

It's OK Because

Joe Slater

Rationalize: “to attribute one’s actions to rational and creditable motives without analysis of true motives and especially unconscious ones”; “explain away” (Merriam-Webster online dictionary & thesaurus).

Nobody likes being held accountable. Rationalizing provides a mechanism to evade personal responsibility and justify sin. Common rationalizations include the following:

“It’s not my fault. He/she/they upset me.”

The Israelites upset Moses (Numbers 20). He struck the rock rather than speaking to it and failed to give God glory. It cost him the privilege of entering the Promised Land. To his credit, he made no attempt to rationalize.

“It’s just the way I am.” Perhaps so, but you can and should change. You are not helpless! The very word “conversion” means change. God didn’t call you to remain as you are, but to walk in newness of life! (See Romans 6:4.)

“Everyone does it.” Even if that were true (which it isn’t), would that make it right? God didn’t call you to be like “everyone.” *“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind”* (Romans 12:2).

“God wants me to be happy.” Indeed, He does! But real happiness doesn’t come from satisfying the desires of the flesh! *“Blessed (happy) are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled . . . Blessed (happy) are the pure in heart, for they shall see God”* (Matthew 5:6, 8).

Rationalizing indicates severe spiritual immaturity! We expect little children to make excuses for bad behavior. Let it never be so for mature Christians!

A Tribute To My Mother

I was the unplanned pregnancy of an unmarried, 15-year-old girl...

with no money,
no mother of her own to help
and no clue how she was going to make it.

She didn’t say:

“I’m not ready. I’ll kill him.”
“I can’t afford it. I’ll kill him.”
“The foster system is broken. I’ll kill him.”
“It’s a blob of cells. A parasite. I’ll kill it.”
“He’s not even human yet. I’ll kill him.”
“I might suffer. I’ll kill him.”

None of that.

Her thoughts never led her to the conclusion, “I’ll kill him.”

She wasn’t triggered.
She wasn’t entitled.
She didn’t play the victim.

Standing Ovation 🙌🙌🙌

For bravery.
For love.
For life.

Cristene Louise Rogers (1961-1977)

Not a feminist.
But a woman for sure.
I wish I could have met her.
But I know she was glad to meet me.

My mother.

--Rick Kelley (Massillion, OH)

RETURN TO FUNDAMENTALS

Recently I enjoyed an interesting conversation with a brother and former elder in the church. We mutually agreed that our communities and society at large are becoming morally bankrupt. Many factors have contributed to such a coarsening of morals in our neighborhoods, not the least of which is a failure of Christians to reaffirm the basic principles of the Bible.

As a child of the 50s and 60s, I remember when the fundamentals of right and wrong were articulated with clarity. We see these basic truths slipping away when we fail to keep them displayed before the church, the family, and our communities. In far too many neighborhoods, and in the church, the absolute standards of right and wrong have been lowered before our very eyes.

Observe the following basic principles that need serious emphasis in our time:

- (1) A belief in the existence of God;
- (2) A belief in the inspiration of the Bible;
- (3) A belief in the authority of the Scriptures;
- (4) A revival of the home as God mandates it;
- (5) A clear understanding of sin and its consequences;
- (6) A belief in the undenominational nature of the church of Christ.

These are elementary, simple, and fundamental points that have been neglected far too long.

We would not want to omit the fundamentals of mathematics, English, history, and science in the education of our children. These subjects are basic and primary to the instruction of all students. Likewise, a return to the basics of the Bible will bring us to an understanding of God’s will.

--Bob Spurlin (via *Bulletin Gold*) adapted