


# Thinking in God's Categories: 2 - Moral



Agreeing With God (Part 10)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be back with you again, as we draw near to the close of another week. Today I'll continue—and complete—the theme that I've been following for the past two weeks: Agreeing with God.

In previous talks I've explained that agreeing with God requires us to identify with God's thinking in four main areas. And the four areas that I've suggested are these: objectives, priorities, attitudes, and categories. We have to bring our thinking in every one of those areas into line with that of God. We have to share God's objectives, God's priorities, God's attitudes, and God's categories.

I pointed out yesterday that the way that we categorize things or persons determines in a large measure how we relate to them. For instance, if I categorize another man as a black man and I'm a white man, I may feel there's a barrier between me. But if I'm a Catholic and he's a Catholic and I categorize him in a religious category, he's a Catholic, I'm a Catholic—we have that in common. So, one kind of categorization might separate me from him; another kind of categorization might draw me to him. It's the same man; I'm the same person. The only thing that differs is the way I categorize him. So that the way that we categorize things and persons is often decisive in how we relate to them. The way that God categorizes people is revealed to us in the Scripture and it's extremely important that we understand.

In my talk yesterday I shared what I believed to be the primary spiritual category which God uses as He looks upon humanity as it's revealed in Scripture, and that is, faith or unbelief. God looks primarily upon man and says, "Does he believe, does he not believe in Jesus, the Son of God and the message of the Gospel in the Word of the God." Race or other attributes are secondary to that primary category of belief or unbelief.

Today I'm going to share on what I believe to be God's Moral Categories and I'd like to say that there isn't necessarily a hard and fast distinction between spiritual and moral—it's just a kind of guideline, that's all.

For an insight into God's moral categories, I would like to turn to the first epistle of John which is as clear and as thorough

an example of these categories as I think you can find anywhere in the Bible. In a certain sense, this is one of the main themes of this Epistle of John. It's to unfold God's categories to us and in every case, they are in clear-cut opposites. There's hardly any room left for compromise. God's categories don't leave any room for what has come to be known as "the relative morality," where if you look at a think one way, it's this way and if you look at it another way, it's that way. Nor do they leave any room for what has come to be called "the new morality."

A friend of mine who's a fellow preacher, was once asked, "Do you believe in the new morality?" And he paused for a moment and thought carefully and then he said, "Well, if you can think of one new sin I could believe in the new morality." The truth of it is, there's no new sin and there's no new morality. So let's look at some of these clear-cut opposites in God's categorization as they're illustrated in the first epistle of John. First John, chapter 1, verse 5:

> "This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all." (NKJ)

Notice, it's clear-cut opposition—light or darkness. And then he goes on in the very next verse to say:

> "If we say that we have fellowship with God, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth." (NKJ)

Notice again the clear-cut opposites there—lie or truth, light or darkness. And then there's the clear-cut opposition that's all the way through this epistle between sin and righteousness. And John says in one part of it, "All unrighteousness is sin." It's like if you want to know what is crooked, the best way is simply to point out what is straight. And then you say, "Anything that deviates from what is straight is crooked." It doesn't matter whether it deviates 10 degrees or 15 degrees or 90 degrees; if it's not straight, it's crooked. So, all through this epistle, John speaks about sin and righteousness. And if we want to know what sin is, all unrighteousness is sin.

And then in the second chapter of this epistle, verses 9 and 10, John says this:

> "He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. He who loves his brother abides in the light and there is no cause for stumbling in him." (NKJ)

Notice there again, another clear-cut opposite—hate or love. And John seems to imply that there isn't much in between and I think he's right. If we don't love people, and yet they're important in our lives and we're confronted with them and we have to relate to them, the relationship tends to descend to hate. So it's love or hate.

And then, a little further on in the same second chapter, John focuses on what we love, and he says this in chapter 2, verses 15 and 16:

> "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world." (NKJ)

So notice two mutually exclusive objects of love. If we love the Father, we will not love this present world order. If we love this present world order, we cannot say we love the Father. They are mutually exclusive. Everyone of those pairs of opposites that we have looked at is mutually exclusive. That's characteristic of God's moral categories.

In chapter 3, verses 8 and 9, John says this:

> "He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God." (NKJ)

Notice there, the two alternative sources of influence and authority and direction in our life—of the devil, or of God. No third option is left. That's not the way people think today. But those are God's categories—we cannot agree with God unless we bring our categories into line with His.

And then again, a little further on in the same third chapter of John's first Epistle, verse 14:

> "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren, whoever does not love his brother abides in death." (NKJ)

See again, the clear-cut issue—death or life. To love the brothers is to be in life; to fail to love the brothers is to be in death. There's no half way condition between life and death. We know this is true in the natural. It's true in the spiritual and

in the moral.

Again, a little further on in the same third chapter, verse 18:

> "My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth." (NKJ)

And here we have two pairs of opposites—love on the one hand that's only in word or in tongue, it's just words, it's superficial, it's unreal, or love that is in deed and in truth. And again, there's nothing in between. We either say we love and prove it by our actions, or we say we love and deny it by our actions and we're insincere. We're hypocrites.

And then, a little further on in the fourth chapter, verses 17 and 18, another pair of opposites.

> "Love has been among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love." (NKJ)

You see the two opposites there—fear on the one hand or boldness on the other. If we do not have boldness, we are subject to fear. So those are just some of the pairs of opposites in moral categorization according to which God categorizes us and the whole human race. And in every case we see, there are mutually exclusive opposites with nothing half way in between.

Now there's one more vitally important fact that I need to share with you before I close this message. On this basis that's the basis of these opposites, we will face the judgment of God. Second Corinthians 5:10:

> "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." (NKJ)

So we're all going to have to answer to God one day for our lives—what we've done, the way we've lived. But there are only two possible categories that our actions will fall into—either good or bad. So don't be deceived. Don't think there's moral neutrality in the way you live. There is no moral neutrality. Everything you and I do is either good or bad and we're going to answer to God for it.

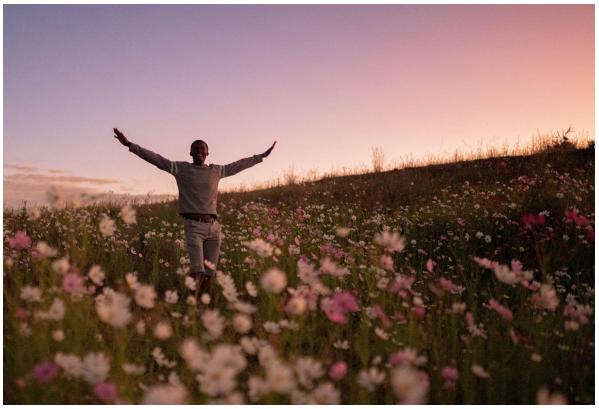
Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again next week at this same time, Monday through Friday. Next week I'll be sharing with you on another exciting theme from the word of God.

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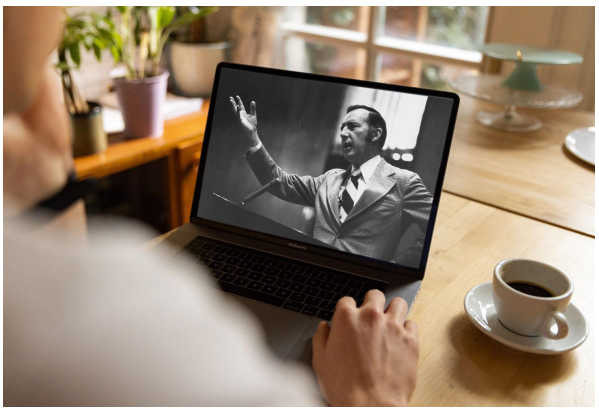
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