

Appropriate Attitudes Toward Error

Introduction. Beethoven may have poisoned himself. That's what William Walsh, a scientist from Illinois, suggested after studying strands of hair from the body of famous classical composer Ludwig van Beethoven. Walsh discovered that Beethoven's body had one hundred times the normal amount of lead. He concluded that Beethoven's untimely death at the age of fifty-seven was due to lead poisoning.

Beethoven's lead poisoning may have been due to the mineral spa he went to for relaxation. The very thing he thought was bringing him relief was slowly poisoning him to death.

Our religious community is filled with far too many churches with different names, creeds, and doctrines. As people engage in practices and embrace ideas that are spiritually poisonous, they think they're becoming more spiritual. But in reality, they're gradually being poisoned to eternal death.

God is not the author of all this confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33). Furthermore, division does not suit the purposes of God (1 Corinthians 1:10). In the light of this, it is advisable for us to examine the New Testament to make sure we are right (2 Corinthians 13:5; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; 2 Peter 1:10).

In this lesson, let's examine the proper attitude toward error. In other words, we ask, "What does God's holy word teach us about religious error?"

I. The Reality Of Error

- A. There are false doctrines (Matthew 15:8-9; 2 Timothy 4:3-4).
 - 1. There are false doctrines of the religious community: Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, etc.
 - 2. There are false doctrines of "Christendom": Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Church.
 - 3. There are false doctrines of denominationalism: Baptist, Pentecostal, Methodist, Lutheran, etc.
 - 4. There are false doctrines of cultism: Seventh-Day Adventist, Latter-Day Saints, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc.
 - 5. There are false doctrines among brethren: Institutionalism, social gospel, fellowship, MDR, creation, eschatology, etc.
- B. There are false ways (Psalm 119:104; Proverbs 16:25). There is only one way that leads to life. The Bible calls all others ways "false ways."
- C. There are false teachers (2 Corinthians 11:13-15; 2 Peter 2:1-3).
 - 1. Evil men and seducers will grow worse and worse (2 Timothy 3:13). They are blind guides (Matthew 15:10-14; Acts 20:29-30).
 - 2. There is a narrow way that leads to life (Matthew 7:13-14). There are not many ways that lead to heaven, no matter how many people think otherwise.

II. The Responsibility Toward Error

- A. We are to hate every false way (Psalm 119:104, 128; Romans 12:9; Revelation 2:6, 15) and fight against error (1 Timothy 1:18-20; Jude 3).

1. Sometimes preachers really have to go after error, and some weak members are offended by it.
2. But while we may hear statements that make us winch, others are hearing statements that are cutting them to the heart and converting them to Christ.
- B. We are to test every teacher (Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:1; Revelation 2:2). If we find erroneous teachers, we are to identify them (Romans 16:17-18; Titus 3:10-11).
- C. We aren't to give false teachers encouragement (2 John 9-11); instead, we should expose and reprove them (Ephesians 5:11).

III. The Problem With Error

- A. Error can't save (2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:22).
 1. The truth makes us free and sanctifies us (John 8:31-32; 17:17).
 2. The truth contains all the good works God wants (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
 3. We study so we can correctly handle the truth (2 Timothy 2:15; 1 Peter 3:15).
 4. A knowledge of truth is the only safeguard against error (2 Peter 3:16-18).
 5. The truth is able to build us up and give us a home in heaven (Acts 20:32).
- B. Error deceives people (Ephesians 4:14; 5:6; Colossians 2:8, 18).
 1. Even the elect can be deceived (Matthew 24:24).
 2. Error will condemn the soul (Galatians 1:6-9; Titus 1:13-14).
- C. God sends strong delusion to those who don't love the truth (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12).
 1. Balaam is an example of this principle (Numbers 22:19).
 - a) It is hard to understand why God told Balaam to go, and then becomes angry with him when he goes (Numbers 22:20-22).
 - b) But God had already plainly spoken to Balaam, "You shall not go with them" (v. 12). But Balaam wasn't satisfied with that. He wanted more.
 - c) Human nature doesn't change.
 - (1) God has revealed His will about how to obtain forgiveness of sins, but people want more (Acts 2:38).
 - (2) God has revealed His will about instruments in worship, but people want more (Ephesians 5:19).
 - (3) God has revealed His will about divorce and remarriage, but some want more (Matthew 19:9).
 2. Honor and respect toward God demands that we do as He directs (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32).

Conclusion. Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia, has inspired a new religion. Yoism, invented by a Massachusetts psychologist, is based on the "open source" principle that the public creates a combined, creative authority and source of truth.

Yoism operates and evolves over the Internet and has numerous contributors. It shuns traditional religious authorities and divine inspiration in favor of the wisdom of humans. Bob Dylan, Albert Einstein, and Sigmund Freud are among its revered saints.

Dan Kriegman founded Yoism in 1994 to make religion open to change and responsive to the wisdom of people everywhere. "I don't think anyone has ever complained about something that didn't lead to some revision or clarification in the

Book of Yo,” Kriegman says. “Every aware, conscious, sentient spirit is divine and has direct access to truth ... Open source embodies that. There is no authority.”

Christians should have a strong desire for truth (Proverbs 23:23) born from a good understanding of truth (Psalm 119:104). In everything related to faith and practice, do exactly as the truth commands (John 4:24).