

Are You Open-Minded?

by Sebastian R Fama

Whenever discussing issues of morality, it is not uncommon to hear the phrase: “You have to be open-minded.” What this usually means is that you need to be open to a more permissive ethos. As society becomes more perverse, the list of new things we are supposed to be open to, grows longer.

Actions are not right or wrong because they merely violate some written directive. They are right or wrong because of the results they produce. Those who indulge in permissive behaviors, can in some ways be compared to an alcoholic. Short-term gratification is prioritized over long-term consequences.

All living things are governed by the Natural Law. When our actions are inconsistent with our nature, we create problems. When we act in accord with our nature, we thrive. That is reality, that is history. The more we indulge ourselves in bad behavior, the more oblivious we become to the consequences. Being open only to new things is actually being closed-minded. When one is truly open-minded, one is open to all things, honestly weighing the arguments and evidence for each, and rejecting that which is harmful.

Members of a jury are instructed to weigh evidence carefully. And that is because the whole purpose of a court proceeding is to arrive at a just verdict. Logically then, shouldn't we be just as careful when it comes to our private lives? And wouldn't that necessity be intensified when our decisions have any effect on our eternal destiny?

The greatest obstacle to being open-minded is being self-centered. We want what we want and no one is going to tell us what to do – not even God. Thus, we get to the point where we will only accept evidence that either supports, or appears to support our desired outcome. The Bible warns us about such a mindset: “For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and will turn away from listening to the truth” (2 Timothy 4:3-4)

In order to be open to the truth, we need to die to self. Dying to self enables us to set our prejudices aside and see things as they are. The Bible speaks of this in a number of places. For instance, in Galatians 2:20, Paul says: “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” If Christ lives in me, I will act like Christ. And that can only happen with the aid of God's grace (Philippians 4:13). If I fail to embrace the truth when it is revealed to me, it is because I have refused to allow Christ to work in me.

To be Christian, is to be humble (James 4:6). To be humble, is to be open to correction (Proverbs 12:1). Thus, we must be willing to change our thinking when the evidence demands as much (Romans 12:2). And so, the question remains; are you open-minded?