

“Well, It Depends”

by Bill Crews

Is it wrong to file a false insurance claim? Is it wrong to take items from a store without paying for them?

Is it wrong to cheat on a school assignment or classroom exam? Should you find a purse or a billfold with money in them, must you return them to the owners? What should you do if you return home from a shopping trip and discover that a clerk has given you ten dollars instead of five dollars in the change? Is it right to take home merchandise, tools, equipment or other items from your company without permission?

Do you know that many people, in answering such questions, would begin by saying, “**Well, it depends ...**”?

The answers will not be forthright and unequivocal. People are becoming very hesitant about labeling anything as wrong, or a crime, or a sin. Because they want to justify themselves and others, because they are conforming to the tide of unethical conduct which surrounds them, because they have succumbed to the philosophy of “situation ethics.”

“Situation ethics,” known also as “relativism,” says that truth is **never absolute** (definite, fixed, unchanging), but **relative** (subject to change, modification, appeal). A thing can never be said, out and out, to be wrong, or a crime, or a sin. The situation or the circumstances have to be considered, and what might ordinarily be wrong becomes right. It is simply the devil’s tool and a way for man to justify his conduct and salve his conscience. No wonder that so many fence-straddling and spineless Americans are remarking, “**Who can say what is right or wrong? Even the Bible says, ‘Judge not.’**”

Right and wrong, good and evil, truth and error are still determined by the teaching of God’s word.

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