the Good Samaritan ([Lk. 10:25-37](#)). Both the priest and the Levite who passed by without helping the injured man would surely have condemned the sinfulness of the thugs who beat him up, robbed him, and left him for dead. They might have made some comment about how the world had gone to the dogs and how something ought to be done about the lawless folks who made it unsafe to travel on the public highways. But Jesus showed that the priest and the Levite were just as wicked as the robbers. The things they were "against" didn't qualify them as truly loving goodness if the things they were "for" didn't move them to engage in actual deeds of goodness.

So the story of the Good Samaritan illustrates the adage that "talk is cheap." What counts for goodness in God's sight is what we do about the wrong we talk against so much. At the judgment, we'll be judged not on our words or our ideals or what we knew to do. Our judgment will be based on what we actually did. "Depart from me" is what Jesus will say to many so-called "righteous" people. They knew what was right, but He will say, "You did not do it" ([Mt. 25:41-46](#)).

Monday: Obadiah 10,11

Key Idea: If we are friends of justice, we must actively stand up for what is right.

Questions for Family Growth: What sin had Edom committed against Jerusalem? Can we claim to be on the side of justice and righteousness if, when wrong is being done, we simply stand "on the other side" (NKJV) and do nothing?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 22:26,27](#).

Tuesday: Revelation 2:6

Key Idea: We ought to hate sin and refrain from doing evil.

Questions for Family Growth: In this verse, what did Christ commend the Christians in Ephesus for doing? Can we be the Lord's friends without sharing His enemies and hating the same things He hates? What does **Jd. 23** teach about our feelings toward evil?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 22:28.**

Wednesday: Luke 10:25-37

Key Idea: True goodness consists of actually doing good deeds, not just avoiding evil ones.

Questions for Family Growth: Why did the man who was "desiring to justify himself" need to hear the truth contained in the story that Jesus told? While both need to be done, which shows greater character: talking against evil or doing what is good?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 22:29.**

Thursday: James 1:26,27

Key Idea: We must pay attention not only to the negative side of religion but also the positive.

Questions for Family Growth: How is it possible for a religious person's religion to be "worthless"? In the last part of **v.27**, what is the negative side of "pure and undefiled" religion? In the first part of the verse, what examples are given of our positive responsibilities?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 23:1-3.**

Friday: Matthew 25:31-46

Key Idea: At judgment, those approved of God will be those who have actively done good.

Questions for Family Growth: For what were the "sheep" commended? For what were the "goats" condemned? In **vv.44,45**, what was the response of those condemned, and what was the Lord's answer? What is the difference between sins of "commission" and those of "omission"?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 23:4,5.**

Gary Henry — WordPoints.com