



## Are We SURE Sin is Really Sinful?

**Romans 1:28:** (NASB) *And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper...*



What has happened to us? We live in an age where ego and emotion are more important than virtue and values. An age where personal preference outweighs personal worth and "I want it now" trumps integrity. We live in an age where absolutes are not - unless we decide they fit into our personal plan - and standards are only something to customize and remodel to our personal satisfaction. Ours is an age where the ancient principles of sin and objective morality are being relegated to the trash heap of history. So, what are we supposed to do? Should we go along with the flow of thoughts and emotions that are reshaping our social structure? Should we abandon what is considered to be the old and worn out moral thinking of the past and embrace the new and vibrant personally-based principles of the present?

To get started, let's look at the basic biblical definition of sin:

Two Old Testament words most often translated *sin*:

**Sin:** Strong's #2403 an offence (sometimes habitual sinfulness), and its penalty, occasion, sacrifice, or expiation (meaning an offering for sin); also (concretely) an offender

**Sin:** Strong's #2398 to miss; hence (figuratively and generally) to sin; by inference, to forfeit, lack, expiate, repent, (causatively) lead astray, condemn

A brief look at the New Testament:

**Sin:** Strong's #264 to miss the mark

**Sin:** Strong's #266 to sin

**Matthew 18:21:** (KJV) *Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother **sin** <264> against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?*

**Matthew 26:28:** (KJV) *For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of **sins** <266>.*

**Offense:** Strong's #3900 a side-slip (lapse or deviation), i.e. (unintentional) error or (willful) transgression

**Romans 5:15:** (KJV) *But not as the **offence** <3900>, so also is the free gift. For if through the **offence** <3900> of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.*

The love of God through Jesus cancels this sin. That love is "agape" love - love in its highest form. Curiously, that very kind of love was the principle behind the founding of "situation ethics."





Joseph Fletcher was an American professor who founded the theory of situation ethics in the 1960's, and was a pioneer in the field of bioethics. He wrote the book: [Situation Ethics: The New Morality](#) in 1966.

(See Bonus Material.)

### Introduction and Agape love, *Situation Ethics Explained by Peter Baron of Peped*



- *We're going to talk about situation ethics, a theory that Joseph Fletcher came up with in the 1960's. That's the era, you remember, of free love. "Love is all you need," said the Beatles. And Fletcher argues that there is only one norm, one supreme norm, which is agape love. And agape love is love of a certain sort. It means sacrificial or commitment love and it's the most often used word in the New Testament of the Bible for "love." And it is, in Greek philosophy, the love which means commitment for the stranger, love for the stranger. And Fletcher says we need to live by that sort of admittedly demanding type of love. And he says it's typified by four principles, four "working principles," he calls them.*

**Sin brought the human race out of favor with God and under the rule of another:**

Ephesians 2:1-2: (NASB) <sup>1</sup>And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup>in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Satan is the "prince of this world." He usurped God's authority and we are living under his control, to the extent permitted by God.

### Introduction to the four principles, *The Four Working Principles of Situation Ethics*

- *The central motif of situation ethics is to act in a loving way toward others. We are to always seek to do the best thing, which in this case, is the most loving. The Christian is neighbor-centered first and last. Love is for people, not for principles. In his book, Joseph Fletcher set out how his situation ethics works by the way of six (actually four) propositions. These are: pragmatism, relativism, positivism and personalism.*

Positivism, pragmatism, personalism, relativism - all based upon agape love! At first glance, we might think that there is something here that is really valuable. But he said, "Love is for people and not for principles" - let's explore that further.

**Has "situation ethics" been world changing?  
How clearly has the power of selfless love manifested?**

Thinking about situation ethics from the standpoint of its origin is probably a complete surprise to most of us because we generally see situation ethics through the eyes of "making things up as we go." Let's look at how the whole thing has come together for us in this age of enlightenment. How does it actually work and is there value to situation ethics?

### The four principles explained, *The Four Working Principles of Situation Ethics*

- *Situation ethics is pragmatic because it is practical; it is concerned with doing good things for people. Situation ethics is relative because it responds to each moment uniquely, but always with the intent to act in the most loving manner. Positivism is about choice. We are not obliged to follow any creed or*

*set of commandments, but we choose to act in a loving manner because this is the right thing to do. Finally, situation ethics is personal because it focuses on people and their needs and dismisses blind obedience to religious teachings and commandments.*

This all sounds like it has merit, but the big problem with our enlightenment is that it is polluted.

Paul in the following context is emphasizing his care and responsibility for the Corinthians, as they were experiencing other earthly influences that were drawing them away from the true gospel:

2 Corinthians 11:12-15: (NASB) <sup>12</sup>But what I am doing I will continue to do, so that I may cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the matter about which they are boasting. <sup>13</sup>For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. <sup>14</sup>No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. <sup>15</sup>Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.

Those bringing the church "enlightenment" were false teachers. Paul was telling them there are higher standards that must be followed.

*Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light* - If Satan is the ruler of this world and all light essentially filters through him, we receive polluted - not pure - light. We want to see sin for what it *really* is, not for what we *hope* it is.



Faith requires following; feelings require managing. Faith and feelings are different.

Joseph Fletcher talked about situation ethics being founded in agape love, but he also stood for darker things. For example, he wrote that Down Syndrome children can be "put away," meaning either in an institution or through death. This is NOT agape love! (See Bonus Material.)



## What happens when we seek to live by how we feel? Let's look at the context of our theme Scripture:



**Romans 1:20-25:** (NASB) <sup>20</sup>For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. <sup>21</sup>For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

The world has seen the miracles of creation but has chosen to ignore them. Science displays the intricacy and beauty of nature but cannot say it was designed. Any light that humanity has in this darkened state will be tainted with the scourge of sin. *They became futile in their speculations* - God saw the trend and let it happen. He allowed hearts to be darkened, scourged with the taint of sin.

<sup>22</sup>Professing to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup>and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. <sup>24</sup>Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. <sup>25</sup>For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

Situation ethics exchanges the truth of God for a lie. It says the moment is bigger than principles. This is framed as idolatry, which is the epitome of darkness masquerading as light. Darkness likes more darkness.

### Jesus was relativistic, *Eight Situation Ethics: Compatible with Christianity*

- *To question whether or not Fletcher's situation ethics is compatible with Christianity is still an important consideration, though. Remember, not all Christians think alike. So, as some will love the idea of such an ethic, others will utterly reject it. You must be able to consider why this might be the case. In favor of situation ethics being compatible with Christianity is the fact that Jesus set an example that seems to be in keeping with Fletcher's descriptive principles. When he healed on the Sabbath, or harvested grain on the Sabbath, he was directly challenging the legalism of the Pharisees and taking a relativistic approach.*

Was Jesus relativistic? No. How do we know?

### Here is the real context in which Jesus says to love:

**Matthew 22:36-40:** (NRSV) <sup>36</sup>Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest? <sup>37</sup>He said to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. <sup>38</sup>This is the greatest and first commandment. <sup>39</sup>And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. <sup>40</sup>On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

This shows agape love based on godly instruction for living - it is *not* relativistic!



A CQ App user asks: Where in the Bible is being a transgender a sin if all we are changing is our bodies and not our temple, which is our heart?

On January 8, 2018 we are planning the podcast called, "Is My Gender Your Business?" We are going to hold off answering this complex question because it warrants more than just a 30-second discussion today.





### Jesus' associations and teaching, *Eight Situation Ethics: Compatibility with Christianity*

- *He mixed with members of society that were considered to be undesirable, like tax collectors and prostitutes, regardless of what others said. His inflammatory statements clearly set out to attack legalism and adopted a more personal approach to faith and ethics, offering forgiveness for sins. Jesus' teaching was in keeping with this idea, too. In his parables, such as "The Good Samaritan" and his condemnation of the rich man in the parable who let Lazarus starve to death at his gates, he clearly takes the agape route of compassion for those who are in need. In his Sermon on the Mount, he teaches not to judge others for their sins and to love enemies. These are clearly compatible with the six fundamental propositions, which advocate that agape is not the same as liking someone, and that we must be prepared to break rules that do not serve love. Here Jesus seems to be advocating the relativist approach to ethics rather than the legalist.*

It might seem that Jesus took the relativist approach because he stepped outside the lines drawn by the Pharisees, but he did not step out of the lines that God drew.

John 12:44-46: (NASB) <sup>44</sup>And Jesus cried out and said, He who believes in me, does not believe in me but in Him who sent me. <sup>45</sup>He who sees me sees the One who sent me. <sup>46</sup>I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me will not remain in darkness.

Jesus was a direct reflection of the light of God. That is not relativistic. It is clear, concise and focused entirely on the highest principles.

**Ethical Truth:**

**OUR HIGHEST AND BEST  
EXAMPLE OF UNIVERSAL  
ETHICS ACTED IN  
ACCORDANCE WITH  
GOD'S LAW.**

~~WRONG~~  
**RIGHT**



Jesus always acted in accordance with principle, which was higher than the preferences of any given moment.

**Is there such a thing as breaking a law for a higher purpose?  
How would we know we are right?**

We can all think of situations where standing for a higher good prevails. Having said that, this is where things always get sticky because it becomes a nearly impossible task to establish firm guidelines and principles to act in accordance with. Let's look at a couple of examples that shed some light on the how and why of the "higher good" and what we should watch out for.



### Obi Wan Kenobi, *The Four Working Principles of Situation Ethics*

- You know, all this brings me back to Star Wars again. Do you remember that scene when Ben is fighting Darth Vader in the Death Star hanger?
- "Now I am the Master."
- "Only a master of evil, Darth."
- The scene ends with Ben giving up his life so the others may escape. Have you ever considered how much Ben's sacrifice was an example of situation ethics in action? What he did was practical. They all needed to escape the Death Star. So, Ben gave up his life in order for the others to do this. His actions were relative to the situation. He considered giving up his life to be the right thing to do at that time. It was also a choice. He was under no pressure to do what he did. He alone made the decision to give up his life. It was also personal; it was done for his friends, not for himself.

Was he acting out of agape love? We will come back to this.



### What is ethical cheating, *Ethical Cheating*, Dr. Arthur Harkins

- What is ethical cheating? Well, my goodness, it's the kind of cheating that you can justify. It's like honor among thieves in a way. Let's apply that to the academy, to the university or college environment. Many, many students feel today, and research is showing this, that their college experience is not preparing them for the real world, or at least for the world of work. So, what they're trying to do is get through their colleges as fast as they can, ideally with minimal expense and bother. They go on with their living, their so-called "real world" lives. And one expression of that is that they will pull things off the internet, cut and paste in term papers. They will do a lot of things that ordinarily would be regarded as unethical by faculty, for example. Well, maybe, maybe not. Maybe if your educational delivery system is failing you, you are best justified moving on beyond that system and doing something that every knowledge worker already does today. And that is find every bit of information you possibly can that is relevant to the problem or an opportunity and convert that through intellectual transformation into alternative decision-making options.



In other words, "It is okay to cheat" because knowledge workers (defined as anyone who works for a living at the tasks of developing or using knowledge) do this anyway. But they are not being tasked with being original. They are being tasked with creating something because they are being paid to do something. While in school, the college student is tasked with applying his or her own brain. It is not legal or ethical to take someone else's writings from the internet as your own because you do not feel the college is doing for you what you think it should.

### In the days of Daniel and King Darius...

**Daniel 6:3-5:** (NASB) <sup>3</sup>*Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps (a provincial governor in the ancient Persian empire) because he possessed an extraordinary spirit, and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom. <sup>4</sup>Then the commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to government affairs; but they could find no ground of accusation or evidence of corruption, inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was to be found in him. <sup>5</sup>Then these men said, We will not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find it against him with regard to the law of his God.*

Daniel's behavior was so focused on doing right, he had such integrity, there was no "dirt" they could find on him. They had to make something up.



### Ethical observations from watching Daniel's behavior:

- Daniel had a personal and private habit and responsibility of worship.
- Daniel unequivocally knew God's hand was with him in miraculous ways.
- Daniel's allegiance was unshaken by circumstance and he was willing to accept consequences. God was more important than his physical life.
- Daniel's ethics were NOT at all "situation ethics," rather, they were universal based ethics. He broke the law of the land because God had proven Himself as more important throughout Daniel's life.



### Should we break God's word, *Eight Situation Ethics: Compatible with Christianity*

- *In addition, St. Paul clearly teaches that love is vital. As we've seen in 1 Corinthians, love is spoken of. But also in Galatians 5:14, where he reiterates Jesus' words that you should love your neighbor as yourself and this is the whole of the law. Having said all of this though, situation ethics seems to reject the commands in Scripture that seem to be absolute. The Ten Commandments are a good example, since it's always been taken that these are not to be broken. In addition, the church has a structure of authority. Within this structure, there is tradition and interpretation of Scripture which has been prayerfully considered over hundreds of years. Who are we to set this aside? It is arrogant and lazy to think that we can just ignore the work of the thousands of faithful and intelligent minds who have put together such structure of law for the benefit of humankind just because it suits us to do so.*

A lot of church traditions have gone off base, but God is a God of absolutes.

Peter and the Apostles were standing for something higher than the law of their day. Their preaching and healing caused an uproar among the High



Priest, the Sadducees and the entire religious ruling class in Jerusalem. The Apostles were put in prison and told to stop their activities.

**That night an angel released them from prison and told them to continue their preaching:**

*Acts 5:21-31: (NASB) (selected verses) <sup>21</sup>...Now when the high priest and his associates came, they called the Council together, even all the Senate of the sons of Israel, and sent orders to the prison house for them to be brought. <sup>22</sup>But the officers who came did not find them in the prison... <sup>25</sup>But someone came and reported to them, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people! <sup>26</sup>Then the captain went along with the officers and proceeded to bring them back without violence... <sup>27</sup>...they stood them before the Council.*

**Should they have obeyed the religious leaders or an angel from God?**

*The high priest questioned them, <sup>28</sup>saying, We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. <sup>29</sup>But Peter and the apostles answered, We must obey God rather than men. <sup>30</sup>The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging him on a cross. <sup>31</sup>He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*



**Observation: Why did the Apostles not follow the laws of the land?**

- The Apostles followed specific directions from God. This does not give us permission to break any law we want.
- The Apostles' ethics were NOT at all situation ethics; rather they were universal-based ethics. They were based in doing the will of God.

**Ethical Truth**

**DISOBEYING ANY LAW  
REQUIRES CRYSTAL  
CLEAR EVIDENCE OF  
GODLY CONVICTION AND  
NOT JUST FEELINGS.**

~~**WRONG**~~  
**RIGHT**



**How do we know what might cause us to inadvertently walk down the situation ethics path?**

It is one thing to proclaim that we are abiding by universal ethics but it is entirely another thing to actually do it. Why? Because we are human, we are sinful and we are emotional beings. Abiding by universal ethics depends on us knowing how to find and prove them to be true. If we cannot find them in Scripture and prove them to be true, we have no business standing for them. That takes the situational application of what we might be trying to label as a universal ethic. Proper application must take place.



**Was Obi Wan Kenobi really loving, *The Four Working Principles of Situation Ethics***

- *The thought that Ben might be said to have done a loving thing, but did his act lead to loving consequences? Oh, for his friends, yes. But what about all those on the Death Star? He's making sure his friends could escape. Ben's*



*actions led to Luke coming back in his X-Wing, firing a torpedo into the Death Star's exhaust chute and blowing the whole place to smithereens - which resulted in everyone on the space station being killed. Hmmm. That's not very loving. Oh well, something to think about as I fill up the crinkle-cut chips. See you soon.*

He saved his life but destroyed so many others. Was every person on the Death Star who was killed really bad? This is why following godly principles is better because it is above and beyond the human experience. All of the "what ifs" and gray areas are already covered. But this is difficult because again, Satan is the ruler of this world.



Psalms 19:12-13: (ASV) <sup>12</sup>Who can discern his errors? Clear thou me from hidden faults. <sup>13</sup>Keep back thy servant also from **presumptuous sins** <2086>; Let them not have dominion over me: Then shall I be upright, and I shall be clear from great transgression.

There are two sources of sin within us revealed in this text:

1. **Hidden Faults:** This first aspect of sin is the hidden, internal sin - perhaps sins that are a part of our very nature - hard for us to see clearly, as they are so natural to us. Perhaps these sins correlate to our desires. It is hard to deny such personal sin.
2. **Presumptuous sins:** This second aspect of sin - arrogance - has to do with outward display and action - a show that would correlate to outwardly seeking pleasure.

The prayer was to cleanse us from both the inward and the outward sins.

**Presumptuous sins:** Strongs #2086 arrogant

🔊 Short cuts not cheating, *Ethical Cheating, Dr. Arthur Harkins*

- *Although I'll admit, in some cases cheating is not ethical. So, one way to look at this is, if your college is legitimate in its treatment of you as a student, as a learner, as a future member of the knowledge workforce in any country, then you are going to be kind of locked into it, you're going to do what it tells*



*you, you're going to be happy to be a "good student." But if you perceive that you're not getting what you're paying for in college, that you are not being prepared to be competitive on a global scale with the emerging workforce of which your demographic is a part, then you may be quite differently oriented and be willing to do a lot of shortcuts, create a lot of shortcut steps to get you out of the system with a degree as fast as possible.*

If your college is not feeding you according to what you want, quit! Stop paying them! Go to a different school. It is much easier to say "I am good, they are bad" and apply situation ethics to me.

**Acknowledging our passions that drive us from within and our arrogance that puts them on display gives us a foundation for fighting against "situation ethics":**

**Romans 6:12-13:** (NRSV) <sup>12</sup>Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions (hidden faults). <sup>13</sup>No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness (arrogance), but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness.

**Discipline not arrogance!**

 **Love is not the only thing, Eight Situation Ethics: Compatible with Christianity**

- In fact, when St. Paul wrote about love, he also wrote about other virtues or qualities, too. Love may be significant certainly, but it is not the only important quality, as Fletcher claimed. He felt that faith and hope were also vital, as were joy, peace and so on. These qualities should surely also be considered when weighing up a moral decision. A "one principle per ethical theory" may be too narrow to be trustworthy.*

God must be the foundation for our ethics, not how we feel or what others say.

**Relying on true agape love is the framework that is built upon that foundation:**

**Romans 5:18-19:** (NRSV) <sup>18</sup>Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. <sup>19</sup>For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

**Our ethical building is constructed with the materials of praise, reverence and obedience to God:**

**Matthew 4:10:** (NKJV) Then Jesus said to him, Away with you, Satan! For it is written, You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.

**Ethical Truth:**

**THE OBJECT AND  
DIRECTION OF OUR  
REVERENCE AND  
PASSION DETERMINES  
THE KIND OF ETHICS  
WE PRACTICE.**

~~**WRONG**~~  
**RIGHT**





The defining characteristics of worship directly impact our ethical thoughts and behavior:

- The **object** of your worship - what is it?  
*What ethical approach does it lead to?*
- The **reasons** for your worship - why is it?  
*What ethical approach does it lead to?*
- The **methods** of your worship - how is it?  
*What ethical approach does it lead to?*

We are not to worship anything that is not worthy of our admiration, praise and loyalty! God Almighty and His son Jesus are higher than we are.

**How do we positively identify, stay focused on and walk down the path of godly ethics?**



It is incredibly important to identify how to build our ethical belief system. Just as important is the responsibility to continually test the application of that belief system, as we are inherently faulty when it comes to ethics. Testing can be tedious and disturbing but is vital to our ethical success!



 **Cheating is not cheating if you say so, *Ethical Cheating, Dr. Arthur Harkins***

- *So, bottom line, if you want to be an ethical student, even if you're practicing ethical cheating, you have to decide what you want from college. If you just want a degree and you're willing to cheat your way through conventionally to get that degree, you are a cheat, and there is nothing to be said for you. But if you are saying to yourself, "My college is not really serving me. I can do better by myself or with my peers, or with a global network of students all over the world who are working together," then you are an ethical cheater and you are trying to beat the limitations of your college in order to further*



*your future. So, my bottom line is, if colleges and universities really want to serve people, students, ethical cheaters, regular students, well, they're going to have to shift to a laboratory model away from a classroom model.*

How is taking someone else's work helping the student put the principles of discipline in place so they can succeed after school? When integrity is gone, there is great discontent in life.

We are going to highlight Mahatma Gandhi's list of seven deadly sins, as they track closely with Scripture. The following are all examples of "enlightened" highest common objective thinking taught in the Bible thousands of years ago. Universal ethics shine through here!

### **Wealth without work:**

2 Thessalonians 3:10: (NASB) *For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either.*

Ethical action: Always be willing to contribute and always do so when it is possible and appropriate.

### **Pleasure without conscience:**

Ephesians 4:19-20: (NASB) <sup>19</sup>*and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.* <sup>20</sup>*But you did not learn Christ in this way,*

Ethical action: Always apply God's standards of right and wrong above our own feelings in the moment. Humans are sensual beings and there is an appropriate place for sensuality, but for a Christian, it must be in the context of how the Scriptures define it - within marriage.

We want to apply God's standard - not how I feel, not what I want, not what is tempting in front of me.

### **Science without humanity:**

James 4:17: (NASB) *Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.*

Ethical action: Respect human life as it was meant to be respected - originally created in God's image. Of all the earthly creation, humans were the only ones created in the image of God.

### **Knowledge without character:**

1 Corinthians 8:1: (NASB) *Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies.*

Ethical action: Decide that all knowledge will be filtered through a godly character before use. What would Jesus do?

### **Politics without principle:**

1 Peter 2:13-14: (NASB) <sup>13</sup>*Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, <sup>14</sup>or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.*





Ethical action: Hold the passion of politics at arm's length knowing that principles are not based in emotion. If we can get past the emotion of the different points of view and get to the principles, we can have a conversation.

**Commerce without morality:**

Proverbs 20:10: (NASB) *Differing weights and differing measures, both of them are abominable to the LORD.*

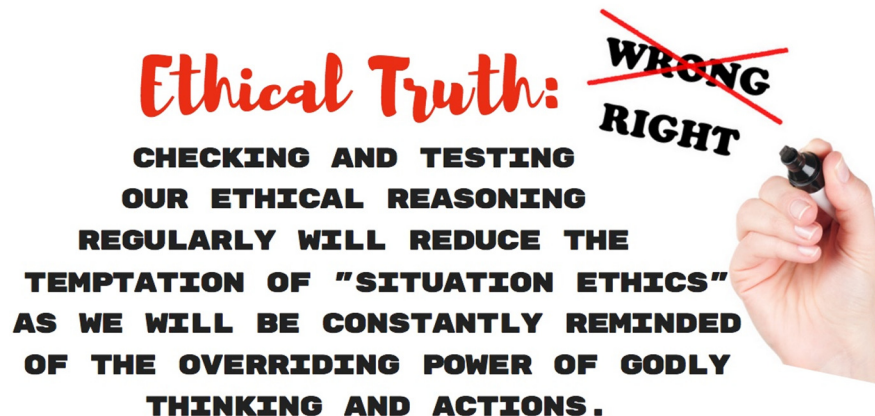
Ethical action: Treat all transactional experiences with equity as though Jesus were your business partner.

**Worship without sacrifice:**

Romans 12:1: (NASB) *Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.*

Too often we get into situation ethics within the context of Christianity when we make our Christian experience about ME - what I can get, what I like, what God can do for ME. Worship without sacrifice is situation ethics because it takes the focus off of God and makes ME the powerful one.

Ethical action: Honor God with a heart of personal *giving* rather than with a desire of personal *getting*.



In order to be truly ethical, we have to be constantly reminded of the overriding power of godliness. The Ethical Truths we reviewed today are important to remind us to live up to something and not down to what everybody else is doing.

Situation ethics are based on situations and therefore are fallible and full of holes. Godly, universal ethics are based on the solid foundation of God above us and righteousness.

*So, are we SURE sin is really sinful?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*

*And now even more to think about...  
only in the Full Edition of CQ Rewind!*





## First, a little bit about Joseph Fletcher:

(Source: Wikipedia) Joseph Francis Fletcher (April 10, 1905 in Newark, New Jersey - October 28, 1991 in Charlottesville, Virginia) was an American professor who founded the theory of situational ethics in the 1960's and was a pioneer in the field of bioethics. Fletcher was a leading academic proponent of the potential benefits of abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, eugenics and cloning. Ordained as an Episcopal priest, he later identified himself as an atheist.

### Notable works:

- 1954 Morals and Medicine, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. (on euthanasia)
- 1966 Situation Ethics: The New Morality, Philadelphia: Westminster Press. (translated into five languages)
- 1974 The Ethics of Genetic Control: Ending Reproductive Roulette, New York: Doubleday. (on eugenic cloning)

"We need to educate people to the idea that the quality of life is more important than mere length of life. Our cultural tradition holds that life has absolute value, but that is really not good enough anymore. Sometimes, no life is better."

"We ought to love people and use things; the essence of immorality is to love things and use people."

"People [with children with Down's syndrome] ... have no reason to feel guilty about putting a Down's syndrome baby away, whether it's "put away" in the sense of hidden in a sanitarium or in a more responsible lethal sense. It is sad; yes. Dreadful. But it carries no guilt. True guilt arises only from an offense against a person, and a Down's is not a person." *Bard, Bernard; Joseph Fletcher (April 1968). "The Right to Die". The Atlantic Monthly: 59-64.*

## Next some more perspective on a godly approach to ethics...

### Our need for spiritually based standards is clear:

Proverbs 29:18: (KJV) *Where there is no vision, the people perish.*

**Perish:** Strong's #H6544 to loosen; by implication to expose, dismiss

(Young's Literal Translation) *Without a vision is a people made naked.*

(Rotherham) *Where there is no vision, a people is let loose.*

(New Jerusalem Bible) *Where there is no vision the people get out of hand.*

(ASV 1901) *Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint.*

The "Rick translation:" Where there is no vision, the people are vulnerable, confused and heading toward utter defeat.

### Not only do we need God's standards, we must focus on appreciating them:

Proverbs 19:16: (ASV) *He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his soul; But he that is careless of his ways shall die.*

Psalms 119:165-176: (NRSV) <sup>165</sup>Great peace have those who love your law; nothing can make them stumble. <sup>166</sup>I hope for your salvation, O LORD, and I fulfill your commandments. <sup>167</sup>My soul keeps your decrees; I love them exceedingly. <sup>168</sup>I keep your precepts and decrees, for all my ways are before you. <sup>169</sup>Let my cry come before you, O LORD; give me understanding according to your word. <sup>170</sup>Let my supplication come before you; deliver me according to your promise. <sup>171</sup>My lips will pour forth praise, because you teach me your statutes. <sup>172</sup>My tongue will sing of your promise, for all your commandments are right. <sup>173</sup>Let your hand be ready to help me, for I have chosen your precepts. <sup>174</sup>I long for your salvation, O LORD, and your law is my delight.



<sup>175</sup>Let me live that I may praise you, and let your ordinances help me. <sup>176</sup>I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek out your servant, for I do not forget your commandments.

**James 1:17-18:** (NRSV) <sup>17</sup>Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. <sup>18</sup>In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

**Job 38:4-7:** (KJV) <sup>4</sup>Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. <sup>5</sup>Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it <sup>6</sup>Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; <sup>7</sup>When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

**Isaiah 55:8-11:** (NRSV) <sup>8</sup>For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. <sup>9</sup>For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. <sup>10</sup>For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, <sup>11</sup>so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

### **Finally, a reminder about what happens when we allow Satan's tainted "light" to guide our lives:**

**Romans 1:28-32:** (NKJV) <sup>28</sup>And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; <sup>29</sup>being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, <sup>30</sup>backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, <sup>31</sup>undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; <sup>32</sup>who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.