

A Lesson from Sesame Street

Ponder: “The same” and “not the same.”

Scripture: “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter” (Isaiah 5:20, NKJV).

If you’ve raised children, you’ll probably recognize this song:

One of these things is not like the others,
One of these things just doesn't belong,
Can you tell which thing is not like the others
By the time I finish my song?

It’s from the children’s television program “Sesame Street.” Big Bird or another character would display four items. Three would be identical, but something would be different about the fourth. It might be a different color or size. Or it would portray three identical puppies with their eyes open and one with its eyes closed.

Here’s the song’s ending:

Did you guess which thing was not like the others?
Did you guess which thing just doesn't belong?
If you guessed this one is not like the others,
Then you're absolutely...right!

The song helped children learn to think, pay attention to detail, and understand that we sometimes think that things are identical when actually they aren’t the same.

Is there any application to spiritual matters? Indeed! Our culture pressures us to blur the lines and ignore differences. For example, Christians recognize the Bible as the word of God and try to follow its teaching. But political correctness says there is no difference between the Bible and other “holy books” – the Quran, the Vedas, etc. “They all teach the same things,” we are told. “Be kind to your neighbor, take care of your family, etc.” In fact, however, they are as different as night and day. Even five-year-olds watching Sesame Street would easily know the difference if the books were read to them.

Is baptism sprinkling, pouring, immersion, or something else – much of the religious world says “it’s all the same!” But even a five-year-old watching Sesame Street understands that sprinkling is not immersion, nor is pouring. They all involve water, but that falls far short of making them the same thing. The Holy Spirit chose a word that means immerse. Perfectly good words were available if He wanted to say sprinkle or pour, but He used none of them.

We could go on indefinitely, but you see the point. Just because the world says two things are the same doesn’t make it so. By human standards the differences may be irrelevant. But let us abide by God’s standards!

Song: “Hold to God’s Unchanging Hand”

Prayer: Unchanging Father, Your word is truth and Your way is right. Guard is from the temptation to see anything else as equal to truth and right. In Jesus’ name, Amen.