

Messenger Of Truth

"Holding forth the word of life" (Phil. 2:16).

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Extremes

"Extremes are dangerous." – Jonathan Mayhew

"Our age knows nothing but reaction, and leaps from one extreme to another." – Reinhold Niebuhr

"In everything the middle course is best; all things in excess bring trouble." – Plautus

"Who can be patient in extremes?" – William Shakespeare

"Extremes meet and there is no better example than the haughtiness of humility." – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Centuries ago Scripture gave a clear warning to the children of Israel, "Therefore you shall be careful to do as the Lord your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left" (Deut. 5:32; cf. 17:11,20).

In facing religious ideas and concepts, it is important that we be cautious that we don't listen to those who go to extremes. Webster defines such as "going to great or exaggerated lengths," "situated at the farthest point from a center."

We are on a strait path that leads to life; one that is narrow and constrictive (Matt. 7:13-14). But what remains unseen are the ditches on either side of this path. And yes, there are ditches to the left and to the right. And in those ditches we find the ugliness of intolerance.

There are some who apparently think that God has granted them extreme positions. Our Lord told Peter, "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16:19). So man assumes he can bind his edicts upon men, or he can loose the very commands of God. It is sad to see brethren given to such extremes, and yet invoking the name of God.

Many no doubt are familiar with the concept of the pendulum. In effect, it is a weight that hangs from a pivot that allows it to swing in either direction. As it relates to views that brethren hold on religious subjects, quite often they may be prone to swing the pendulum in one direction. But perhaps later, choose to swing it to the opposite extreme. A centered approach or view seems out of the question.

It is troubling to see good folks caught in the extremes of religious views. The tragedy in this is that they most likely had "help" in adopting their extreme position.

A balanced approach to Scripture is of paramount importance. We cannot afford to turn to the right or to the left, but stay on that strait path that leads to life.