**Doing What’s Right in *Your Own* Eyes**

# Judges 21:25

*“In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”*

**Question: Is this good or bad?**

When it boils right down to it, isn’t that what we’re supposed to do?

* As in **Acts 5:29**?
* Won’t we be judged *individually?* **2Cor.5:10**
* Isn’t it wrong to violate your conscience? **1John 3:20-21**
* Isn’t that the premise of *free will, autonomy* (*self-lawed*, hence *self-governed*)?

**I. First Example**

Let’s back up a minute. How is the phrase being used in **Judges 21:25**? *Positively* or *negatively*? In Judges 21 the 12,000 Israelites have gone to Jabesh-Gilead and slain the residents in order to take 400 virgins as wives for the men of the tribe of Benjamin (vv.10-12). Why? They felt “*sorry*” for them and didn’t want them to become extinct in Israel, v.15. But 400 weren’t enough, v.14. So, they told the men of Benjamin to steal more from the *“daughters of Shiloh”* during a festival and that they would then “cover” them when the fathers and brothers complained, vv.19-24.

**How do “God’s people” get to the point where such moral atrocities are acceptable???** **Verse 25, *“everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”***

Think about it- at what point in this whole story did the men of Israel:

-consult the Law of God to see what was right?

-consult the Priest of God to see what was right?

-consult God in prayer to see what was right?

-stop and think that if God wanted Benjamin saved, He would do it Himself or tell them how to do it properly!

## II. Second Example

Look at another similar case in **Judges 17:6** where the same phrase is used again. Here, a man named Micah had stolen 1100 pieces of silver from his mother. He confessed and returned it. She gave it back to him to have a *“graven image and a molten idol”* made- obviously, contrary to God’s command, vv.1-4. Next, Micah made a shrine, ephod (priestly garment), and consecrated one of his own sons to become his priest, again, all in violation of God’s law, v.5!

**How did he get to that point where all of these things, which were in obvious violation of God’s Law, could be done in the name of religion?** **Verse 6, *“every man did what was right in his own eyes.”***

## III. Third Example

One more passage in this regard, **Deut.12:8**. In this chapter Moses is trying to explain to Israel what they could and could not do *prior* to their entering the land of Canaan. In **v.8**, he rebukes them for *“every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes”*. Evidently they had sought to offer sacrifices on their journey every time they came to *cultic altar,* v.13. He is explaining that they should wait and sacrifice ***where/when/how God tells them to* in the land of Canaan, vv.11-12**. Then, he says in **v.25, *“you will be doing what right in the sight of the Lord.”!!!***

**IV. What does all of this mean?**

**A. Remember** **Jer.10:23 always!**  ***“I know, O Lord, that a man’s way is not within himself; nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps.”* God made us this way…. dependant on Him. When we forget it and start doing “what looks/seems right to me”we’re in big trouble! Therefore, *“Correct me, O Lord, but with justice;”* v.24a.**

B. When we make “moral” decisions (like whom to marry/divorce and how to do it, whether it’s same-sex, etc.) according to “what looks/seems right to me,” we’re going to get it wrong! God’s laws of morality are for our best interest now and in the future. Though it’s not usually difficult to discern “why He said to do it this way,” we really don’t have to always understand- we just have to obey.

C. When we decide to worship God “how, when, where, etc. we think is right according to our own eyes,” history teaches us that we’re going the wrong way! The wrong way does not lead to heaven. Matt.7:21 is still true.

**D. Whatever the decision- whether related to morality or religious service, when we decide on what to do or not do according to what “we see as right,” we’re walking by *sight* rather than by *faith,* 2Cor.5:7. Such will never, in any circumstance, be acceptable to God!**