

# The Christian and Controversy

**B**y now, most people are aware of the firestorm of controversy touched off a few weeks ago by comments from Phil Robertson. Mr. Robertson, the patriarch of the reality show “Duck Dynasty,” made remarks condemning homosexuality and other types of sins. The Robertson family issued a statement after his suspension acknowledging that his “unfiltered” remarks were coarse, but that his beliefs are grounded in the Bible’s teachings. In opposition to Mr. Robertson, a spokesman for the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) denounced Robertson’s statements opining that “true Christians” do not hold to those kinds of beliefs.

Regardless of what anyone might have said during this controversy, the Bible’s teaching on human sexuality is quite clear. To summarize it, the Bible teaches that human sexual relations are to be confined to marriage. Marriage is the institution, established by God in Genesis 1:20-24, wherein one man and one woman are to be joined together for life. Any sexual relationship outside of marriage is sin (1 Corinthians 7:2) and participants in such sin must repent. This is the same teaching set forth by the most loving, caring person to ever walk the earth, Jesus Christ (Matthew 19:4-9). Needless to say, in our pluralistic society such a message is heresy against the dogmas of political correctness. As such it is shocking to some and unwelcomed by many.

This controversy raises some important questions for those who would profess to be Christians. What is the “true Christian”—to borrow the phrase—supposed to do when society rejects a teaching of the Bible? What is his or her course of action to be when society or government may even seek to punish a person for merely stating what the Bible teaches? Tragically, many religious people and groups have chosen to compromise Biblical teaching in many different areas.

They have done so by, perhaps, being shamed into silence, by ignoring Biblical doctrines, or by altering Biblical teachings to make them acceptable to society. These approaches are antithetical to the scriptures (Ephesian 5:11). How then should the true Christian react when controversy over God’s Word arises?

First, the Christian needs to understand what determines truth and righteousness. It is not man-made religions which define truth (Matthew 15:3-9). Nor is it the governments of men which determine what is morally right. Man’s laws can, in fact, conflict with God’s Law (Acts 5:29) and therefore can be very immoral. Surely the actions of many governments in the last century alone are sufficient to demonstrate that what is legal does not always equate to what is right. While representative government is a wonderful political blessing, no one should be deceived into thinking that the will of the majority determines what is true (Exodus 23:2). While society’s view of right and wrong may indeed “evolve” over time, God’s view does not. Further, a person’s conscience is not a reliable guide (Acts 23:1), nor is even what we may believe to be true (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12). Sincerely believing a falsehood

does not transform it into truth. One must not be led astray, therefore, by these false standards. What then determines objective truth? In John 17:17, Jesus said that God’s Word is Truth. God’s Word is the only standard that matters because it will be the standard by which all men will be judged. That Word will stand true even if everyone rejects it.

Secondly, when controversy arises, the true Christian should stand for the Truth. Jesus never compromised the Truth to avoid controversy and neither should the Christian. Lest any be confused or tempted to misrepresent, standing for God’s Truth does not equate to hate. To the contrary, the true Christian must love all people. In fact, I John 2:8-11 teaches that it is impossible to know God while hating others, because God is love. Thus, the Truth is to be taught in love (Ephesian 4:15). It is not to be proclaimed in a crude or malicious way, but with graceful, kind speech (Colossians 4:6). The Christian, like Jesus, wants only what is best for all mankind and it is for this reason that we urge all people to accept the Lord’s laws in every aspect of their lives. In standing for the Truth, Christians should understand that the Gospel will seldom, if ever, be popular

with the majority. The Gospel, after all, requires that we change our hearts, our minds, and way of life. It requires that we live Christ-centered lives and not self-centered lives. Those requirements will not be popular with many, but it is the message that all people need. Christ has tasked the church with proclaiming His soul-saving gospel to the whole world. It this Gospel that we declare and it is the cause we plead, even if the one proclaiming that message is like a lone voice crying in the wilderness.

*If you are looking for a group that strives to be faithful to God’s Word in all aspects of doctrine, in worship, and in Christian living, please contact us or visit with us. If you, or someone you know, have questions about the Bible’s teachings on the family or any other Biblical topic, we will be happy to provide additional Bible-based information.*

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