

OPEN-MINDEDNESS vs. CLOSED-MINDEDNESS

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Christians are often accused of being “close-minded.” In contrast, those who say this consider themselves to be “open-minded.” The accusation of close-mindedness is easy to throw around, but is it accurate? What does it mean to be open-minded and close-minded? Is everyone who believes the Bible close-minded? And are the ones who claim to be open-minded really that?

An **open-minded** person is one who is **willing** to listen and consider a view that may not agree with his own. This does not mean that he will believe anything he is told but will have a standard by which to judge. The open-minded person will follow this standard (the Bible) to the best of his ability yet knowing that he is not perfect in understanding and knowledge. Growth is always necessary. Therefore, the open-minded person is always willing to listen to other understandings and beliefs. He will then restudy the standard to know the truth and change his understanding if necessary. If his investigation finds that a teaching does not conform to a standard of truth, the open-minded person will then reject it, because he loves the truth. An open-minded person is **not** someone who just believes and supports anything. That is foolishness. Truth is always the standard of judgment by which an open-minded person tests and proves all things (1 Jn. 4:1; 1 Thess. 5:21).

A **close-minded** person is one who **refuses** to hear and consider a view contrary to his own. He believes what he wants to believe and no amount of truth, reason, or logic to the contrary will cause him to restudy an issue or change his mind. It is the old “I know what I believe, so don’t confuse me with the facts” mindset. In many cases, the very ones who accuse Christians of being close-minded are themselves close-minded. They will blindly accept any amount of foolishness, but then refuse to sit down and study the facts and teachings of the scriptures. Unfortunately, many immature Christians refuse to study and grow. Since God has given us the standard of truth, let us have no fear of being challenged to study what God’s word teaches, and then challenging others to study. This is what open-mindedness is all about.