

THE DANGERS IN THE GRAY AREA

Introduction

- 1) There are **unequal opposing forces** in this world seeking our allegiance (Rom. 8:6; 12:9; 13:12)
 - a) Light and darkness, good and evil, righteousness and wickedness, spiritual and fleshly, etc.
- 2) The forces of good are greater and morally superior to the forces of evil (Eccl. 2:13; Col. 1:13)
 - a) There can be no mixing or fellowship between good and evil (2 Cor. 6:14-16)

I) Man Can Discern Between Good and Evil

- A) The Bible affirms that we can “discern both good and evil” (Heb. 5:14)
 - 1) This is possible only by the knowledge and use of the “oracles of God” and the “word of righteousness” (vv. 12-13)
 - 2) Eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil made Adam and Eve aware of the difference and opposition between good and evil (Gen. 2:17; 3:5,7,22)
 - 3) The works of the flesh and fruit of the Spirit are identifiable and distinguishable from one another (Gal. 5:19-23)
- B) Must respond differently to good as opposed to evil (Rom. 12:9; 1 Thess. 5:21-22; Eph. 5:8, 11)

II) Problems Created by Human Wisdom

- A) The **dismissal** of any distinction between good and evil
 - 1) Modern relativism – all moral distinctions are subjective perceptions
 - 2) Doing whatever you think is “right” for you (Judg. 21:25; Prov. 14:12)
- B) The **reclassification** of what is good and what is evil (Isa. 5:20)
 - 1) Abortion = choice, same-sex marriage = right to love, religion = oppression, etc.
- C) The **creation** of a subjective “gray area” between good and evil
 - 1) Moral choices that cannot be specified as absolutely right or wrong
 - 2) An indeterminate territory, undefined position, lacking clarity as to what is right

III) The Dangers in the “Gray Area”

- A) We must choose to dwell in the light and reject the darkness (Rom. 13:12)
 - 1) There is no “inheritance of the saints in the gray area” (cf. Col. 1:12)
 - 2) “Gray areas” necessarily involve confusing, risky, questionable, problematic matters
- B) This does **not** include legitimate issues of individual conscience about which people may disagree **that are neither right nor wrong in themselves** (Rom. 14; eating meats, working in a grocery store, attending a sporting event)
- C) **Beware** – “gray areas” often are created by trying to mix up the “darkness for light and light for darkness” (Isa. 5:20)
- D) Some things that have been placed into the “gray area”

1) <i>Social drinking</i>	8) <i>Lying in law enforcement/spying</i>
2) <i>Immodest clothing</i>	9) <i>Abortion in cases of rape or incest</i>
3) <i>Celebration dancing</i>	10) <i>Tax cheating/office stealing</i>
4) <i>Office flirting</i>	11) <i>Denominational baptism</i>
5) <i>Gambling</i>	12) <i>Instrumental music in worship</i>
6) <i>Viewing violence, sex, pornography</i>	13) <i>Adulterous marriage sanctified by baptism</i>
7) <i>Smoking, vaping, recreational drugs</i>	14) <i>Days of creation were long ages</i>
- E) Unfortunately, these things involve and lead to greater ungodly thoughts and actions but are declared “gray area” matters in an attempt to justify one’s participation

- 1) This involves a softening of the will of God by appealing to *situation ethics*, that in certain situations we convince ourselves by our own human judgment that we have a legitimate reason to act contrary to the will of God without sin
- 2) One can come up with any number of extreme hypothetical situations to argue that there should be exceptions to will of God, but such situations are usually very rare, and we should instead be emphasizing the need to walk daily in the clear light of God's truth, avoiding any questionable activities that would not reflect the godly thinking and actions of one who puts their trust in God and His ways (Titus 2:11-12)

IV) **How To Avoid the Dangers of the Gray Area**

- A) Study, learn, and obey the light of the gospel of truth (Eph. 5:1, 8-10)
- B) Examine all things by God's standard and avoid all forms that evil takes (1 Thess. 5:21-22)
- C) Follow the advice and example of godly people who seek things above (1 Cor. 11:1)
- D) Walk carefully as one who is wise in the will of the Lord (Eph. 5:15-17)
- E) Do nothing that might cause stumbling or doubt in another person (Rom. 14:13)
- F) Do only that in which you can give glory to God (1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17)

Conclusion

The Bible tells us that Christians are “**sons of light**” who are to “**walk as children of light**” (1 Thess. 5:5; 1 Pet. 2:9; Eph. 5:8; 1 Jn. 1:7). This is our life in Christ and we should seek to dwell in the light of Jesus, not in the darkness of sin, nor in the nebulous gray area of human confusion and compromise. If caught up in doubt or stubbornness, deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Christ! It is the only true and right way to go (Jn. 8:31-32).