

Overview: Tolerance is a major point of contention between the Christian worldview and the view commonly held by the world. Christians often view their own thoughts and treatment of others as being quite kind and tolerant, but the world often views us as being mean, hateful, and closed-minded.

Outline:

I. Definition

- a. **Webster's:** Recognition of and respect for the opinions, practices, or behavior of others
- b. **Christian view:** Loving others and being respectful of, but not necessarily agreeing with, their differing views and practices.
- c. **World view:** Being fully supportive of the differences of others and valuing them as being equally valid and moral.
- d. **Our misunderstanding:** We think that we are being tolerant when we love the sinner, but hate the sin, recognize someone's sin, but gracefully give them time to grow and change, and respectfully acknowledge differences but still think we are right. In the world's eyes, this type of thinking is increasingly viewed as being intolerant, disrespectful, and hateful.

II. Common issues

- a. **The God of the Bible / Jesus**
- b. **Right and wrong, absolutes, claims of truth**
- c. **Issues regarding biblical morality and judgment**
 - i. Sexual practices
 1. Example: living together before marriage
 2. Homosexuality
 - ii. Abortion
 - iii. Hell
 - iv. Any sin
 1. John 7:7 The world hates Jesus because he points out evil.
- d. **Sharing your beliefs with others**

III. Problems with the new tolerance

- i. Embracing the new tolerance results in two options:
 1. We must decide what behaviors will be tolerated and what will not.
 2. We must embrace all beliefs, no matter how repugnant
 - a. There are people who will not admit that the Nazis were morally wrong.
 - b. There are people who will not admit that child abuse is wrong.
- ii. There is a logical fallacy: All views must be tolerated and so any intolerant view will not be tolerated.
- iii. It treats a person's actions as inseparable from their identity.

IV. Tolerance according to the Bible

- a. Christians are called to love believers and nonbelievers.
- b. Christians are not to partner with unbelievers
- c. Christians should treat unbelievers with respect (Expect non-believers to act as such.)
- d. Christians are called to holy living
- e. Unrepentant sin is not to be tolerated in the church

V. Examples

- a. Jesus
 - i. Friend of sinners
 - ii. Called sin a sin
 1. Called people to repentance – Matt. 4:17
 2. "Go now and leave your life of sin." Jn. 8:11
 3. "Stop sinning or..." John 5:14
 - iii. One way to heaven
 1. "I am the Way..." John 14:6
 - iv. Taught on hell – Matt. 5:22-30, etc...
 - v. Sheep and the goats – Mat 25:32
 - vi. Church discipline – Matt. 18:17
- b. The church in Corinth
- c. Chick-Fil-A

Conclusion:

Christians should continue to love and respect others with differing opinions. However, we must understand that the teachings of the Bible have always offended non-Christians, and our rejection of sin will be met with increasing persecution.

Supporting Material

Verses:

Loving others

Matthew 7:1-2 "Do not judge , or you too will be judged. 2 For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Romans 12:16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

Romans 12:18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

Ephesians 4:1-2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Colossians 3:13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Hebrews 13:16 And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

Don't partner

2 Corinthians 6:14-17 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? ¹⁵ What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." ¹⁷ "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord." NIV

Ephesians 5:3-7 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. ⁴ Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. ⁵ For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person — such a man is an idolater — has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. ⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. ⁷ Therefore do not be partners with them.

Be merciful to unbelievers

1 Peter 3:15-16 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

Jude 22-23 Be merciful to those who doubt; ²³ snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear-hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.

Christians are called to holy living

1 John 1:5-6 If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

1 Peter 1:15-16 But just as he who called you is holy , so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶ for it is written: "Be holy , because I am holy."

Unrepentant sin is not tolerated

1 Corinthians 5:4-13 When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, ⁵ hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord. ⁶ Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? ⁷ Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸ Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth. ⁹ I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— ¹⁰ not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. ¹¹ But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat. ¹² What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? ¹³ God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you."

Jesus

Matthew 4:17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent , for the kingdom of heaven is near."

Matthew 11:19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners."' But wisdom is proved right by her actions."

Corinth

1 Corinthians 5:1-2 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife. ² And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this?