Subject: Thoughts and Comments on Christian Ethics taught by Hobart Freeman
Posted by james on Fri, 22 Dec 2017 21:38:56 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

In message post #12327 Mark wrote the following:

"Ascetic tendencies within Protestantism-

Holiness churches, Amish, Old Order, Pentecostals all emphasize a life of self denial towards certain practices in the world: beer, dance, movies, lipstick, ect.

Four Different Tendencies within Protestantism_

A. Do's and don't become ends in themselves.

B. Result in works salvation.

C. It is the central message of their teachings.

D.There is no sound basic teaching to under gird their call to a separate life."

First, Mark, I am assuming these are quotes from Hobart Freeman and not your own words. If I'm wrong please correct me. Sense I can't remember the order of his teaching I'm also assuming that these ethics teachings were earlier in his ministry, because he seemed to have forgotten them near the end. Much of what was emphasize the last few years were exactly 'do's and don't' and they became laws within our circle of Christianity. And just as he condemned them for making it their central teachings, somehow it became what he focused on. His opinion became our laws to follow, and it was as silly as can't wear Nike shoes, jeans on women, TV & movies, go to doctor and remain in 'the faith', ect.

These are MY experiences and opinions of what I witnessed over 8+ years and not posted to be critical but to comment because I don't have the notes and tapes any longer and was a bit shocked in reading some of the teaching and comparing them to my memory and experiences.

Subject: Re: Thoughts and Comments on Christian Ethics taught by Hobart Freeman
Posted by Mark L on Sat, 23 Dec 2017 05:16:04 GMT

View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

Yes those are quotes. I'm taking them right out of my old notes. The same with the OT theology. I wrote them in point form so I cleaned them up a little to make it more readable but thats about it. Anytime I added something from me I put it in italics. The ethics are from I think the early 70's.

I agree about the legalism as well. Near the end it was almost like he had lost touch. Too closed in to his own world.

I have tremendous respect for Bro. Freeman but where you're wrong you're wrong.

Subject: Re: Thoughts and Comments on Christian Ethics taught by Hobart Freeman
Posted by william on Mon, 01 Jan 2018 04:14:40 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

This is something I posted in the Bible Issues/Politics thread and I wanted to repost it here because it relates better to this subject and I wanted to make a couple of comments afterward:

Quote:
Amen. I think though, that most of our troubles resulted from not understanding the whole realm of biblical ethics. Ethical behavior is derived from principles not laws... to my mind we blurred this distinction and that became a major flaw.

We have an aversion to the idea of 'situational ethics' because we like to have concrete answers that we can apply regardless of the circumstance, but I'm not sure that this is possible in the ethical realm without resorting to a list of dos and do nots.

The overarching default principle for the Christian is: loving God, and loving others. Applying that principle means that different situations may result in different actions. This is almost intolerable for human beings. We demand consistency and if one person acts one way in a certain situation, then EVERYONE must act in the same manner or the rule of ethics has been compromised. The problem? Ethics can't be reduced to a list of rules... ethics are principles we use to govern our actions in various situations and those situations are rarely EXACTLY the same.

When we approach a situation, we base what we do on our best understanding of what God's will is in the matter. That is the heart of ethics -- making decisions based upon the foundational truths of the Christian faith (love God, love others).

But we value uniformity of outcome more than simply allowing others to apply those principles for themselves. Why? I think the reason is that we feel threatened when others take a different action

than our own. After all, if it is God's will for me to do this, then it must be God's will for you to do this... if I do this and you do that -- how can both of us be right??

Ethics and doctrine are two different areas and problems are going to rise when we confuse the two.

Anyway, I've got to run... more later.

Blessings,
William

I can remember clearly brother Freeman saying over and over in the Christian Ethic series that these were "principles" not "laws".

That said, we all know that these words were flipped in so many instances!

Why? I think it was because of our aversion to the phrase "situational ethics". There is a wide range of interpretations when it comes to the phrase (just google it and you'll see what I'm talking about) not to mention the wide range of Christian philosophers who are of the liberal persuasion (none that I'd wish to be associated with!) that espouse situational ethics.

We all want to believe in moral absolutes so why not just make Christian ethical behavior absolute and dispense with the whole notion of principles? Laws are something we understand, they are clear (usually) and to the point, so why insist that ethics are principles?

For example, if we see someone stealing from another person, why don't we just make it a law to expose the thief? Dispense with all of the "ethical principle" talk and just get on with the application of justice. Lock them up and throw away the key!

Ahh, but this clear case of thievery doesn't exist in a vacuum. There could be many scenarios that might mitigate the absolute application of this law.

(I know I should have thought this out a bit more but it's late and I'm having a tough time coming up with a good reason to help this thief out of receiving his just desserts, but I do believe that someone smarter than me can come up with better reasons and/or a better example...).

Maybe his baby is starving... maybe he shoplifted a fire extinguisher to put out a fire... maybe he committed grand-theft-auto to save someone from death... perhaps he siphoned gas from a car in a parking lot to get his family home in sub-zero weather, (see, I'm having trouble coming up with something that isn't lame!)

Anyway, if you can look beyond the lameness and see that there might be different ethical

reactions to an otherwise straightforward application of a law, then you might be able to see why this might be handled differently depending on the circumstances (situations).

Buy the guy some groceries and pay the shop-keeper for whatever he took (and don't forget to witness to the guy and point him to Jesus!) You can do that and still be true to ethical principles. (After all, it was Jesus who paid the penalty for our debt.)

I guess all I'm saying here is that whenever it is possible we should resist the temptation to legalize principles and try as best as we know how, to love God and love our neighbor as ourself within the ethical principles that we've learned. And we should also keep in mind that not everyone has learned all of the same ethical principles that we've been able to grasp.

We're not all at the same level (hence the reason we find it easier just to make it a law and be done with it.)

What is the ethical principle that governs (see, that is the justice side of me talking!) divorce and remarriage? I've learned that a straightforward approach in this area is fraught with danger. Yes, it is easy just to condemn those involved and leave them without a solution. Don't divorce and the remarriage part won't be an issue. Already divorced? don't remarry and you'll be fine. Oh, already remarried? well just leave, God doesn't recognize second marriages anyway. Kids from the remarriage? ahh, well, hum, ah... let me get back to you on that.

Let's just teach the ethics, and keep them in the realm of principles, and I think we'll be fine.

Blessings,
William

Subject: Re: Thoughts and Comments on Christian Ethics taught by Hobart Freeman
Posted by Mark L on Mon, 01 Jan 2018 17:01:52 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

william wrote on Sun, 31 December 2017 23:14
Let's just teach the ethics, and keep them in the realm of principles, and I think we'll be fine.

Blessings,
William

Yes I agree and I think James would too.

william wrote on Sun, 31 December 2017 23:14 God doesn't recognize second marriages anyway.
Kids from the remarriage? ahh, well, hum, ah... let me get back to you on that.
Blessings,
William

That is something that has always bothered me. Assuming a remarriage is wrong what about when there are kids from the second marriage. I've always wondered about that in light of the kids what is the greater wrong. I don't know if that is right or wrong biblicaly but I've wondered about that.

Subject: Re: Thoughts and Comments on Christian Ethics taught by Hobart Freeman
Posted by james on Wed, 03 Jan 2018 20:05:52 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

william wrote on Sun, 31 December 2017 22:14
We're not all at the same level (hence the reason we find it easier just to make it a law and be done with it.)

Blessings,
William

In reflecting back I think this was a major problem, expecting newborn Christians to be walking in what it took older Christians years to understand and apply effectively. Thank God for His mercy and grace; destroying a new believer's faith with rules and regulations that they can't understand is a terrible thing.

Subject: Suicide
Posted by Mark L on Sat, 07 Mar 2020 20:29:11 GMT

View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

Regarding the ethics notes on suicide which I just finished putting up. I'm going to disagree with Bro Freeman. He said we just don't know how God will deal with it. I took a closer look at it as we had a recent eg in our family with my sisters grandson committing suicide. 23 yrs old. I wasn't close to him but that side of the family certainly was.

I don't see why suicide is any different than any other sin. Are we to believe that entering eternity with an unconfessed sin may be grounds for being put out. There are multitudes of xians who will enter eternity with unconfessed sin.

Subject: Re: Suicide
Posted by william on Sat, 07 Mar 2020 21:19:22 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

Suicide is certainly a tough subject to judge. The person involved is already gone and since we don't hold to the Catholic's beliefs on indulgences the matter boils down to just opinions. That said, our opinions don't matter too much either, at least as it relates to a person who has already committed suicide.

On the other hand, our responsibility to the living kinda dictates that we hold a 'strong' opinion against suicide (so as not to encourage it!).

My opinion is that it isn't an unpardonable sin.

Also, what you said about the idea of "un-confessed sin" at the time of death and comparing that to the sin of suicide... there isn't much difference. All of us would jockey hard for those who have sinned, to confess it all before death, but we probably would take the position that dying with un-confessed sin would't necessarily be the final arbiter in determining one's eternal state. Just like suicide, though, we preach hard against having un-confessed sin to the living!

Blessings,
William
