

“Abstain from Every Form of Evil”

1 Thess. 5:22 (NKJV)

Introduction:

- A. Christians are to abhor evil (Rom. 12:9) and “abstain from every form of” it.
 - 1. More blatant forms.
 - 2. More subtle forms.
- B. Christians do well to abstain from the three basic *forms* of evil.

Discussion:

I. Things *Unconditionally* Sinful.

- A. Things inherently “unlawful” or “unclean”. (Matt. 14:4; 2 Cor. 6:17)
 - 1. “Nothing unclean” (Rom. 14:14) and “All things lawful” (1 Cor. 10:23) limited to context.
 - 2. Some condemned by *name* others by *principle*. (cf. Gambling, cheating).
- B. There are things both morally and religiously wrong - never right to do them.
 - 1. The works of the flesh and the like. (Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 4:28; Rev. 21:8; 1 Pet. 4:15).
 - 2. Teaching false doctrine. (Matt. 15:9,13).

II. Things *Circumstantially* Sinful.

- A. It may be lawful or clean of itself - still not be good. (Rom. 14:14; 1 Cor. 10:23).
- B. It may be good in some circumstances but not in others.
 - 1. Note: A thing ordinarily sinful cannot be made right by circumstances, while a thing ordinarily lawful can be made sinful by circumstance.
 - 2. If it is done in offence. (Rom. 14:15-21; 1 Cor. 8:8-13).
 - 3. If it is done in doubt. (Rom. 14:14,23).
 - a. It may turn out to be lawful -- strictly speaking.
 - b. We must protect our consciences.
 - 4. If it is done at wrong place or wrong time. (cf. 1 Cor. 8:10,11; 10:25-29).
 - a. Things good one setting, not in another.
 - (1) Items of apparel not for mixed company.
 - (2) Entertainment and recreation. (Cf. Sunny James in Lubbock).
 - b. Things morally right but religiously wrong. (Matt. 15:1-9).
 - (1) Instrumental music.
 - (2) Common feasts. (1 Cor. 11:22,34).
 - c. Things generally right made wrong by injecting corrupt elements. (Movies, T.V., games, etc.)

III. Things *Potentially* Sinful.

- A. Certain Marriages. (1 Cor. 7:28; 35-38; Neh. 13:26).
- B. Certain Companionships. (1 Cor. 15:33).
- C. Certain moves in life. (Gen. 13:12).
- D. Certain joint arrangements. (2 Cor. 6:14).

Conclusion:

- A. We would do well to abstain from things sinful of themselves.
- B. We would do well to abstain from circumstances that put good things in sinful light.
- C. We would do well to abstain from things with sinful potential.