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ETHICS & AMERICA

Can we separate morality, religious principle?

Exclusive: Ben Kinchlow explains why nation needs 'fixed standards of right and wrong'

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Ben Kinchlow is a minister, broadcaster, author and businessman. His latest book is "[Black Yellowdogs.](#)" He was the long-time co-host of CBN's "The 700 Club" television program and host of the international edition of the show, seen in more than 80 countries. He is the founder of [Americans for Israel](#) and the African American Political Awareness Coalition, and the author of several books.

Not too long ago, an extremely well-educated, intelligent individual asserted in a discussion on morality and ethics that *morality is completely separate from religious principle.*

I found this assertion extremely interesting, though I would I heartily disagree, for two reasons: 1) Every culture's morality is based upon their God/gods or lack thereof, and cultures or societies that have no gods subject themselves to whomever is promoted to those positions, and 2) I would give odds that the above person's assertion is based on an assessment of our Judeo-Christian Western culture. (Even the briefest visit to any Muslim-dominated country, for instance, would immediately prove the point.)

There are those who are adamant in their positions that all legal, social, political and economic decisions be made purely from the standpoint of *reason*, without regard to any standards of morality, which begs the question: *Is there any universal standard for morality?*

In the midst of heated debates today regarding abortion *rights*, homosexuals, same-sex marriages, transgenders, minor-attracted adults (pedophiles), homicide bombers and other "special interest" groups, arguments abound as to what should be considered the basis (if any) for making moral and, by extension, legal judgments.

I wrote a column in 2011 regarding ethics and morality. After a brief overview at what is being reported as "news" as we enter 2013, it dawned on me that said column was a preview of where we are headed today at breakneck speed.

Consider: As of this writing, a group of inmates is suing the alcohol industry for \$1 billion, claiming "alcohol is responsible" for their misdeeds; several teens in the football capital of Ohio (Steubenville) had their video bragging about raping a female schoolmate go viral; two lesbians are now suing a male sperm donor for child support; military chaplains are being pressured not only to accept "Don't Ask Don't Tell" but also to perform

same-sex marriages despite their religious and moral convictions; Hobby Lobby is facing a fine of \$1 million per day for refusing to violate moral principles by funding abortion-inducing drugs under Obamacare.

How about this: Since the porn industry is not prosecuted, why not have XXX movies in regular theaters and on TV in prime time? After all, at one time R-rated movies were restricted. (Remember twin beds and pajamas in films?) And since elementary school children are being taught sexual orientation and “educated” about their sexuality, why not have child porn available “on demand” at home? And one more thing, since we are all just *animals* (no God, remember?), why can’t we just have sex publicly, whenever, wherever and however? Other animals do it. (Poochie doesn’t wait until *he* gets home). I mean, after all, if *morality is completely separate from religious principle*, then isn’t it all just a matter of opinion?

President George Washington, in his 1796 Farewell Address, issued one of the gravest warnings in American history: “*Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion.*” He continued, “*Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education ... reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.*” (It should be patently obvious to all that Washington was clearly referring to the Judeo-Christian Bible and the Christian religion.)

President Washington clearly understood the folly of attempting to substitute education for morality (*the quality of being in accord with the standards of right and wrong*).

Liberal-oriented educators and intellectuals insist that our children can make moral choices in a vacuum, that these choices can be made without regard to any absolute standard of right and wrong. Situational ethics (the decision depends on the situation you are in) present our youth with a *shifting morality* as the basis for making decisions. The simple fact of the matter is, the intelligentsia make these assertions without due consideration of the end results. Absent religious principles (which, in Western civilization, are taken from the Judeo-Christian Bible), what, one could reasonably ask, are the foundations upon which we base our actions and order our society?

Are there *any* fixed standards of right and wrong? If so, who sets them? Has *everything* become merely a matter of opinion? And if so, whose?

If one group believes it is acceptable to kill the *unborn* and another believes it is acceptable to kill those who *kill* the unborn, which group is right? If one group adamantly denies the value of girls and believes they should be terminated *in utero* and believes only boy babies should survive pregnancy, while yet another group says girls *are* of equal value, which group is right? Says who? (Note the policies in India and China.)

If one group believes you can *practice* homosexuality and pedophilia openly and another group believes they should *kill* homosexuals and pedophiles, which group is wrong? Says who?

If there are absolutely no absolutes, then there is no basis for our criminal justice system, legal system, oaths, business agreements or any other form of contractual intercourse. Our national security, the ability for police to protect us, the pursuit of criminals, the prosecution of lawbreakers, our prosperity and our very existence as a nation all rest upon the twin pillars of *ethics and morality*. Remove these twin supports from Western civilization and we find ourselves on the brink of the same destruction that befell another of the greatest empires ever to exist, the Roman Empire.

Rome fell not from hordes of barbarians at the gates, but from not only a marked decline in patriotism but the abandonment of its standards of ethics and morality, which created rot at its core; a weakened moral fiber; discontented/disenfranchised masses (mobs); decline in the traditional citizenry (illegal aliens); literature; amusements and lifestyles portraying gratuitous sex and violence.

Ultimately, standards of morality and absolutes are indispensable for the continuation of our individual liberties and the type of government we enjoy – a free republic.

What, may I ask, is the foundation of ethics and morality in Western civilization if not the Judeo-Christian Bible?

Should we continue unabated on this course, historians will someday look back and say of America, as of ancient Rome, *“as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind (a mind devoid of judgment) to do those things which were loathsome”* (Romans 1:28).

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