



How Do I Handle It When I Am Wrong?

Romans 14:5: (NASB) *One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike.*

Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind.

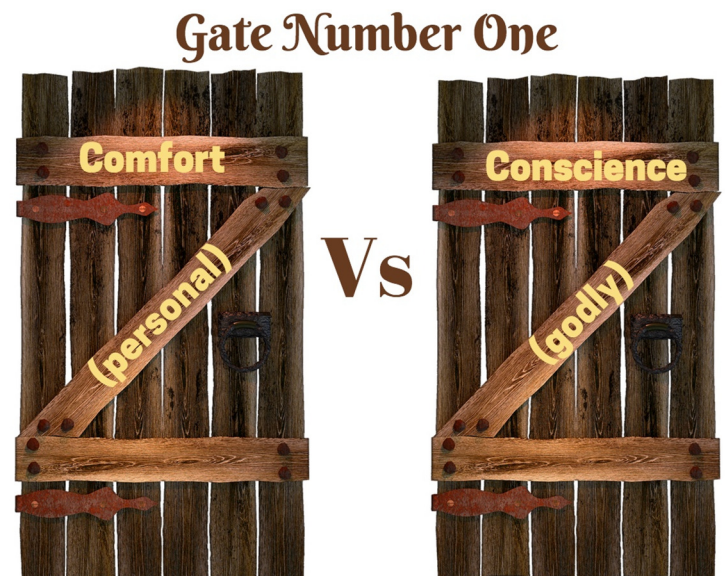


Everyone has had and will have the experience of being wrong, of making mistakes and of not understanding something well enough to properly represent it. Everyone. The question is not about what to do IF these things happen, the question is how do we handle it WHEN these things happen? Making mistakes and being wrong are never comfortable experiences, but they are priceless in their value if we allow them to be. So, how do we allow them to be priceless? When we are wrong, do we face it or ignore it? When we make a mistake, do we 'fess up or bury it? Further, how can we identify the thought and behavior processes that bring us to wrong conclusions and actions so we can avoid repeating the same old mistakes over and over again?

How does it feel, *On Being Wrong*, Kathryn Schulz, TEDTalk

- So, why do we get stuck in this feeling of being right? One reason, actually, has to do with a feeling of being wrong. So, let me ask you guys something - or actually, let me ask you guys something, because you're right here: How does it feel emotionally - how does it feel to be wrong? Dreadful. Thumbs down. Embarrassing. Okay, wonderful, great. Dreadful, thumbs down, embarrassing - thank you, these are great answers, but they're answers to a different question. You guys are answering the question: How does it feel to realize you're wrong? Realizing you're wrong can feel like all of that and a lot of other things, right? I mean it can be devastating, it can be revelatory, it can actually be quite funny, like my stupid Chinese character mistake. But just being wrong doesn't feel like anything.*

The good news about making mistakes and being wrong is that there is usually a process to get there. If we pay attention to the process we can begin to identify those things which would make us right and those things which would make us wrong. The following are Seven Gates of Right and Wrong. Each of these gates has two entrances - one entrance leads to incomplete, immature and worldly judgments. The other entrance leads to more mature, spiritual and sanctified judgment.



The battle of being right or wrong often begins with a battle for personal comfort. So often we look for what is comfortable - physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually. This is a physical, natural desire. Are we looking for a comfortable answer that we can relax with, or are we in tune with an inner compass that may drive us towards righteous but often uncomfortable actions?

The context of our theme Scripture teaches us about two categories of Christians - weak in faith and otherwise:



Romans 14:1-4: (NASB) ¹Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions. ²One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only. ³The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him. ⁴Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

Two kinds of people are described. One of them is weak in faith, but each are judging the other. *To his own master he stands or falls* - There is a principle that will echo throughout our conversation of how to look across the aisle at someone. We are not political on this podcast, but this relates to politics. People in politics get so energized about their side and look across the void between with daggers in their eyes. It is a great visual for us to draw a spiritual lesson.

For God has accepted him - Are we saying it is okay to be wrong and be told that you are wrong? Why would we stand for something wrong? How do these work together?



Wile E. Coyote, On Being Wrong, Kathryn Schulz, Ted Talk



- *I'll give you an analogy. Do you remember that Loony Tunes cartoon where there's this pathetic coyote who's always chasing and never catching a roadrunner? In pretty much every episode of this cartoon, there's a moment where the coyote is chasing the roadrunner and the roadrunner runs off a cliff, which is fine - he's a bird, he can fly. But the thing is, the coyote runs off the cliff right after him. And what's funny - at least if you're six years old - is that the coyote's totally fine, too. He just keeps running, right up until the moment that he looks down and realizes that he's in mid-air. That's when he falls. When we're wrong about something, not when we realize it, but before that, we're like that coyote after he's gone off the cliff and before he looks down. You know, we're already wrong, we're already in trouble, but we feel like we're on solid ground. It does feel like something to be wrong; it feels like being right.*

What is your conscience tuned to? It is easy to find the lowest common ground to tune in to:

1 Timothy 4:1-2: (NASB) ¹But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, ²by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron...

Seared in their own conscience - your sensibility has been deadened.



It is much harder to find the higher and less common standards of Christ to tune in to:

1 Peter 2:18-19: (NASB) ¹⁸*Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.* ¹⁹*For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly.*

The idea is to have a higher level of principle.



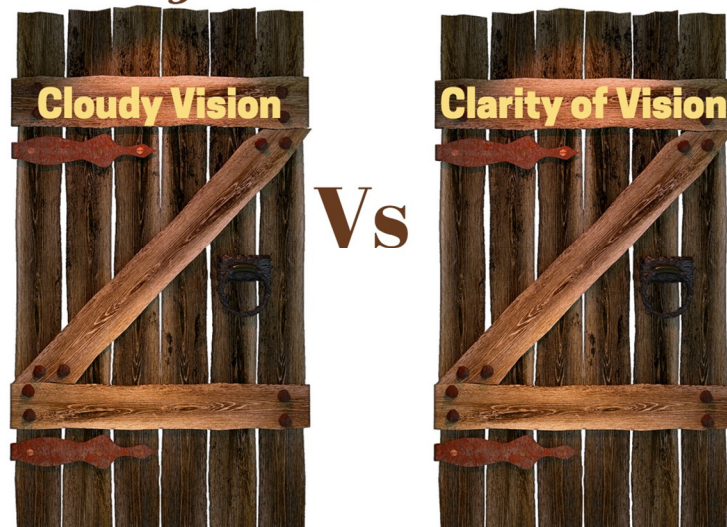
One example is taking a specific side on an issue because you have the "heavy hitters" on that side. You do not really know why you are on that side, but knowing certain people take that position is just more comfortable.

Having a rightly-tuned conscience is key, but is all of our being wrong because of conscience?

A pure conscience is key, but it is certainly not the only key in figuring out right and wrong in our lives.

There are so many of us who have a good conscience - who really want what is right - who make the wrong decisions anyway. Why? Desire for God's way is only a foundation. Learning God's way is where our building truly begins.

Gate Number Two



Are we unsure of the objective at hand (cloudy), or do we have a clear picture of what we are involved in (clarity)? Our world is filled with gray areas.

People think computers will keep them from making mistakes. They're wrong. With computers, you make mistakes faster. — Adam Osborne



Surgery gone bad, *On Being Wrong*, Kathryn Schulz, Ted Talk

- *Then we freak out at the possibility that we've gotten something wrong. Because according to this, getting something wrong means there's something wrong with us. So, we just insist that we're right, because it makes us feel smart and responsible and virtuous and safe. So, let me tell you a story. A couple of years ago, a woman comes into Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center for a surgery. Beth Israel's in Boston. It's the teaching hospital for Harvard - one of the best hospitals in the country. So, this woman comes in and she's taken into the operating room. She's anesthetized, the surgeon does his thing - stitches her back up, sends her out to the recovery room. Everything seems to have gone fine. And she wakes up, and she looks down at herself, and she says, "Why is the wrong side of my body in bandages?"*



Continuing in Romans 14, Paul lays out that those who are weak (and therefore wrong on some issues) are still acceptable to God.

Why would God accept them if we **KNOW** they are wrong?

Romans 14:5-6: (NASB) ⁵One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind.

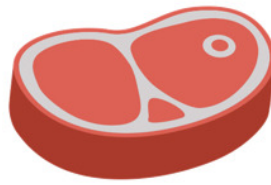
Why did this happen?

(Source: Bible Commentary by Henry Alford) There is some doubt who the weak in faith were, of whom the Apostle here treats; whether they were ascetics (practicing strict, self-denial), or Judaizers (those who adopt Jewish customs and practices such as Christians who practice the Law of Moses). Some habits mentioned, as for example the abstinence from all meats, and from wine, seem to indicate the former: whereas the observation of days, and the use of such expressions as "unclean," ...plainly point to the latter. The difficulty may be solved by a proper combination of the two views.

Remember, Christianity grew out of Judaism. As Jesus sets up this new arrangement, a lot of the rituals of the Jewish Law no longer mattered. This was easy for Christians who were not Jews - they had nothing to unlearn. But this was a huge problem for Jews coming to Christianity because these were the traditions and laws they were taught for generations. The Apostle Paul tells us both sides were wrong.

⁶He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God.

Conscience is clear and directed to honoring God on both sides, but knowledge is NOT clear! Those who were wrong were doing the best of their ability to honor God.



THEIR TEMPTATION...

The one **strong in faith** able to eat all things **SHOWED CONTEMPT** of the weak in faith.

The one **weak in faith** eating only vegetables **JUDGED** those who indulged in freedom which to themselves appeared unlawful.

Whether cloudy or clear, here is the bottom line:

Romans 14:7-8: (NASB) ⁷*For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; ⁸for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.*

Both groups had the same, clear objective - to honor God. Some did it by adopting practices that were not appropriate for Christianity, but Paul was saying, "We have to honor them because they want to honor God." We can be right in our wrongness and wrong in our rightness!

This does not mean that anyone with a conviction can do what they want within Christianity. Remember, this was a specific issue at a very crucial point in time regarding with the Jewish Law and how it would relate going forward.





))) Introduction to Ed, *On Being Wrong*, Kathryn Schulz, USI 2012, Paris, France

- *Since I myself am frankly not that inspiring, I thought I would introduce you to a couple of people - three people - who might be able to inspire you to rethink your relationship to being wrong. First one is this guy. This is Ed Viesturs. Ed is one of the world's greatest living mountaineers. He's climbed all 20 of the world's highest peaks without supplemental oxygen - which basically is insane. Some of you might recognize him actually at this point from kind of an old IMAX movie about Everest, if any of you ever saw it? He was the star for that movie. He's been up Mount Everest eight times, also without supplemental oxygen. He just doesn't go up these mountains alone; he leads entire teams of people up and down them. So, he is someone who has thought very hard about risk and error and managing both of them in incredibly dangerous, high stakes situations, situations where literally lives, including his own, are on the line.*



We will come back to Ed shortly.

So, what if we are wrong?

Jesus' point here is that we are naturally cloudy in our vision and need to change:

Matthew 7:1-5: (NASB) ¹Do not judge so that you will not be judged. ²For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. ³Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴Or how can you say to your brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? ⁵You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

The lesson is for us to take a look at ourselves before we make a judgment on our brother. The very idea of us making a judgment brings a faulty reasoning along with it. Instead of looking at that speck in your brother's eye, telling him he messed up, his vision is not clear, you should take the 2x4 plank out of your own eye. *You* are blind because you are overlooking your own faults. This is a severe warning from Jesus about us approaching others to let them know they are "wrong." Your condescension can create a more damaging wrong.

Going from "cloudy" to "clarity" requires a searing internal honesty - feelings must be shelved!



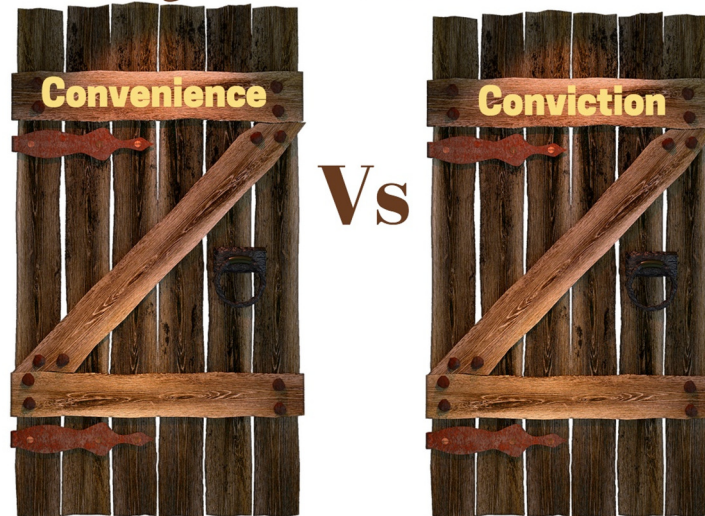
How can we change? Realize that God expects us to live UP to His standards according to our best ability and not live DOWN to what we *think* we know.

Both conscience and clarity can be pointed in the right direction and still be wrong. What can we do about that?

Conscience and clarity are two approaches to right and wrong that very much come from our heart. While this is needed to get our attention, following the path that is willing to correct our wrongs must add a firm decision (based in real conviction) which is based on firm truth (based on sound principle).

If you're not making mistakes, then you're not doing anything. I'm positive that a doer makes mistakes. — John Wooden (former UCLA basketball coach)

Gate Number Three



Do we look for an easy way out, or are we driven by a deeply-convicted belief?

 Boring story, *Being Wrong*, Kathryn Schulz, USI 2012, Paris, France

- *I had the chance to interview Ed last year and at some point in the course of the interview, I asked him to tell me about the worst mistake he'd ever made on a mountain. And Ed proceeded to tell me the most unbelievably boring story you can possibly imagine. Basically, it went like this. He says, "Well, this one time I was up on K2," K2 is the second highest mountain in the world, "I'm up on K2 and the weather was getting kind of bad, and I thought, you know, we should probably turn around. But we didn't turn around and we kept going up and the weather got worse, and I thought, Ed, man you should really turn around, but we didn't turn around and then we got to the top and then we came back down."*

More on this "boring" story soon!

Back to Romans 14. Paul essentially tells both of them that they need to grow up. With the issue now laid out, he begins to build a solid Christian solution to the volatile issue of who is right and who is wrong.

He appeals to their highest convictions:

Romans 14:9-12: (NASB) ⁹*For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.* ¹⁰*But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.* ¹¹*For it is written, as I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.* ¹²*So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.*

To this end Christ died and lived again - "All of you are answerable to this highest level of conviction."

Why do you judge your brother - Paul talks to those who are right. *Why do you regard your brother with contempt* - Paul talks to those who are wrong.

We will all stand before the judgment seat of God - not of each other.

We want to look at each other with a godly perspective. In the Day of Judgment it would be better to say, "I was as honest as I could be; I did my best. I admitted my mistakes and tried to forgive others of theirs." We all will have to "come clean" at some point. It comes down to an attitude of humility and grace with integrity. It is not just about being right; it is about being right in such a way that you lift others up and appreciate others even if they are wrong.

There is very little appreciation in our politics today! What a shame! There is no appreciation for the conviction someone on the other side may have. That influences society to act the same way.

The folly of convenience begins this text, but it ends with the solid action of conviction:

Ephesians 4:14-15: (NASB) ¹⁴*As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; (It is easy to be wrong when we just go along.)* ¹⁵*but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into him who is the head, even Christ...*

We can be right in principle but wrong in attitude. If you are right, how do you present it? Is being right a sledgehammer with which to crush your enemy or is it a hand up to help the person with whom you disagree?



Conviction brings us to a whole new level of existence - one in which "right" breeds contentment:

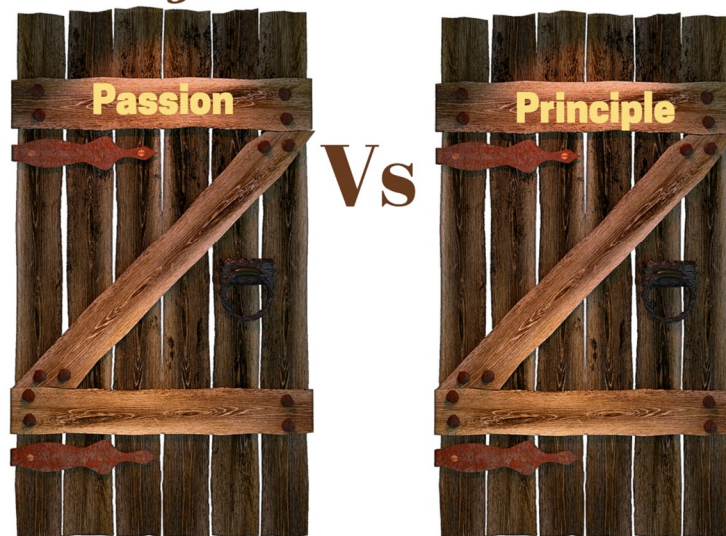
Philippians 4:11-13: (NASB) ¹¹*Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.* ¹²*I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.* ¹³*I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.*

The Apostle Paul had to suffer in his attempt to do right. *I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am* - because the road he was on was one of righteousness and grace. He would rather be on that road in disarray than another road being happy and proud.



How can we change? Realize that all of the most powerful Christian growth comes through conviction!

Gate Number Four



We are suggesting that "principle" is the right gate and "passion" is the wrong gate.

 **Surgery moral, *On Being Wrong*, Kathryn Schulz, Ted Talk**

- Well, the wrong side of her body is in bandages because the surgeon has performed a major operation on her left leg instead of her right one. When the Vice President for Health Care Quality at Beth Israel spoke about this incident, he said something very interesting. He said, "For whatever reason, the surgeon simply felt that he was on the correct side of the patient." The point of this story is that trusting too much in the "feeling of being on the correct side" of anything can be very dangerous.

The battle of passions vs. principle is between the deep emotion we feel on an issue and the principle behind the issue. Most times it is easier to follow emotion.



We often mistake our passion for principle even if we are right:

Romans 14:13-15: (NASB)

Principle: ¹³Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this - not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way. ¹⁴I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself;

Do not look to judge others or put things in your brother's way to make his way more difficult. Nothing was wrong with eating meat previously offered to idols - it is just food.

Passion: *but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.*

This passion is on the wrong side of the issue. This individual says, "I cannot eat that because I have an obsession with making sure I do everything according to the Law." That passion brings the person down the wrong road, but the Apostle Paul says, "Let it be, because in his mind he should not eat the meat. Do not tell him to do what he is convicted not to."

Passion: ¹⁵For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love.

If you who know better are harassing him because you are trying to get him to be right, you are wrong - even more wrong than he is.

Principle: *Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died.*

In other words, do not destroy with your understanding of the matter someone who does not get it the way you do.

If passion can pollute our principles, does that mean we should throw all emotion out the window?

We often mistake our passion for principle even if we are right. Because passion is such a strong force for movement, we need to learn to apply it to being right - to being spiritually driven and mature in Christ. What this suggests is that as we go through spiritual growing pains we monitor and manage our passion.

Making mistakes is part of life. The only things I would feel ashamed of would be if I had said things I hadn't believed in order to get on. Some politicians do do that. — Tony Benn



First assumption - ignorance, On Being Wrong, Kathryn Schulz, Ted Talk

- *Think for a moment about what it means to feel right. It means that you think that your beliefs just perfectly reflect reality. And when you feel that way, you've got a problem to solve, which is, how are you going to explain all of those people who disagree with you? It turns out, most of us explain those people the same way, by resorting to a series of unfortunate assumptions. The first thing we usually do when someone disagrees with us is we just assume they're ignorant. They don't have access to the same information that we do, and when we generously share that information with them, they're going to see the light and come on over to our team.*



Here is what we, as Christians, must grow into:

Galatians 5:16-17: (NASB) ¹⁶*But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.* ¹⁷*For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.*

Your passion has to stay in check. Unbridled passion causes damage.



Our passion needs to be filtered through these next words of Jesus:

John 15:12-15: (NASB) ¹²*This is my commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.* ¹³*Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.*

Jesus was able to handle those who were in direct opposition to him. His ministry was for three-and-a-half years, and he had detractors always around. They were the ones that held positions of greatest authority in their society. They would constantly come at him with what they saw as contradictions going against the Law. He answered them by asking questions on how to apply the Law and inevitably they would get stuck. He did not beat them down with their wrongness; he showed them by asking questions to help them consider looking at things in a different way.

The only time Jesus did something different was towards the end of his ministry after all those years of trying to get them to understand, he finally called them hypocrites. It was a controlled, clear explanation of where they had gone wrong.



How can we change? Realize that all of the most powerful Christian growth comes through conviction!

Gate Number Five





Are we willing to allow the consequences of actions (ours or our brothers) to come to fruition, or do we coddle and overprotect? We live in a society that does not prepare our young people (in the United States) for the realities of life. It is good to care but not to coddle.

Moral of the story, *Being Wrong*, Kathryn Schulz, USI 2012, Paris, France

- *I am like, "Ed, Dude, people die in those mountains. They lose their climbing partners, they lose their limbs, they get hypothermia...this is all you got for me?" And Ed got very serious, and he looked at me and he said, "A mistake is a mistake whether you pay for it or not." I can't tell you how many times I thought about those words since that conversation. Incredibly admirable attitude toward being wrong. Most of us cannot recognize, acknowledge and learn from our mistakes even when we DO pay for them. Or worse, when other people pay for them. Here is a guy who was able to recognize and learn from a mistake that he got away with.*

"A mistake is a mistake whether we pay for it or not." We might get away with it, but that does not mean we learned from it. The greatest power of any mistake is learning from it.

A life spent making mistakes is not only more honorable, but more useful than a life spent doing nothing. — George Bernard Shaw

Make your mistakes with the greatest of confidence. — Rick's uncle

As we return to Romans 14, Paul now brings us to the practical lesson of truly caring for those with whom we disagree.

Remember, he is telling those on both the right and wrong sides to adjust:

Romans 14:16-19: (NASB) ¹⁶Therefore do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil; ¹⁷for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸For he who in this way serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. ¹⁹So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.

Paul did not challenge *what* they believed; he challenged how they *handled* what they believe. This was not a sin that would take them off the Christian path.

The kingdom of God is being acceptable by doing what you truly believe is right. Sometimes we are off when we try to do the right thing, and we should learn from that. God judges our heart intent, even if we mess up.

Caring:

Galatians 6:1: (NASB) *Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.*

Help them; do not seek to destroy them.



Sometimes allowing someone to go through the pain of something is the best way to care for them.

In our next texts, the Apostle Paul was trying to teach the Corinth church that they were making a mistake. A brother was doing something immoral and Paul wanted them to understand what was actually happening.

They were coddling the offender:

1 Corinthians 5:4-5: (KJV) *⁴In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁵To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

Sometimes wrong actions are wrong enough that they require severe consequences. They were not to withhold those consequences in order to help the person in the long run.

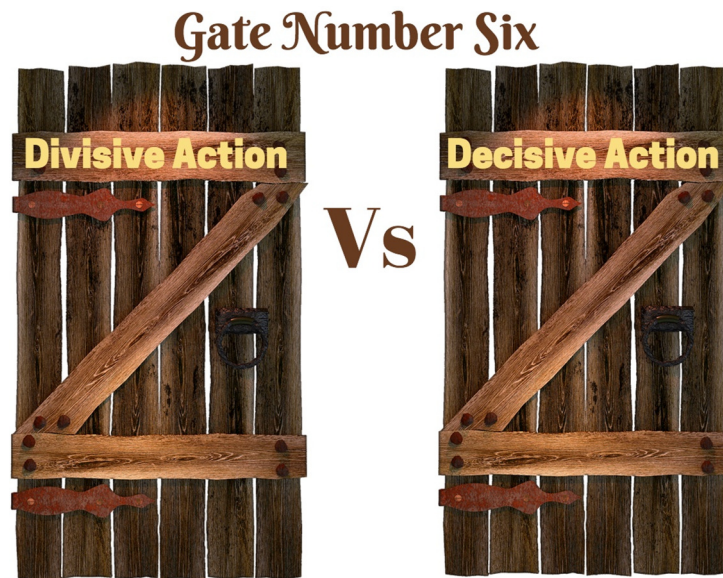


How can we change? Truly caring for our brother means we are focused on their growth in Christ. It means we have a smaller concern for their comfort and a larger and primary concern for their future.

Higher principles prevail. How do we determine if our actions are truly higher principle driven?

Determining the real source of our personal stand on things can be trickier than it might sound. Thus far we have talked a lot about emotions, comfort, passion and principle. Now let's focus on what to look for when we are ready to take action and what might make us right or wrong in that action.

I would agree with you, but then we would both be wrong. — Anonymous



When we feel we are right, the firm actions we take can reveal the content of our hearts.

))) Second and third - idiocy and malevolence, *On Being Wrong*, Kathryn Schulz, Ted Talk

- *When that doesn't work, when it turns out those people have all the same facts that we do and they still disagree with us, then we move on to a second assumption, which is that they're idiots. They have all the right pieces of the puzzle, and they are too moronic to put them together correctly. And when that doesn't work, when it turns out that people who disagree with us have all the same facts we do and are actually pretty smart, then we move on to a third assumption: they know the truth, and they are deliberately distorting it for their own malevolent purposes. So, this is a catastrophe. This attachment to our own rightness keeps us from preventing mistakes when we absolutely need to and causes us to treat each other terribly.*

Back to Romans 14. Paul just brought us the lesson on how to care for one another, and now he brings the lesson of the results of our “caring” action.

Are we right or wrong?

Romans 14:20-21: (NASB) ²⁰Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are clean, but they are evil for the man who eats and gives offense. ²¹It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles.

Paul clearly states what was right: *All things indeed are clean*. It did not matter if they ate meat that had been offered to idols. But those things are evil for the man who eats and makes him feel like he is offending God. He recognized the power of that person’s conscience and respected it as God-honoring. What a powerful way to look at someone who does not see things as we do!



Well-meaning divisive action corrected in a decisive manner:

1 Corinthians 3:4-7: (NASB) *⁴For when one says, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are you not mere men? ⁵What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. ⁶I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. ⁷So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.*

Christians are just like other people in that we tend to want to gather around a strong leader and create a sense of importance. That happened in the early Christian church. Apollos was a brilliant, well-learned Jewish Christian and garnered a lot of attention, not because he sought it, but because he was really good at explaining Scriptures. Many Christians in that area gathered around him and proclaimed they were followers of Apollos. Others claimed to be followers of the Apostle Paul. Another group said they followed Jesus. They tried to find rightness but created divisiveness.

Paul told them to STOP. "Who is Apollos? Who is Paul? We are just servants of God." *I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth.*



How can we change? Step back and see the bigger picture. "I am but a very small cog in the massive and powerful machinery of the body of Christ. Am I working for the body or for my own agenda?"

Gate Number Seven



A lot of problems in the world would disappear if we talked to each other instead of talking about each other. — Anonymous

Have we checked the facts? How do we know we are basing our thinking on what is honorable and not merely hearsay?

 **Aftermath of the story, *Being Wrong*, Kathryn Schulz, USI 2012, Paris, France**

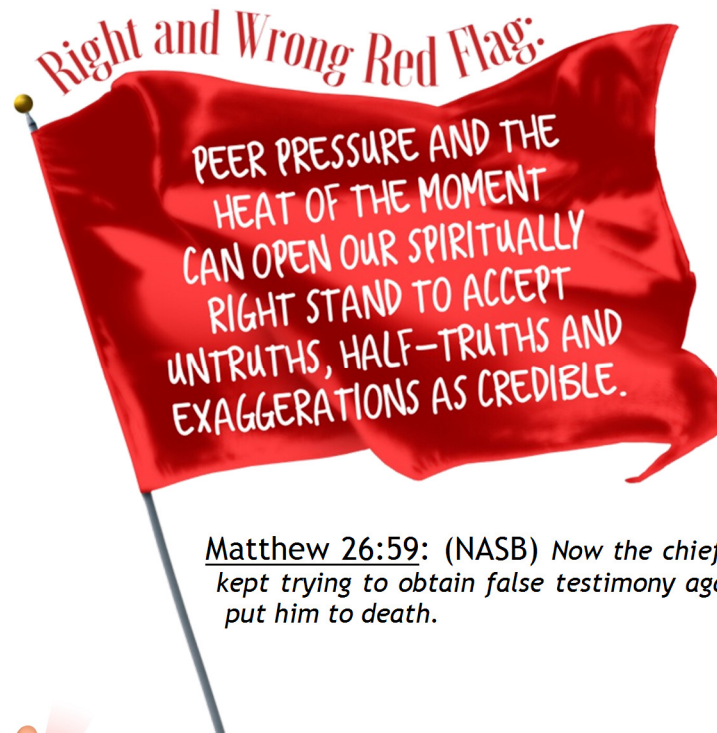
- *And he really did learn from it. Later on in that same conversation he told me, "You know, ever since that time on K2, when I'm on a mountain, I hear a voice inside me saying this could be a mistake. I pack up my ego and I pack up my team and we go back down that mountain." This is a lesson I think we could all stand to learn, that in those moments we hear the voice inside us saying "eh," or a voice around us saying, "You could be making a mistake," to pack up our egos and back down.*

We see Paul now urging all of those in this "I'm right, you're wrong" argument to seriously check the foundation of their own individual faith to be sure of its source.

Look in the mirror - check the foundation of your own faith:

Romans 14:22-23: (NASB) ²²The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. ²³But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.

You can be content in your conviction if it is sincere. If we allow ourselves to be thoroughly convicted but open to the opinion of others, we can learn and grow.



Matthew 26:59: (NASB) *Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, so that they might put him to death.*



How can we change? Be humble enough to be guided by the highest spiritual principles no matter what the personal consequences might be.

Philippians 4:8: (NRSV) *Finally, beloved, whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, pleasing, commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.*

Have your attitude in a godly fashion so you can treat right and wrong with respect to others.

*So, how do I handle it when I am wrong?
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 text to remind us that God depends on us to properly represent Him:

Ephesians 4:29-32: (NRSV) ²⁹*Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear.* ³⁰*And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption.* ³¹*Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice,* ³²*and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.*

Second, another look at the cloudy vs. clarity gate of right and wrong:

Paul in the following account dramatically reveals common sources of cloudy vision and the one source of clear vision:

Philippians 3:3-15: (NIV) ³For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh-- ⁴though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵(Here are the cloudy reasons) circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless. ⁷But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸What is more, (Here comes the clarity) I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ--the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. ¹²Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you.

1 Kings 18:21: (NRSV) *Elijah then came near to all the people, and said, how long will you go limping with two different opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. The people did not answer him a word.*

Clarity provokes choice...

The bottom line is liberty. We have it, but must use it with the wisdom gained by passing through the seven gates of right and wrong:

Galatians 5:13-17: (NRSV) ¹³For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. ¹⁴For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. ¹⁵If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another. ¹⁶Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

1 Corinthians 8:9-13: (NRSV) ⁹But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? ¹¹So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. ¹²But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

Being given liberty is a very emotional event. As we have seen, being right or wrong can be easily colored by our emotions. The attitude with which we hold our opinions must be continuously checked and rechecked - which side of the seven gates are we entering?

You grow up by making mistakes. I've made a ton of them, but as long as I keep on failing better, I don't mind. — Joely Richardson



From our Live Chat Board at
<http://christianquestions.com/listen-live>:

There is a freedom that comes from admitting our own wrongs, not others' wrongs. It is comforting to know God is above us and has everything figured out. Knowing that we are unable to get work done in this world while never making an error, we must get comfortable admitting our mistakes. It helps us to become humble. God and His son Jesus have condescended to interact with us and to save us, showing the greatest of humility. We need to follow their example of humility and, in our cases, to humbly admit mistakes and try to do better. Proverbs 28:13-14: (NASB) *He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion. How blessed is the man who fears always, but he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.*