

Pleasing God. There's nothing more important in life than pleasing the One who has given us life. And it's not a grim duty either. Our Creator is also our Redeemer, who has given His Son to rescue us. So it's the natural response to say as Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:9, "We make it our aim to please Christ."

But how do we please Him? By obeying His Word. "If you love Me, you will keep my commandments," He said. But what if we're faced with a decision where there is no direct command? How do we know what pleases Him then? That's the question we're seeking to answer. Two weeks ago we began a series, "***Christian Ethics: Learning to Think Christianly about Ethical Dilemmas.***"

A brief review from last time...

Life is filled with decisions that have ethical implications. Here's one we mentioned. Your granddaughter invites you to her wedding. She is marrying a woman. Should you go? Are you sinning if you do? What's the *right* thing to do?

Sometimes the term "right" and "wrong" are confusing. For instance, you're putting replacement shingles on your house. You grab for a hammer and your friend says, no, don't do that. That's the wrong hammer to use, because you're using a finish carpenter's hammer and this is rough carpentry work. That's wrong, he says. Here's the *right* hammer.

But what does *right* and *wrong* mean? Can we overuse (or misuse) the words *right* and *wrong*? When is it appropriate to use those words? When is it inappropriate?

The church is the perfect place to address these kinds of questions. And that's what we're doing in this Sunday evening series. We want to grow in our ability to *think Christianly about ethical decisions and dilemmas.*

Purpose of Series:

This series seeks to provide a biblical framework for addressing ethical challenges facing Christians living in the contemporary world. This series will seek to help believers:

1. Identify and consider several of the key ethical issues facing believers today
2. Be able to respond to ethical issues by applying biblical truth in a Christlike way

Suggested Reading:

-Grudem, Wayne, *Christian Ethics: An Introduction to Biblical Moral Reasoning*, Wheaton: Crossway, 2018.

-ESV Study Bible, appendix, "Biblical Ethics: An Overview"

In this series, we hope to find *answers* to pressing ethical dilemmas. But it's also important to learn to ask *questions*, specifically, the right questions. If all we do is give answers, we're in trouble. Why?

Because next year there will be new dilemmas, and the next year as well. We need to learn to *think Christianly*. One of the ways to do this is through asking questions.

Here's one way we're going to try and grow in this area, through asking the question, "How would someone else approach this ethical dilemma, and why?" For instance, take the question about whether going to your granddaughter's wedding is the right thing to do. How would a secularist approach this ethical dilemma? A Protestant Liberal? A Roman Catholic? A Muslim? A Charismatic? Joseph Fletcher? Joel Osteen?

In our first lesson I mentioned an observation by John Frame, in *The Doctrine of the Christian Life*, "All ethics is religious, even when it tries hard to be secular. In the end, all ethics presupposes ultimate values. It requires allegiance to someone or something that demands devotion and governs all thinking."¹ If that's true, and I believe it is, then if we know what someone values, we can likely predict the ethical choices they will make. More about that later.

Some Definitions to Consider

During our series we're seeking to address some important questions...

1. What is *ethics*?

By dictionary definition, "ethics" is "the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation."² Ethics, then, has to do with determining whether something is right or wrong.

Or is it that simple? Sometimes the dilemma is a dilemma because we are approaching it with only two categories in mind, right versus wrong. Sometime we need more categories, such wise versus unwise (such as when you're picking which hammer to use). Sometimes the question is, is this a matter of right/wrong, or are we dealing with a Christian liberty issue here (for instance, when deciding what clothing is appropriate in the church building)? How do we know which category we're dealing with?

2. What is *Christian ethics*?

Wayne Grudem explains, "Christian ethics is any study that answers the question, 'What does the whole Bible teach us about which acts, attitudes, and personal character traits receive God's approval, and which do not?'" This definition indicates that our study of Christian ethics will be God-centered and Bible-centered."³

This is what we're after in this series, a God-centered, Bible-centered approach to the ethical dilemmas we're encountering.

A Biblical Approach to Ethical Dilemmas

As Christ-followers, we ought to approach ethical questions from a different vantage point than our non-Christian friends. Why would that be? It's because we have an objective basis for approaching

¹ John Frame, *The Doctrine of the Christian Life*, p. 5.

² <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ethic>

³ Wayne Grudem, *Christian Ethics: An Introduction to Biblical Moral Reasoning*, p. 37.

questions of right and wrong, and for that matter, questions of wisdom and Christian liberty too. And what is that objective basis? It's the person and character of God Himself, and the nature of the Book He has given to us.

But knowing who God is, what pleases Him, and knowing what He has said, takes work. Hence, the sub-title of this series, "*Learning to Think **Christianly** about Ethical Dilemmas.*" What does it mean to think Christianly? It means we think like Christ, and for Christ's honor. As we'll see, it also means we think *biblically*, for Christ was a "Man of the Book" (time and time again we hear Him saying, "What do the Scriptures say?").

But how does this happen? It doesn't just happen. It takes work to think Christianly, and this work involves the following steps of action.

1. *To think Christianly, we must resolve to take a Biblical approach when addressing an ethical dilemma.*

*We must develop and apply the **theological pyramid** when we make decisions.* What does that mean? It means that we build our answers upon the foundation of the Bible, then move to exegesis, then biblical theology, then systematic theology, then historical theology (as we look outside the Bible to see what others have said about the issue throughout church history), and then practical theology.

New material...

2. *To think Christianly, we must operate with a correct view of the person and purposes of God Himself.*

When addressing ethical questions, our theology always shows up. That's true for the Muslim, and for Joel Osteen, as much as it is for us. If we know what a person thinks about God, and mankind, and the world around us, we can fairly accurately predict the choices they will make.

This is why it's vital that we possess an accurate understanding of who God is, how He communicates His purposes, who man is, and what sin is.

Therefore, it's vital in a series on ethics that we reflect on the foundational doctrines of what we believe about God, the Scriptures, mankind, sin, and salvation. The more technical terms: Theology Proper, Bibliology, Anthropology, Hamartiology, and Soteriology. Each of these could be a semester length course of its own.

For our purposes, we want to narrow the discussion to this question. What's true regarding this particular doctrine that ought to affect the way we approach the ethical dilemma we're facing?

Theological Proper – the doctrine of God. Who is God? What is He like? What has He done in the past, is He doing in the present, will He do in the future? How does He communicate with us? What pleases Him? And here's the key question, for our purposes. What's true regarding God that ought to affect the way we approach this particular ethical dilemma?

Bibliology – the doctrine of the Scriptures. Bibliology answers the question, "How does God speak to us?"

Anthropology – the doctrine of man. Who is man? Where did he come from? Why is he here? What, if anything, makes him different from other living beings in this world?

Hamartiology – the doctrine of sin. What is sin? What makes something right or wrong, and how do we know? Who makes this determination? Are there consequences?

Soteriology – the doctrine of salvation, which addresses the question, "Is there a solution for man's problem with sin?" Christianity has a clear soteriology, and says that God has provided the remedy for man's problem of sin, and the remedy is His Son, and His work on the cross. But other religions have their version of soteriology too.

What I'm about to say next may surprise you, but it's true. All religions, in fact, all *people* have a theology proper, a bibliology, an anthropology, a hamartiology, and a soteriology. This even includes the non-religious, even the atheist. Everyone has an answer to these questions, and their answers have a direct bearing on how they approach ethical decisions.

Let's demonstrate this briefly, first from the Scriptures, and then we'll move to some contemporary examples. In the Bible the people of God encountered a couple of powerful religious influences. In the Old Testament, there was **Baal**. In the New Testament, it was **Roman polytheism**.

Suppose you lived in Israel in the eighth century BC, as did Hosea, for instance. You had neighbors who worshipped Baal. How would your neighbor approach ethics? Suppose you lived in Rome in AD 60. How would your Roman neighbor decide what was right and wrong?

We don't have time to do an exhaustive study of these religions, but I want to hit some key points to demonstrate how beliefs affect ethics.

A worshipper of Baal

Theological Proper – Who is God? A Baal worshipper believes there are many gods, most of them fairly regional. Baal was one of the top deities. He was the storm god and bringer of rain. According to one Bible dictionary, "Baal was recognized as sustaining the fertility of crops, animals, and people. His followers often believed that sexual acts performed in his temple would boost Baal's sexual prowess, and thus contribute to his work in increasing fertility."⁴

Bibliology – How does God speak to us? To discern the will of Baal, you might sacrifice an animal, and the priest would take an internal organ, and examine it. You would use "the quiver of the liver" to find out the purposes of your god.

Anthropology – What is man? Man is able to "boost Baal's sexual prowess." How? By engaging in sexual activity with a priest or priestess at the local temple.

Hamartiology – What is sin? In Baal worship, sexual activity isn't sinful, but is actually a way to worship Baal and get what you want from him.

Soteriology – What is salvation? Salvation is the good life now, good crops, lots of healthy kids. And Baal, and specifically, keeping Baal happy, is the key to all this.

A worshipper of the Roman gods

Theological Proper – Who is God? There are many gods, not just one. I found this interesting statement, "Roman religion involved cult worship. Approval from the gods did not depend on a person's behavior, but on accurate observance of religious rituals."⁵

Bibliology – How does God speak to us? Through the priests. They would observe natural phenomena, such as lightning or birds in flight, or read the entrails of sacrificed animals.

Anthropology – What is man? Influenced by Greek thinking, the spirit mattered, but the body did not. The spirit was considered good, but the flesh was a bondage.

Hamartiology – What is sin? There really isn't anything called sin. The goal is to keep the many gods happy with you and each other, which results in the good life for you. In terms of sexuality, it's fine to be married and have someone on the side, because the physical doesn't really matter.

⁴ Corduan, W. (2016). [Baal](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, L. Wentz, E. Ritzema, & W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Lexham Press.

⁵ <https://www.pbs.org/empires/romans/empire/worship.html>

Soteriology – What is salvation? Heaven the place where the spirit is set free from the bondage of the body. It didn't really matter what you did with your body since it wouldn't last anyway.

A Muslim

Theological Proper – Who is God? He is Allah, and is all powerful and all knowing. He hates idolatry and polytheism (which is what Christianity is, the worship of three gods).

Bibliology – How does God speak to us? Through the prophets

Anthropology – What is man? Man is created in God's image.

Hamartiology – What is sin? Anything that goes against the commands of Allah.

Soteriology – What is salvation? Salvation from sin is not necessary, so Jesus' death on the cross was not necessary. People are saved by the will of Allah through obedience to his law. So doing good is very important.

So a good Muslim might emphasize moral purity, but for a different motivation when compared to Christianity.

Joel Osteen

Theological Proper – Who is God? While the doctrinal statement says many things that are true, in reality, God exists for you. Life is about you, and your potential.

Bibliology – How does God speak to us? He promotes a word-faith approach, name it-claim it. Osteen writes, "We have to conceive it on the inside before we're ever going to receive it on the outside. If you don't think you can have something good, then you never will."⁶

Anthropology – What is man? His book titles answer the question. *Become a Better You. The Power of I am. Your Best Life Now. I Declare: 31 Promises to Speak Over Your Life.*

Hamartiology – What is sin? Sin is essentially not believing in yourself.

Soteriology – What is salvation? According to his website, "We believe that salvation is found by placing our faith in what Jesus did for us on the cross. We believe Jesus rose from the dead and is coming again."⁷ In reality, however, what matters is the good life now, and this is up to you.

So there's a sample of what others believe, and how those beliefs might affect an ethical decision. Again, what we believe is the basis for what we do. Beliefs determine ethics.

Now it's time for the question, so what do I believe? We could take months to answer this question, but let's do it in a couple of minutes.

What I Believe

Theological Proper – the doctrine of God. Who is God? He is the Creator of everything. All things are from Him, through Him, and to Him. He is a triune God, and has existed eternally as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, who are equal in essence, but distinct in function. That statement has great significance when it comes to matters of gender and sexuality.

Bibliology – How does God speak to us? Through creation, which is often called general revelation. Through the Scriptures, His special revelation, in which He has given us everything we need for life and godliness. And through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁶ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Joel-Osteen.html>

⁷ <https://www.joelosteen.com/our-ministry/what-we-believe>

Anthropology – the doctrine of man. Man is created in the image of God, male and female. We exist for God, for His purposes, to reflect His likeness, to care for His world, to serve and enjoy Him.

Hamartiology –What is sin? Sin is displeasing God. The Bible teaches that we have inherited a sin nature from Adam, and enter this world cut off from God. Then from birth, we immediately begin to go our own way, and experience the consequences of sin.

Soteriology – Is there a solution for man’s problem with sin? Praise God, yes! Christianity has a clear soteriology, and says that God has provided the remedy for man’s problem of sin, and the remedy is His Son, and His work on the cross. We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. And once saved, we joyfully live for the glory of God alone.

Application: Let’s put this into practice with an ethical decision. Should we go to our granddaughter’s wedding? Here are some follow-up questions that will help us.

What do I know about the **doctrine of God** that will help me make this decision? I know He is holy and righteous, that He hates sin, for it’s displeasing to Him, and He knows it’s not in our best interest. I know that He is a triune God, and that our male-female distinction is part of how He intends for us to rightly image Him. I know that a “same sex couple marriage” fails to communicate that distinction.

I also know He is loving and merciful and gracious, and calls me to be the same, even towards those who are sinning against Him. How can I best do that in this situation?

What do I know about the doctrine of the Bible? I know that the Bible is God’s Word, that it’s good, good for me, and for my grand-daughter, too. I know I am never to call something “good” that He says is “evil.”

What do I know about the doctrine of the man and sin? I know that I am a sinner, meaning I’m prone to go my own way rather than God’s. So I certainly understand what’s happening in my grand-daughter’s life. I know how much we both need grace.

What do I know about the doctrine of salvation? I know that this is my greatest need, and my grand-daughters, and everyone else’s. Not to live a moral life. But to know Christ, as Lord and Savior. And God freely offers this salvation by His grace, to all who will repent and believe in His Son.

This is how I must view this ethical dilemma, *as an opportunity*. For what? To see the true and living God put the glory of His saving grace on display. What can I do that would most contribute to that end?

There are actually other steps to consider before we’re ready to make the decision. What we’ve done so far is to begin to apply our systematic theology to our ethical decision. But what if our systematic theology is wrong? Think back to the theological pyramid. It’s time to take another look at the various biblical texts that undergird our systematic theology.

3. To think Christianly, we must identify and examine specific Bible passages that address our ethical dilemma. We are looking for biblical instructions and principles that will help us determine what is the most God-pleasing way to think and act in this situation.

Thankfully, God has spoken. He has given us His precious Word, the Bible, and in the Bible He addresses “all things that pertain to life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3). We certainly need the whole Bible, and yet, when it comes to ethical decisions, certain passages are particularly helpful. So we want to explore these first. Then, we move to other passages that address our question in a more direct fashion.

The key texts include:

- The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20, Deuteronomy 5)
- The book of Proverbs, which gives us another category, “wise” versus “unwise”
- Jesus’ sermon on the mount (Matthew 5-7)
- New Testament “one another” commands, especially “Love one another”
- Christian liberty passages (Romans 14-15; 1 Corinthians 8-10)
- The book of Ephesians, which provides a concise framework for approaching ethics
- Ephesians 5:1-5, which shows us in specific terms how to deal with sexual sin

The Ten Commandments

When it comes to ethics, an important place to begin is the **Ten Commandments**. I’ve preached on the Ten Commandments before, one per message, and as a whole (note: My Exodus 20 transcript from 1997 is missing; here is my preaching outline).

Exodus 20 "The Ten Commandments"

- I. The Ten Commandments show us what God is like.
 - A. He is a revealing God (1).
 - B. He is a personal God (2).
 - C. He is a redeeming God (2).
- II. The Ten Commandments show us what God expects.
 - A. Commands #1-4 deal with our relationship with Him.
 - #1 He is exclusive (so, no other gods).
 - #2 He is unique (so, no images).
 - #3 He is holy (so, no profanity).
 - #4 He is the Creator (so, remember the sabbath).
 - B. Commands #5-10 deal with our relationships with others.
 - #5 He is pro-authority (so, honor your parents).
 - #6 He is pro-life (so, no murder).
 - #7 He is pro-family (so, no adultery).
 - #8 He is sufficient (so, no stealing).
 - #9 He is the truth (so, no deceiving).
 - #10 He is worthy (so, no coveting things).

It’s noteworthy that in his book *Christian Ethics*, Wayne Grudem uses the Ten Commandments as the lens through which he looks at the subject of ethics. Here is his table of contents. Notice how he takes the Ten Commandments one by one, and relates each to a significant ethical dilemma.

Part 1: Introduction

1. Introduction to Christian Ethics
2. The Ultimate Basis for Ethics: The Moral Character of God
3. Our Source of Ethical Standards: The Bible
4. The Goal of Ethics: Living for the Glory of God
5. The Joys and Blessings of Obedience to God and the Harmful Consequences of Sin
6. How to Know God’s Will: Factors to Consider in Making Ethical Decisions
7. Christians Will Never Have to Choose the “Lesser Sin”
8. How Should Christians Use the Old Testament for Ethical Guidance?

Part 2: Protecting God's Honor

“You shall have no other gods before me.”

9. No Other Gods
10. No Carved Images
11. Purity of Speech
12. Lying and Telling the Truth
13. The Sabbath Commandment

Part 3: Protecting Human Authority

“Honor your father and your mother.”

14. Authority of Parents
15. Equality and Leadership in Marriage
16. Civil Government
17. Other Authorities

Part 4: Protecting Human Life

“You shall not murder.”

18. Capital Punishment
19. War
20. Self-Defense
21. Abortion
22. Euthanasia
23. Suicide
24. Aging and Death
25. Racial Discrimination
26. Health
27. Alcohol and Drugs

Part 5: Protecting Marriage

“You shall not commit adultery.”

28. Marriage
29. Birth Control
30. Infertility, Reproductive Technology, and Adoption
31. Pornography
32. Divorce and Remarriage
33. Homosexuality and Transgenderism

Part 6: Protecting Property

“You shall not steal.”

34. Property: The Goodness and Necessity of Private Ownership of Property
35. Work, Rest, Vacations, and Retirement
36. Increasing Prosperity: Is More Prosperity a Good Thing?
37. Poverty and Wealth
38. Personal Financial Stewardship

- 39. Borrowing, Lending, and the Question of Debt
- 40. Business Ethics
- 41. Stewardship of the Environment

Part 7: Protecting Purity of Heart

“You shall not covet.”

- 42. Purity of Heart

It’s worth noting how Grudem uses the term “protecting.” That’s what God does in the Ten Commandments. He didn’t give these commands merely to restrict (that’s a negative), but protect (that’s positive). What do they protect? They protect God’s honor, human authority, human life, marriage, property, and the purity of heart.

Discuss: How should that word “protect” affect the way we approach an ethical dilemma?
Now let’s move to another key biblical text pertaining to ethics...

The book of Proverbs

Proverbs gives us another vital category, “wise” versus “unwise.”. It’s not law, but wisdom literature. It’s not “Thus says the Lord,” but “What’s the wisest way to respond in this situation?”

See examples:

Proverbs 4:10–11 “Hear, my son, and accept my words, that the years of your life may be many. I have taught you the way of wisdom; I have led you in the paths of uprightness.”

Proverbs 5:7–9 “And now, O sons, listen to me, and do not depart from the words of my mouth. Keep your way far from her, and do not go near the door of her house, ⁹ lest you give your honor to others and your years to the merciless.” Is it wrong for a man to walk down a certain street at night, near the home of a certain woman? No, but it certainly isn’t wise.

Proverbs 6:6–11 “Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise...How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? ¹⁰ A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, ¹¹ and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man.” Is it wrong to sleep in until 10:30 in the morning? No, it’s not morally wrong. But it’s not wise.

Conclusion: Life is filled with wisdom issues. This should prompt us to ask a key question. Am I facing a right/wrong ethical dilemma, or a wise/unwise situation?

Jesus’ sermon on the mount (Matthew 5-7)

In this sermon Jesus gives essential “Kingdom Living 101.” He makes it clear how His followers are to live. The standard is certainly high, and prepares us for what follows in Matthew 8-28, namely, His redemptive work on the cross.

Note the progression. Jesus starts with the beatitudes and similitudes. Then He moves to concrete examples of ethical situations, such as lust, divorce, anger, etc.

[see transcripts; Matthew 5:1-3; etc]

New Testament “one another” commands, especially “Love one another”

[see transcripts]

Christian liberty passages (Romans 14-15; 1 Corinthians 8-10)

[see transcripts]

The book of Ephesians

Ephesus provides a concise framework for approaching ethics.

Ephesians 5:1-5, which shows us in specific terms how to deal with sexual sin

[see transcript “Straight Talk about Overcoming Sexual Sin”]

4. *To think Christianly, we must recognize that the Bible provides us with four categories (and there may be others) that pertain to decision-making.* Not all decisions are created equal. Specifically, there are **moral** issues, **wisdom** issues, **Christian liberty** issues, and **preference/perspective** issues.

A. Moral issues (where the options are right versus wrong): Use the Ten Commandments to show the divine, objective standard for whether something is right or wrong.

1 Samuel 12:23 Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you, and I will instruct you in the good and the **right way**.

2 Chronicles 28:1 “Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And he did not do what was **right** in the eyes of the LORD, as his father David had done.”

B. Wisdom issues (where the options are wise versus unwise): Use the book of Proverbs

C. Christian liberties issues (where both options may be right depending on timing and maturity): Use Romans 14-15

D. Preference/personal perspective issues (such as, “Now that’s the right way to cook a steak, medium well!”)

Esther 8:5 “And she said, “If it please the king, and if I have found favor in his sight, and if the thing **seems right** before the king, and I am pleasing in his eyes, let an order be written to revoke the letters devised by Haman the Agagite, the son of Hammedatha, which he wrote to destroy the Jews who are in all the provinces of the king.”

To do: Develop a “hierarchy of beliefs”

5. *To think Christianly, we must develop and apply a biblical model for decision-making.*

-Utilize the decision-making model provided by Professor James Grier (found in the WBC Counseling Training track 2)

-Encourage caution regarding the traditional model which sees every decision as hitting the bulls-eye in a target. A more biblical approach is to view decision-making as a field with a fence around it.

6. *To think Christianly, we must develop summary, biblical principles that help us when facing ethical decisions.*

Here are some examples.

-Our theology determines our ethics (Exodus 20).

-Character matters (1 Tim 3).

-What would Jesus do? = What does the Bible say?

-When the Bible is not clear, we are free to do the loving thing.

7. *To think Christianly, we must seek to apply biblical principles to our contemporary ethical dilemmas.*

In other words, if a decision has to be made, then let's prayerfully make it. We must act.

So, what should we do when...?

-When we are offered a tax break to do something unethical?

-When government establishes laws that make it illegal to counsel someone regarding sexual orientation, discipline our children, call homosexuality sin, etc?

-When dealing with lawsuits?

-When deciding how to spend money (Would Jesus drive a Cadillac?)?

-When a church decides to call a woman to be its pastor?

-When a political candidate attends a church service?

What contribution does our supplemental reading add to our understanding of Christian ethics?

Participants will discuss during class time (as well as in an online chat format) highlights from the following required texts:

-Grudem, Wayne, *Christian Ethics: An Introduction to Biblical Moral Reasoning*, Wheaton: Crossway, 2018.

-Trueman, Carl R., *Strange New World: How Thinkers and Activists Redefined Identity and Sparked the Sexual Revolution*, Wheaton: Crossway, 2022.

-ACBC Code of Conduct

How do we take a biblical approach to addressing various contemporary ethical challenges?

Use case studies: Have participants work on the following case studies. They will do this work initially on their own, and then as a group project, which will then become a class presentation.

Case Study #1: A church member approaches you (a church leader) and says, "Pastor, as you know election day is coming. I'm concerned about the direction our country is going. I'd like to hand out these voter guides this coming Sunday after the service. I'd also like to make an announcement during the service inviting people to a political rally this Tuesday. Would that be possible? And by the way, I think it would go a long way if you would put your influence behind this."

- How will you respond to this person? Will you approach this as a moral issue, a wisdom issue, a Christian liberties issue, or a preference/personal perspective issue? Or is it a combination of issues?
- What passages of scripture provide guidance for this situation?
- What biblical principles might be helpful?
- What lessons from church history, from other people's experience, from my own experience, might be helpful to consider?
- Consider this situation from the perspective of other ethical models. How would a Protestant Liberal decide what to do in this situation? A Roman Catholic? A Muslim? A Charismatic? A Secularist? Joseph Fletcher? Joel Osteen?

Case Study #2: A young woman approaches you after the service one Sunday. You have never met her before. She has come at the invitation of a friend who is a member of the church. She says through her sobs, "I'm in trouble and I don't know what to do. I'm a pre-med student and have been planning to being medical school in the fall. It's been my dream for years to be a doctor. But I just found out that I'm pregnant. I've already made an appointment to get an abortion. After all, the timing is just not right for a baby. Surely, God will understand. At least, that's what I've been thinking. But after coming to church today, I'm really confused. What should I do?"

- How will you respond to this person? Will you approach this as a moral issue, a wisdom issue, a Christian liberties issue, or a preference/personal perspective issue? Or is it a combination of issues?
- What does she need most from you, and how will you address this?
- What passages of scripture provide guidance for this situation?
- What biblical principles might be helpful?
- What lessons from church history, from other people's experience, from my own experience, might be helpful to consider?
- Consider this situation from the perspective of other ethical models. How would a Protestant Liberal decide what to do in this situation? A Roman Catholic? A Muslim? A Charismatic? A Secularist? Joseph Fletcher? Joel Osteen?

Case Study #3: [To be submitted by the students???)

- How will you respond to this person? Will you approach this as a moral issue, a wisdom issue, a Christian liberties issue, or a preference/personal perspective issue? Or is it a combination of issues?
- What does she need most from you, and how will you address this?
- What passages of scripture provide guidance for this situation?
- What biblical principles might be helpful?
- What lessons from church history, from other people's experience, from my own experience, might be helpful to consider?
- Consider this situation from the perspective of other ethical models. How would a Protestant Liberal decide what to do in this situation? A Roman Catholic? A Muslim? A Charismatic? A Secularist? Joseph Fletcher? Joel Osteen?