

Equal Rights

Joe Slater

How could a Christian possibly oppose equal rights? God doesn't show favoritism (partiality, "respect of persons") and neither should His children.

That being said, corrupt people have redefined "rights" to suit their own purposes. When Christians reject those new definitions, we are tarred as bigots who supposedly support inequality. This holds true in both spiritual and earthly concerns.

In religion, many have equated equal rights with identical functions. Thus, Christian women supposedly have the "right" to be elders in the church. Biblical teaching that an elder must be "the husband of one wife" is written off as a mere vestige of an outmoded patriarchal society. Redefined "equality" surpasses plain Scripture.

Now, what about secular issues? Fifty years ago Americans were debating the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution (ERA). It reads: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." Though the time for it to be adopted has long since expired, the President is pressuring Congress to adopt it since more states have subsequently ratified it.

The amendment sounds simple enough. However, even half a century ago we knew that politicians, judges, and lawyers would "spin" it to mandate abortion on demand and who knows what else, despite the fact that an average person wouldn't make such absurd applications. Today the secular progressives would see special accommodations for so-called "transgender" persons as being not only legal but mandated by the Constitution!

Biblical "equal rights" ought to be recognized and respect by all. But what the world means by "equal rights" and what God means are two different things!

A Good Man!

Scripture reserves the word "good" for a select few characters described in its pages. One of those was Barnabas. Acts 11:24 refers to him as "*a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith.*" Although people today toss around the term "good" lightly, God's description of a man as "good" is a rare compliment indeed!

Let's look at some of the reasons behind the "goodness" of Barnabas. The first mention of him in the Bible shows him to be a generous working Christian (Acts 4:36-37). He sold some land and brought the money to the apostles to help with the needs of the new converts in Jerusalem. Barnabas counted his possessions as God's and was not hesitant to give what he had to the cause of Christ.

Another fine quality in Barnabas was his faith. He was "full of faith," both in God and in his fellow man. It was Barnabas who convinced the doubting and frightened Christians in Jerusalem to accept Saul, who had been their persecutor, as their new brother in Christ (Acts 9:27).

Barnabas was also missionary-minded. He was not content to help only his friends at home. He was anxious to tell others of the Savior, and he and Paul traveled great distances telling the Good News.

Barnabas was truly a remarkable individual; it seems that he put the cause of Christ far ahead of his own desires. For this attitude, God called him "good."

How would the Lord describe your life?

Why not be a Barnabas?

--Ron Stough (Duncan, OK) via *Old Paths*

Don't Say Anything If . . .

1. You are in the heat of anger (Proverbs 14:17).
2. You don't have all the facts (Proverbs 18:13).
3. You haven't verified the story (Deuteronomy 17:6).
4. Your words will cause the weak to stumble (1 Corinthians 8:11).
5. You are joking about sin (Proverbs 14:9).
6. You would later be ashamed of what you said (Proverbs 8:8).
7. The issue is none of your business (Proverbs 26:17).
8. You are tempted to tell an outright lie (Proverbs 4:24).
9. Your words would damage someone's reputation (Proverbs 16:27).
10. Your words could destroy a friendship (Proverbs 16:28).
11. You are cursing someone (James 3:9).
12. It's time to listen (Proverbs 13:1).
13. You are continually complaining (Proverbs 19:13).
14. You are just flattering someone (Proverbs 28:23).
15. You are supposed to be working instead (Proverbs 14:23).

--via Facebook (adapted)

Satan's Lies

Jesus said of Satan, "*He is a liar and the father of lies*" (John 8:44). Even if his words have a grain of truth in them, his assertions will always be half-truths, designed to deceive. I sometimes preach a sermon to young people I call "All Satan's Apples Have Worms."

Satan told Eve, "*You will not surely die, for God knows that when you eat of it, you will be like God, knowing good and evil*" (Genesis 3:4-5). Indeed, as the name of the tree suggested, when they ate, they knew good and evil, but not like God.

They now knew evil by disobeying God and thus participating in it. God never knew evil by doing it. Satan lied again!

--Cecil May, Jr. (via Preacher Talk)