

Do we have to be right to be wrong?

A frequently heard comment in ordinary conversation, is the expression, "I have the right to be wrong." This statement is said with an air of finality that defies contradiction. The person uttering this, apparently true word, challenges all comers to call into question his position. That is exactly what I propose to do.

If, when someone makes this statement they are indicating they have the ability to do things that are wrong, then everyone must agree. We are all capable, and in fact, are involved every day in doing things that are wrong by various standards. But this is not likely what the person means.

What is more to the point is that the person almost certainly means that they do not wish anyone judging their actions and condemning them for them. This is a luxury that most people wish to afford, especially when they know they have done something particularly wrong. No one in his or her right mind enjoys being proven wrong.

But, do we really have the right to be wrong? The answer is an emphatic "No!" No one has the right to be wrong. While we all have the capacity to be wrong and indulge that ability frequently, we have no right whatsoever to be wrong.

Imagine someone who is of the opinion they have the right to be wrong being pulled over on the highway for speeding. The officer comes up to their car and asks them if they are aware how fast they were travelling. The person says they do and indicates a speed well above the legal limit. As the officer writes out a speeding ticket, the person then says to the officer that they have the right to be wrong. Can you imagine what the officer

would think, or say to the person? Somehow the person's right to be wrong, would not extend to the place where they would not get a speeding ticket.

Think of the teller in the bank who makes an error on your deposit and short changes you \$500.00. You bring the mistake to their attention and they say that they have the right to be wrong. Somehow, when it comes to money, no one has the right to be wrong.

Well, if we don't have the right to be wrong on the side of the highway, or in the bank, where do we have the right to be wrong? It seems that many people who try to insist on the right to be wrong are thinking especially of moral issues and especially in the area of our relationship to God. But this is exactly the area where we desperately need to be right, not wrong!

We all can afford a speeding ticket now and then, or we can sort out a wrong at the bank easily enough, but if we are mistaken in our relationship to God, what recourse do we have? Is not our relationship to the Almighty the most significant, the most profound issue of life? Why is it that in this area of all areas, we wish to fudge the matter? Why is it we desire a lack of clarity here when we want accuracy in other areas of life?

Is it possible that we have a sneaking suspicion that our life style may not be pleasing to our Creator and for that reason we wish the right to be wrong? We hope that God will indulge us in our sins? We pray that He will turn a blind eye to our misdeeds? Is this not the real issue here as we consider our "right to be wrong"?

How foolish we are to have such a

mindset. We are most anxious that the surgeon scrub very carefully before operating on us, we want him or her to be the best, most experienced doctor with the least mistakes in surgery. But when it comes to our never dying souls, when we are considering our eternal destiny, when we are addressing the most powerful Being in all creation, the One to whom we must give an account, we prefer to be sloppy in our relationship.

Another possibility in this matter is that we know deep down that we are very wrong, we are very guilty and for that reason, we hope to be excused for our misdeeds. We do not know how to sort out our difficulties and we therefor are anxious to sweep them under the rug. We pray that we will be allowed to get away with our sins.

But, going back to the police officer on the side of the highway. If we cannot argue our right to be wrong with him, how much less can we argue with the Almighty? If we can-not manipulate a fellow creature, can we out maneuver the God of all creation? The question carries its own answer. We cannot.

There is only one way to deal with the issue of being wrong before God. The solution to guilt with God is found in Jesus Christ. He has the authority to absolve us of our sins and to give us peace with God. If we will confess our sins to Him, recognizing we have no right to be wrong, He will forgive us our sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. This is the right way, all other ways are wrong.

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