Biblical Correctness

Tjere is a popular term being tossed around a lot these days—"political correctness."

A person who is "politically correct" is blown along by the winds of popular opinion. He is influenced by the thinking of those who are outspoken about moral and social issues, who sway our thinking in a way that is consistent with the way they think we ought to think!

Even without a certified list of politically correct or incorrect stands on issues, the influence and pressure is there nonetheless.

Our challenge is to take the proper stand on each of these issues, regardless of the way the political winds blow. Oftentimes, being politically correct will require that we be biblically incorrect. Which is more important? *"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 bit-ter."* (Isaiah 5:20).

When it comes to the politics of right and wrong, we need to be on the side of that which is right. Which is more important? To be politically correct, or biblically correct?

It does not matter what our society believes and accepts in this or any other generation. What matters is that we rise above these issues and be what our heavenly Father wants us to be, *"that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gen-tiles—when we walked in licentiousness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you."* (1 Peter 4:2-4).

People may think it bigoted or narrow-minded to say what the Bible says about these moral issues. They can choose to go along with the crowd if they want, but we have to teach what God said, "politically correct" or not! *"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free."* (John 8:32).

My friend, it is time to take a stand for what is right! Where do you stand? Jesus said, *"He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad."* (Matthew 12:30).

- by Rob Harbison

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Some Unsaved Believers

The creed book of one popular denomination says, "that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort." But is it true? Does the Bible say that if one believes on Jesus, it makes no difference what else he believes or does? Are you surprised that the Bible says plainly that faith alone is not enough?

In James 2:14-12, the Bible addresses the question of "faith alone" by talking about a man who believes but does not obey. James asks (v. 14) "Can faith save him?" His answer is a clear *No*! Even demons believe (v. 19) to no avail. Man is justified "not by faith only" (v. 24) because "faith without works is dead" (v. 26).

In John 8:30-36, Jesus spoke to some who "believed in Him." But they were not yet saved - Jesus said they also needed to obey His word to be made free. They were believers, but they were not yet free from sin. Later, in John 12:42, some among the rulers believed on Jesus but would not confess it. Were they saved? No, Jesus said plainly that one who will not confess Him on earth will be denied before God (Mt. 10:32-33).

In Mt. 7:21-23, Jesus says that some who believe enough to accept Him as Lord will be lost because they "practice lawlessness" in spite of their belief. Our practice can affect our salvation! The New Testament speaks of the possibility that one may believe "in vain" (1 Cor 15:2). Luke 8:13 speaks of some who believe and then fall away. We are told in Acts 8:13 that the sorcerer Simon believed, yet in verses 20-23 we see that his heart had become not right with God, and he was back in the "bond of iniquity." Obviously something more than believing was required.

These scriptures do not minimize the value of faith. Faith is an absolute requirement for forgiveness, but it is not the only one. John 1:12 says believers have "power to become children of God." They are not yet children of God, but they have to power to become such, because faith empowers all the other things that believers are told to do (Acts 8:35-39; 1 Peter 3:21; Gal. 3:26-27; Acts 22:16). Certainly faith is the foundation, but it is the beginning, not the end.

It is not enough to "simply believe," or to believe and say a sinner's prayer. When the Bible says "not by faith only" (James 2:24) it should be clear that something else is required.

- by Erin Percell

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God Belongs In The Center

In the early chapters of Numbers, we are treated to a layout of the camp of Israel. Three tribes camped on the east side (2:1-9), three on the south (2:10-16), three on the west (2:18-24), and three on the north (2:25-30). In the center of the camp, the Levites were to set up the tabernacle (2:17). Why is this important? It means that God was at the center of the camp, and God was to be their focus, at the heart of everything Israel did. Dads, what about your camp? Is God set up at the center? Is He the focus of all that you are trying to accomplish with your family? Do your children understand that He comes first in all that you do?

- by Rusty Miller

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Things That Promote Peace

In Romans 14:19, we are instructed to *"pursue the things which make for peace"* (NASV). Ephesians 4:3 teaches that we should be *"endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."* What are some of the things that are necessary so that we can obey these commands and enjoy peace among brethren?

The Scriptures teach us that all of these things are important for peace:

1) *Humility.* Pride is a great hindrance to peace. It provides an "explosive atmosphere" for strife and turmoil. Those who are proud can be easily provoked into a fight. God's Word urges us to *"be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility"* (1 Pet. 5:5).

2) *Love.* Instead of following the many instructions concerning love (1 Jn. 4:20,21; Jn. 13:34,35) we are often too ready to engage in harsh, presumptuous judging. This, of course, is plainly condemned by God (Matt. 7:3-5).

3) Carefully chosen words. We are warned that our words have the power to *"stir up anger"* (Prov. 15:1). For this reason, *"let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how to answer every man"* (Col. 4:6)

4) Putting others first. We live in a selfish, self-centered society. This selfishness it a root cause of much fighting and bitterness. To combat this we must *"look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others"* (Phil. 2:4).

5) Forgiveness. It is inevitable that problems will arise; wrongs and offenses will occur. When this happens we have to be ready to *"forgive one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven* you" (Eph. 4:32).

6) *Truth.* There can be no real peace if we are not firmly established together in God's truth (2 Jn. 9-11). When we speak the truth we demonstrate our love (Eph. 4:15) for both God and our fellow man.

- by Greg Gwin