

Everybody knows the scripture about not judging other people. Not surprisingly it is wholeheartedly quoted by the world trying to force their opinions, lifestyles and behaviors as normal. Therefore, "We should not judge other people's choices", they say.

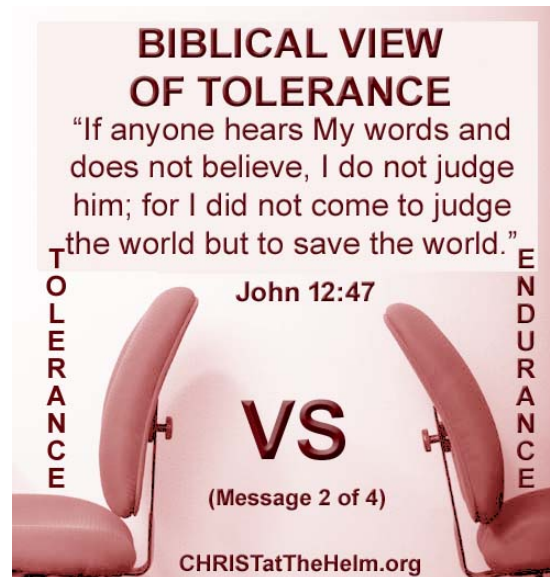
The dictionary defines tolerance as: "The willingness to tolerate the opinions or behaviors that do not necessarily agree with us." Then, no matter if a person's behavior contradicts God's Word, society demands that we accept and even support their lifestyles.

While Jesus' intent in Matthew 7:1-5 was directed at believers in keeping a humble attitude to forgive sinners, it is not to condone sin. The world and hypocrites however seek only to propagate their sinful behavior and even force them on people.

In truth, we are enjoined by God to use endurance, meaning to stand by His Word, be steadfast in our beliefs and actions, even through unpleasant or difficult situations, without giving in to the world's attitudes. That's why Jesus added in Mat 7:15: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves."

Will we choose tolerance and accept the world's evil attitudes, or endurance and stand by God's Word?

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Interestingly, Jesus tells us that He didn't come to judge the world, but rather to save us. The important factor to note and remember is that although He didn't judge people, He clearly indicated in John 12:48, "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day."

In truth, God's Word is what judges people, hence the need to be sensitive to not judge people but rather judge the behavior according to God's Word. In essence, to reject sin and its behaviors isn't the rejection of people, but rather the rejection of sin, the reason we are enjoined to pray for the lost.

Paul in Rom. 12:9 said, "Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good." Then in Rom. 12:18-19 he added, "If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance *is* Mine, I will repay," says the Lord."

Therefore, tolerance for a true Christian believer must be to reject the behavior that is opposed to God's Word, while still loving the sinners and pray that they might get the revelation of salvation through Christ. Where do we stand here?

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PURPOSE OF ENDURANCE

“Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise.”

Heb 10:35-36



Endurance is defined as the ability to withstand hardship or adversity. Obviously, anyone calling Christ Lord of their life will agree that endurance is a must in this sinful world.

Why? In the first place, if we are steadfast in our commitment to Christ, if we abide by His Word, and if our life demonstrates the Christian beliefs of the Word of God, we will be rejected, insulted, and even pursued on account of our faith. It is therefore because of our faith in God that we will be subjected as such, yet without hatred towards people, but however standing firm and not giving in to the world's sinful behavior.

That's why Jesus said in Luke 6:22, "Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you, and revile *you*, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake." Peter tagged along saying, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." (1Peter 3:15) Paul in Heb 12:14 clarified, "Pursue peace with all *people*, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord."

Isn't it clear that true tolerance, according to God's Word, has for purpose to endure while always staying true to our Savior?

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Throughout the Word of God, we find warning after warning about negotiating on our beliefs in order to appease, earn trust, profit or even enjoin people into our life. Here are a few scriptures:

Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.” (2John 9)

“Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.” (Rom 16:17-18)

“If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness... From such withdraw yourself.” (1Tim 6:3&5)

And finally Jesus said in Mat 7:6 “Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.”

Will we choose to tolerate the deceptions and hypocrisy of the world to fit in, or will we be true believers, practice endurance and stand by God’s Word?

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