

SUNDAY BRIEFING

When Tolerance & Standards Get Confused

BY PASTOR DON GARDNER

Our world has brought the true Christian to a point of decision. Will we compromise away all standards, and decision making, in an effort to prove we are open minded and tolerant? Or, will we dare to risk being considered a bigot, closed minded, and old fashioned as we dare to speak up stating that some things are against God's values / standards and therefore to be called "sin?" Are some matters and actions simply beyond our ability to continue to disregard them just because the world says they are OK? As you sit reading this, let me ask if you have "let anything slide by" this week that you should have responded towards?

In Toronto, a high school found itself in the midst of controversy as the students and administration installed, with a majority of student support, a "gender neutral lavatory."

The intent says that this allows students who are "transgender" to have an alternative and choice on which room they may desire to use. Of course, this means that teens are determining what is morally or socially acceptable and the guidance of thought that was traditionally left to teachers / administrators has been reduced again....in the name of "progressive thinking." Christian values and propriety are way beyond consideration in this matter for determining the decisions being made.

Based on my own high school years and to the surprise of some, I confess that if I was a teen today, I would probably be in the middle of those students fighting for the rights of others to make their own decisions. Indeed, I was a pretty politically active high school student. My generation dealt with hair lengths / beards, clothing issues, Vietnam, protesting, teen pregnancy, avoiding the draft, racism responses,

ecological stresses, abortion, premarital sex, etc. Yet, I was a Christian at the time and it was my contention that people should still be free to make their own decisions, even if the decisions were unimpressive, perverted, or unwise. At the same time, my generation allowed for the gospel of Christ to be shared in a fairly open manner. I was able to choose my politically correct, or incorrect, stances while remaining a Christian with His values integrated into my actions and relationships.

For the young Christians of 2021, I pray for your sensitivity and courage to be a bold and balanced person with standards. Yes, make a difference with your life! You must stand up for what you believe, and allow others to do the same, even as you have a caring heart to share Christ with others. Remember, constraining what we allow to enter our mind and what we see will aid us in holding to values that may keep us closer to our Holy Savior and Lord.

Announcements & Prayers

Summer 2021 Sunday School materials are ready for collection and/or delivery. Please email or call the church office to make arrangements for pick up. When in-person Sunday worship services resume in June, you can pick up your materials either at the tables at the worship services or church office before or after the services.

- 1) Let us pray for the many mothers in our church that will celebrate Mother's Day on May 9!
- 2) Let us pray for the Re-Opening Committee of our church as we look to June 6 for our Soft Opening of the church with English and Chinese Worship Services.
- 3) Let us pray for our church's deacons as they will meet on May 15.
- 4) Let us pray for the Arizona Baptist Convention Council meeting on May 11.
- 5) Please support Teacher Grace Lee as she makes plans to guide us in our VBS in June 14-18.
- 6) If you haven't signed up to write something for our Mid-Week Sharing, please let Sharon know when you might be interested in letting us hear from you!
- 7) Please prepare your heart for the upcoming prayer meeting to be held on Saturday, May 22 at 9:00 AM.

FCBC Online Worship Services are available from 9:30 am on Sundays at www.fcbcphx.org/sermons

CONNECT

The best way for knowing about who God is and what God does is through the Bible. Though we all could read and study the Bible individually, we learn so much more when we read and study the Bible together in a group. Bible study groups at FCBC PHX offer a variety of options for all ages, with groups that meet during weekdays, evenings, or Sunday morning. Contact us!

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UPCOMING

May 8 | Council Meeting

May 9 | Mother's Day

May 15 | Deacons' Meeting

May 22 | Church-wide Prayer