

The Danger of Relativity

In our society today, we hear clichés and repeat them, whether they make sense or not. We find ourselves acting like parrots.

For example, William Shakespeare – English poet, playwright and actor who is regarded as the greatest writer in the English language – once said, “Nothing is either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.”

With all due respect to Mr. Shakespeare and his credentials, a moment’s reflection will convince you that thinking has nothing to do with whether rape or murder is good or bad.

Writing on this subject, the late Zig Ziglar – author and internationally known motivational speaker – wrote in his book *Something Else to Smile About*:

Those acts (murder and rape) are bad. Many people today say, “Well, everything is relative,” which is also absurd. We must have some absolutes in life; otherwise, obeying the law is “relative.”

There are several thousand laws on the books, so let’s go down the list and choose the ones that are relative to us and, consequently, obey only them. Chaos would be the obvious result.

For the 85-year-old, driving 40 miles per hour might seem far too fast, while 90 miles per hour for the 17-year-old might not seem fast at all. A “bump” by a 300-pound National Football League offensive lineman on a 290-pound defensive end would be relatively insignificant. The same force applied against a frail senior citizen could result in serious consequences.

As you ponder things of this nature, I believe you will come to the conclusion that the more things we make relative, the more chaos we’re going to have in our society. It’s safe to say that virtually every husband and wife in America does not want their mate to be “relatively” faithful.

Most of us have even taken vows that being relative has nothing to do with. We’re going to love, cherish, honor and be faithful to our spouse. Add relativity and good or bad to that vow, and very few marriages would survive.

The list is endless, but I encourage you to eliminate much of this “relativity stuff,” and this idea that “nothing is either good or bad but thinking makes it so” approach to life. Follow the moral absolutes that have stood civilization in good stead for several thousand years.

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Zig Ziglar was right on target. And the Bible, of course, is clear about moral absolutes, and how we ought to find the abundant life in obedience to our Lord. Here are a couple of examples:

1. *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 (Isaiah 5:20 ESV).*
2. *Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law (Romans 13:8-10 ESV).*

– Beecher Hunter