

the Venues

Go Deep

Am I Wrong?

Genesis 2:8-9, 15-17

April 3, 2016

Mr. Heinz is ordinarily a law-abiding man. One day, his wife becomes seriously ill. Heinz takes her to the Doctor who prescribes a medication for her. The medicine works. She begins to improve. However, Mr. Heinz has no insurance and runs out of money quickly paying for this expensive medicine. After a few months, he can no longer buy the medicine and his wife begins to get worse. One day, he is in the pharmacy and notices that no one is behind the counter. The medicine is in plain view. Should he steal the medicine to help his sick his wife?

How do we determine right and wrong?

Read Genesis 2:8-9, 15-17.

What are the two trees in the middle of the garden?

What do you think about the fact that other ancient literature that predates Genesis include a tree of life guarded by a snake?

The trees are metaphors for something! *For what?*

Why is there a “No Eating” sign on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

Why would God not want the man and woman to have that knowledge?

What does that say about the origin of sin?

What are some complications with an ethic based on “If the Bible says it’s wrong, then it’s wrong”?

Read Ephesians 6:5 and Titus 2:9 in light of the statement by Jefferson Davis that slavery “was established by decree of Almighty God...it is sanctioned in the Bible, in both Testaments, from Genesis to Revelation.”

Europeans quoted 1 Samuel 15:2-3, Joshua 6:20-21, Deuteronomy 2:32-35 to justify the murder of Native Americans.

What do we do with these verses and the ethic that they express?

How would you use the Bible to develop an ethic of war?

What do we do with verses like 2 Timothy 2:12-15?

How do we use the Bible as a guide for ethics?

How would you describe Paul’s overall view of a rule-based approach to ethics based on Colossians 2:20-23; Romans 7:5-6; 2 Corinthians 3:6-7?

What are the alternatives to a rule-based approach?

What do you think about this lesson taught to Warren Buffett by his dad: “It’s very important to live your life by an internal yardstick.”

What do James 2:8 and Romans 13:8-10 provide as an alternative?

What is your response to the ethical system proposed by these two men?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "It is not by ideals and programs or by conscience, duty, responsibility, and virtue that reality can be confronted and overcome, but simply and solely by the perfect love of God."

Viktor Frankl, "The truth - that love is the ultimate and the highest goal to which man can aspire. Then I grasped the meaning of the greatest secret that human poetry and human thought and belief have to impart: the salvation of man is through love and in love."

How does the fact that both of these men were victims of Nazi atrocities affect your view of their proposals?

What is your take-away from this lesson?