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THE SURE WORD By Jonnie Hutchison

WHAT DETERMINES GOOD AND EVIL?

Any person who will view life objectively must conclude that good and evil exist in this world. But how is good and evil to be determined? By what standard is good and evil to be measured? Is there more than one standard by which to judge what is good and what is evil?

Individuals often set their own standards of good and evil, of right and wrong. Many are like those in the Old Testament book of Judges where it is stated, "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6). There is no consistency when each individual becomes his own standard of judging what is good or evil. That is true because one's personal desires and prejudices become one's standard of judging good and evil.

Civil government sets their own standards of good and evil. Civil law defines what a particular society views as good and evil. However, what may be considered good or evil by one societies standard will often be different from that of another. Though civil governments are ordained by God for our good (Romans 13:1ff) they do not always set proper standards for their citizens (E.g., Nazi Germany).

Yes, there are many imperfect standards to use in seeking to determine what is good and what is evil. However, there is only ONE PERFECT STANDARD, and that is the Word of God revealed in the Bible. Psalms 19:7-8 reads, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." God has already determined what is good and what is evil. He has set the infallible standard of right and wrong. Consider the words of Isaiah 5:20-21, "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 bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight! "When God says something is good, it is good. When God says something is evil, it is evil. God's standard of good and evil always takes precedence over those of men "...let God be true but every man a liar...." (Romans 3:4).

How much better this world would be if every society and individual submitted to the ONE PERFECT STANDARD of God's Holy and perfect Word. After all, it is His perfect standard that each of us will face in judgment (John 12:48).