

True Christians love the sinner (Lk. 6:27) and hate the sin (1 Pe. 3:11). Holding Scripture as the foundation for identifying true values (way of life), will consequently result in some level of fundamental disunity and disagreement with those who do not (Am. 3:3; Ro. 8:7; Jn. 15:18-19; 1 Jn. 3:12). There will be differences over what are right or wrong behaviors, lifestyles, and philosophies and subsequently, over agendas.

Generally, non-Christians correctly insist they have a constitutional right and freedom to hold and express different views; to promote (proselytize), socially and politically, a wide genre of agendas that reflect their various religious or anti-religio-philosophical worldviews, within the limitations of not restricting such rights and freedoms to others. Christians correctly assert they have that same right. Such differences, which are often social and political in nature, will inescapably often have a religious basis for evaluating what are the best societal ethical standards and philosophical agendas within the competition of ideas.

Yet, there has been increasing rhetoric by some who assert that the constitution prohibits Christians or religious groups from promoting their values politically, while affirming their own rights to promote opposite values; promoting the idea that political freedom to promote social values, should be held only by non-religious persons or groups. Nothing earthly is more powerful than ideas, and thus freedom of such is a serious issue.

Promoting different opinions does not necessarily constitute a hateful spirit nor result in bitter resentment, if a spirit of maturity exists (Heb. 12:14; 1 Pe. 3:16). – This goes both ways. Unfortunately, some Christians behave otherwise, *contrary* to the nature of Christianity, while many non-Christians also behave otherwise, in accordance with human nature (Ro. 8:7).

Generally, non-Christians would not equate retreating from their principles as correct behavior (unless enlightenment convinced them otherwise). They would rightly recognize such as unprincipled and cowardly. Neither should Christians practice such unprincipled compromise. Let us not attempt *unsanctified unions* with anti-Christ or humanist values by misguided *fuzzy* emotions that lead some sycophantishly to fear disunity with our society or culture (Ro. 12:2a). That is selling Christ out. A spirit of compromise against the Holy Spirit has too often been misrepresented as Christ-like. ‘Harmony at all costs’ is its opposite in disguise (2 Co. 11:3-4 with 13-15; 6:14). We must discern the spiritual gulf that distinguishes ‘striving for peace because we are reasonable and love peace’ from rather ‘preferring compromise to gain peace because we lack the courage, endurance or love of truth, of God and of humanity’ so as not to be willing to stand up for Christ. The ‘way of love’ is not a contention-free way of life (Mt. 10:34-38).

Yet, this is not a Christian ‘war-mongering spirit.’ There is a profound difference between actions that are *properly* conciliatory and those, which, in effect, distort Christ’s teachings to avoid unpopularity. It is a virtue to be true to convictions, yet without hatred or desire to harm anyone. Such love shows the ideal approach of how to interact with those having dissimilar views. Christians should be experts at this. Christ did not come to have peace, harmony and unity with sin (Mt. 10:34-38), but let us do all things in a spirit of love (Eph. 4:15; Gal. 5:14). Continued ...