

1 □ Principles for Proving

The Distinction Principle

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil." (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22)

2 □ Introduction to the Distinction Principle

- So far in our study on Bible principles for proving, we have studied four principles. Help me name them...
 - Association
 - Wedge
 - Doubt
 - Edification
- This evening we are going to study the Distinction Principle.
- As always, this principle is not a rule, but a tool to help you. If you want to live a holy life and please the Lord, this principle will be a great help in making godly choices.

3 □ Mixing a Grey Colour

- Who can tell me what two colours are normally mixed to create the colour grey?
 - White & Black.
 - Is grey black?
 - Is grey white?
- Grey is not clearly white. It is not clearly black. It is a mixture in-between the two.
- Grey is a blend or compromise.
- Grey lacks distinction!

4 □ The Meaning of the Distinction Principle

- "Distinction" comes from the word "distinct" which means not alike, different in nature and quality; easy to perceive; separate; clearly or sharply defined. WordWeb Dictionary
- The word "distinction" refers to a difference or contrast between similar things or people. Web Definition
 - For example bananas and broccoli are both foods, but one is a fruit the other a vegetable, one is yellow and sweet the other is green and savoury. They are distinct.

5 □ God Identifies Many Clear Distinctions in the Bible

- Heaven – Earth (Ge 1:1)
- Light – Dark (Ge 1:4)
- Night – Day (Ge 1:5)
- Male – Female (Ge 1:27)
- Good – Evil (Ge 2:9)
- Clean – Unclean (Le 10:10)
- Male clothing – Female clothing (Deu 22:5)
- Holy – Profane (Eze 22:26)

6 □ God Identifies Many Clear Distinctions in the Bible

- Heaven – Hell (Mt 11:23)
- Saved – Lost (Mt 18:11)
- Jew – Gentile (Ro 2:9)
- Life – Death (Ro 6:23)
- Mortal – Immortality (1Co 15:33)
- Married – Unmarried (1Co 7:34)
- Righteous – Unrighteous (2Co 6:14)
- Christ – Belial (2Co 6:15)

7 □ God Identifies Many Clear Distinctions in the Bible

- Believers – Infidels (2Co 6:15)
- Spirit – Flesh (Gal 5:16)
- Pure – Defiled (Tit 1:15)
- Godly – Ungodly (Tit 2:12)
- Love for God – Love for the world (1Jn 2:15)
- Hot – Cold (Re 3:16)

8 □ Bible Illustrations of Distinction

- In Ezekiel 22 God rebuked Israel
 - Her priests were unholy (Ezekiel 22:26) "Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them."
 - Because the priests, the spiritual leaders made no distinction, those influenced by them became ungodly.
 - Her princes were greedy (Ezekiel 22:27)
 - Her prophets were liars (Ezekiel 22:28)
 - Her people were selfish (Ezekiel 22:29)

9 ☐ Bible Illustrations of Distinction

- God told the Corinthian believers to live distinct lives.
 - (2 Corinthians 6:14-17) "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,"

10 ☐ Bible Illustrations of Distinction

- John admonished believers to walk distinctly.
 - (1 John 1:5-7) "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that **God is light**, and **in him is no darkness at all**. If we say that we have **fellowship with him**, and **walk in darkness**, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

11 ☐ Bible Illustrations of Distinction

- Again, in the Book of Revelation, God condemns being lukewarm.
 - (Revelation 3:16) "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

12 ☐ Using the Distinction Principle

- Ask yourself a few questions.
 - Does this choice clearly identify me with God's holiness?
 - Does this choice uphold the Biblical distinctions God has set?
 - Could this choice be a "lukewarm" choice?
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13 ☐ We must apply the Distinction Principle to every area of life

- God expects our attitudes to be distinct.
 - (Ephesians 4:31) "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:"
- God expects our character to be distinct.
 - (Romans 13:14) "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."
- God expects our speech to be distinct.
 - (Ephesians 4:29) "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

14 ☐ We must apply the Distinction Principle to every area of life

- God expects our dress to be distinct (modest and gender distinct).
 - (Deuteronomy 22:5) "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God."
 - (1 Timothy 2:9) "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;"
- God expects our activities to be distinct.
 - (1 Peter 2:11) "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;"
- God expects our music to be distinct.
 - (Psalm 40:3) "And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD."

15 ☐ We must apply the Distinction Principle to every area of life

- God even expects our thoughts to be distinct.
 - (Psalms 19:14) "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer."
- If you choose to be distinct, it will not be easy
 - (2 Timothy 3:12) "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."
- Your old nature will gripe and complain and try to rebel. This is usually our greatest opposition!
 - (Matthew 16:24) "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

16 ☐ Christians may accuse you of being too holy. Unbelievers may dislike your godliness. BUT never forget, God is praised when you live to glorify Him!

17 ☐ Conclusion

- Being distinct does not mean being weird.
- It means being clearly godly.
- How distinct are you?
- Are you standing in the gap for the Lord in this godless world?
- Let's ask God to help us choose the "white" options instead of the "grey" ones.
- Let's not be lukewarm Christians!