

THE BIBLE VIEW

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"Strange" and Misunderstood

Bill Brinkworth

The world does not understand Christians. As far as they are concerned, living the Christian life is foolishness to them. The Christian life does not give the unsaved enjoyment, answer their questions, or give them the things they value; so they often write it off as a waste of time.

There is, however, more than one way to see things. With unopened spiritual eyes and minds, the lost see it their way; but God sees things completely differently:

- The unsaved see it silly to follow teachings of a man that died a long time ago. To a regenerated mind it is wise (I Corinthians 4:10) to follow one that paid their fare to an eternity with Jesus.
- The lost see it as a sign of weakness (I Cor. 4:10) to let others get away with doing them harm and not getting even. It is equally weak, in their eyes, to follow the guidelines in a book supposedly voiced by an unseen God.

To a saved person and the God in heaven, it takes

unnatural strength not to react the way our flesh wants to and wait on God to deal with a situation as He see fits. It is also takes, in God's eyes, an incredible amount of strength and faith to take God at His Word and trust that if we obey, He will honor His promises.

- The world hates those that obey God's Word (I Cor. 4:10). The more a believer obeys God and His Word, the more he is despised. The believer's obedience often convicts the unsaved of their unrighteousness, and they do not know how to deal with the guilt they feel for their sins; so they hate the Christian in return.
- The world thinks the faithful, loyal believer to be poor (I Cor. 4:11-13) and doing the unnecessary. The truth is believer could have more than they already have, but the Christians often give away what they do have. Many believers do without the finer things in this life, so they can serve God in a faraway mission field, work for a minimal wage so they can teach in a Christian school, or sacrifice to be a pastor in a small church. Some believers have even gone to jail, rather than deviate from their convictions. The lost do not have a clue as to why anyone would do such a thing.

The world sees our behavior, and scratches their head. A Christian's actions and thinking are much different than how the world thinks or reacts. It is not how they were taught to be satisfied and "succeed" in this world.

A Christian knows differently, however. A believer has a different spiritual Father, and sees things in a completely different light. God often lets an obedient Christian see

things the way God sees them and works in a believer's life.

The more obedient a close follower of Christ is, the more God is pleased with him. Who would you rather please: A world that has an opinion and "standard" that is always changing and may only be applied for the time we are here on this earth, or the Creator of this world that knows everything and certainly knows the best way for us?

"The Scriptures give four names to Christians: Saints, for their holiness, Believers, for their faith, Brethren, for their love, and Disciples for their knowledge." — *Fuller*

Why Christianity Is Opposed

Bill Brinkworth

There has always been an animosity for those that live a lifestyle in accordance with the Bible. It is the same disdain that had Christ nailed to the cross. This resentment towards Christianity is certainly alive and doing terribly today. Bad feelings are shown against Christians that are attempting to obey the Bible to the best of their ability.

True biblical Christianity is not, nor has it ever been, a physical threat. In the past, some that have falsely claimed to be Christian, not true believers, did commit atrocities. True Christianity has always improved nations, converted the sinner into a contributing member of society, given to worthy causes, helped the unfortunate, and done many other positive things.

Then why are so many voicing disdain against Christianity? Here is a brief examination as to why many oppose Christians and Christianity:

They may hate God. They may never say it, but many blame God for something they think He is responsible for or hate Him for His requiring a different way of living. This is often the root of their feelings against God.

“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.” John 15:18 Also: I John 3:13

They may have guilt from their sin. Many deal with this guilt in different ways. Some, instead of stopping their sin, turn their hearts against the one that showed them their actions were biblically wrong. One that is living the proper, (most know in their heart what is right and what is wrong) godly life many times heightens their guilt just by another’s godly example. They resent anyone living contrary to how they are living.

“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov’d.” John 3:19-20

They are on the enemy's side. There are two sides: God's and Satan's. People may be against the things of God, because they are against God, and for Satan.

"He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Matthew 12:30

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." John 8:44 Jesus was speaking to the 'religious' leaders at the time.

They see hypocrisy. The unsaved, much of the time, have expectations of how a Christian should act. When they see the professing Christian not practicing what is preached or not living the way they are expected to, a bitterness can be built up against Christianity. One of the most damaging forces to the cause of Christ is the liberal church movement. They have removed much of the credibility, godliness, and character from Jesus' own church, and the unsaved world clearly sees their hypocrisy and disobedience. We are to be an example for the cause of Christ in how we live our lives.

"Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:7-9

There is a spiritual battle raging; so expect skirmishes.

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Ephesians 6:12

“A Christian is the keyhole through which other folk see God.” — Gibson

It's Love, Not Hate

Bill Brinkworth

The word “hate” has now become a defensive word that many use to silence anyone they do not like, understand, or agree with.

The Bible defines true morality. If one points out that the Word of God says lying, stealing, adultery, homosexuality, etc. are wrong and sin, the source of the authority for labeling the sin, the Bible, is ignored. However, the messenger is labeled a “hater.”

Once the messenger of morality or a difference of opinion is labeled a “hater,” many believe they are justified in ignoring all that the person says, even if it is truth. The attack now is on the credibility of anyone that supports biblical morality or opposes the popular mob-rule thinking, so their message can be ignored. Often those stating what the Bible says are ridiculed and even criticized.

All know that when something improper or incorrect in another's life is pointed out, that it will not be received well. So why would a person still point out another's immorality?

In many cases, it is love for the person, and what can happen to them if they continue in immorality or wrongdoing, not hate. Love and concern are why most parents, teachers, friends, and neighbors ignore the feelings and comments they may receive and rebuke those that are doing wrong things.

It is the sin of abortion that prematurely ends the life of an unborn baby. It should be spoken against.

Alcohol and drugs can kill people, and destroy lives. Their use should be rebuked.

Lying costs people trust and destroys relationships. It should be disdained.

Gambling often costs people all they have earned and destroys their families over the ensuing financial ruin. It should be spoken against.

Adultery destroys families, and innocent children have their lives changed because of another's sin. Adultery should also be hated, along with other sins that always hurt lives.

Toleration of wrongdoing and sin will not stop it; it will only allow it to continue. It is not love that is silent while people suffer or do things that will hurt them. It is indifference and often hate. It is love that often causes people to warn others of immorality, no matter the cost to them.

“In the ethic of Christianity, it is the relation of the soul to God that is important, not the relation of man to his fellow man.” — *Russell*