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Exposing the Liberal Lie: What the Bible Says About Political Correctness

by Jim Alexander

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Chapter Six:

Ephraim Is Joined To Idols; Leave Him Alone!

Revelation 2:1-6 -- (Jesus speaking) *"To the angel of the church of Ephesus write," "These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary. Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place -- unless you repent. But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.""*

The book of Revelation opens with this rather peculiar letter from the Lord Jesus to the believers in Ephesus. It is peculiar in that, in this letter, the Lord Jesus commends the Ephesian Christians for being **intolerant** of the Nicolaitans. Now, the word **intolerant** doesn't appear in this letter in the actual Greek, although it is strictly implied via the text. The word the NKJV translates as "bear" in verse two (the NASB renders it "endure"; the NIV as "tolerate") is the Greek word *bastazo*, meaning to **bear** or **endure**. Verse six emphatically states that the Ephesian believers **hate** the practices of the Nicolaitans, and surprisingly (not surprising to Christians familiar with God's word, but possibly to those of the world who've never had the predisposition to actually read it), they are commended by the Lord Jesus for this; *"But you have this in your favor"* (NIV) (or *"Yet this you do have"* -- NASB), certainly sounds like commendation to me. The Lord even goes on to add that **He** hates them (*"the deeds of the Nicolaitans"*), putting the Ephesian believers in fine company.

The letter to the church in Thyatira, which closes chapter two, also warrants further investigation relating to a similar peculiarity. Here, the Lord Jesus reprehends the believers in Thyatira for *"tolerating"* a sinful woman.

Revelation 2:20 -- (Jesus speaking) *"Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols."*

The word here translated in the NKJV as *allow* is the Greek word *eao*, meaning to **let be**, **permit**, or **leave alone** (The NIV translates it as "tolerate"). Again, substituting these variations of translation into the actual passage, it can be ascertained that the Thyatirans were indeed **tolerating** this sinful woman's behavior. Here, the Lord Jesus censures the Thyatirans for this act of **tolerance**.

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In the first instance we see the Lord commending those who are intolerant of wickedness, while in the second, admonishing those who tolerate it. This surely flies in the face of the politically correct notion of "tolerance for all" espoused by compassionate and caring liberals from across the land. One of the few sins worthy of reproach in the eyes of the liberal is the "sin" of **intolerance**: "Thou darest not be intolerant of thy liberal brother's or sister's depravities." But is **intolerance** a sin according to God? From the previous passages in Revelation chapter two, it would appear not. To the contrary, these passages seem to indicate that being tolerant of sin is itself a sin, and intolerance toward sin is something commendable among those who acknowledge the Savior.

In Numbers, chapter twenty-five, the word of God likewise commends Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, for the zeal he demonstrated in dealing with those who had committed idolatry in the camp.

Numbers 25:1-13 -- *Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the LORD, out in the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel." So Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal of Peor." And indeed, one of the children of Israel came and presented to his brethren a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Now when Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand; and he went after the man of Israel into the tent and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her body. So the plague was stopped among the children of Israel. And those who died in the plague were twenty-four thousand. Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My zeal. Therefore say, 'Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace; and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel.'"*

"He was zealous for his God...." Hardly an act of **tolerance**, nonetheless highly commended by the LORD God. **"And it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel."**

But, just what is **intolerance**? From these passages in the word of God, it is obviously not the heinous malfeasance liberals pretypify it to be. One with an **intolerance** to heat is one who cannot **endure** higher temperatures. One with an **intolerance** toward beliefs, behaviors or attitudes is one who cannot **endure**, or very likely **accept** such beliefs, behaviors and attitudes -- as in the case of the Ephesian believers who were **"intolerant"** of the acts of the Nicolaitans (and commended for it by our Lord). Christians are frequently condemned as being **intolerant** of persons who exercise a blatant, often blasphemous disrespect for their Savior and God, generally as evidenced through wanton disregard for His statues and decrees. How about liberals, though? Are **they** ever construed as **intolerant**?

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"Absolutely not! Liberals tolerate all kinds of behavior, no matter how degenerate or debauched it is. They're the most tolerant, receptive, open-minded creatures on the face of the planet." Oh? Are they?! Let us look more closely at the reverse side of the coin. How many liberals do you know who are tolerant of evangelical Christianity and the code of morality it advocates -- the virtue of chastity before marriage -- a woman's submission to her husband -- homosexuality regarded as sin -- the utilization of natural resources, organic and inorganic, for the welfare and betterment of mankind, not the other way around -- capital punishment -- parent's rights to corporally discipline their children -- active, pro-Christian involvement in politics -- prayer or the reading of God's word in public schools -- the supposition that one who doesn't work should not eat?

Oh, so it's okay for **them** to be intolerant of the beliefs, behaviors and attitudes **they** find offensive, only no one better dare to feel or voice disagreement with any of the godlessly liberal pet agendas **they** support. That kind of intolerance isn't allowed. Specifically, as far as liberals are concerned, the greatest intolerance is the kind Christians exhibit when they declare their God the only God, and His way the only way. Few things irritate the "open-minded" liberal more than a declaration of the absolute sovereignty of a one, true God (as previously illustrated in chapter four of this volume).

What does the word of God say about **intolerance**? As already shown in Revelation and Numbers, the Bible's view is seemingly irreconcilable to political correctness: Intolerance of sin is commended, while tolerance of sin is reproached.

Amos 5:15 -- *Hate evil, love good; Establish justice in the gate.*

Again, one who *hates* evil is hardly **tolerant** of it.

Romans 12:9 -- *Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.*

I Thessalonians 5:21-22 -- *Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.*

Avoidance of evil is similarly lacking a **toleration** of it.

I Timothy 4:7 -- *But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness.*

II Timothy 3:1-5 -- *But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!*

Titus 3:10-11 -- *Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.*

Have nothing to do with him. Such a man is warped and sinful. (NIV) If any uttered these words about any of the purveyors of perversion prevalent today, they'd most certainly be labeled as "intolerant", and also, more likely than not, become the targets of splenetic attack.

II John 9-11 -- *Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of*

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Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.

Do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds. Again, shades of Leviticus 19:17 are evident in this passage, which had, most likely, been written a full two thousand years after it.

II Chronicles 19:2 -- (Jehu the seer speaking to King Jehoshaphat) *"Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD? Therefore the wrath of the LORD is upon you."*

Here we see the wrath of the LORD proclaimed upon King Jehoshaphat for helping the wicked and loving (or *making alliances with*) those who hate the LORD (see II Chronicles 20:35-37). It is yet another example of sharing in the guilt of one whose sins one condones. Indeed, there is much that can be said about this, and it will be covered at greater length in chapter seventeen of this volume.

But, what is the LORD God's attitude, personally, toward sinful behavior? Is God **tolerant** of sin or sinner? What does His word reveal to us in this regard?

Leviticus 24:13-16 -- *Then the LORD said to Moses: "Take the blasphemer outside the camp. All those who heard him are to lay their hands on his head, and the entire assembly is to stone him. Say to the Israelites: 'If anyone curses his God, he will be held responsible; anyone who blasphemes the name of the LORD must be put to death. The entire assembly must stone him. Whether an alien or native-born, when he blasphemes the Name, he must be put to death.'"*
(NIV)

So much for free speech, at least where blasphemy is concerned. Either the LORD God isn't familiar with the first amendment to the *United States Constitution* or He just isn't very punctilious about it. **"Stone the blasphemer"**?! This certainly isn't the way one exhibits a **toleration** of free speech. Surely, this person (the blasphemer) wasn't to be granted federal money for his unholy utterances?!?! **"He must be put to death"** is similarly quite unambiguous; there isn't a great deal of room here for debate. But what of God's personal feelings toward sin and sinner? (Again -- as I did in [chapter three](#) of this volume -- I must distinguish between **repentant** and **unrepentant** sinners; those referred to here are **unrepentant**.) Aside from blasphemy, does God tolerate sin? (I know it's a stupid question, but I ask it for the sake of those liberals out there who aren't quite sure, having absorbed the world's lies for so long they are unable to distinguish the real God of the Bible from their own, imagined, all-tolerant one.)

Psalm 5:4-6 -- (of David) *For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, Nor shall evil dwell with You. The boastful shall not stand in Your sight; You hate all workers of iniquity. You shall destroy those who speak falsehood; The LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.*

Normally, the above passage would suffice alone, as it is perfectly apparent from it that the LORD God *hates* and *abhors* all who do wrong (again, I must stress: All who do wrong **unrepentantly**), and that such can never dwell with, or stand in His presence. However, as there may be one or two out there who still refuse to acknowledge this, I am compelled to repetitively underscore this divine posture so that it may be clear for all.

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Proverbs 6:16-19 -- *There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to Him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers. (NIV)*

Proverbs 11:20 -- *Those who are of a perverse heart are an abomination to the LORD, But the blameless in their ways are His delight.*

Proverbs 12:22 -- *Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal truthfully are His delight.*

Proverbs 15:8-9 -- *The LORD detests the sacrifice of the wicked, but the prayer of the upright pleases Him. The LORD detests the way of the wicked but He loves those who pursue righteousness. (NIV)*

Proverbs 15:26 -- *The LORD detests the thoughts of the wicked, but those of the pure are pleasing to Him. (NIV)*

Proverbs 15:29 -- *The LORD is far from the wicked, But He hears the prayer of the righteous.*

Proverbs 16:5 -- *Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; Though they join forces, none will go unpunished.*

Zechariah 8:17 -- (the LORD speaking) *"Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor; And do not love a false oath. For all these are things that I hate," Says the LORD."*

1 Peter 3:12 -- (quoting from Psalm 34:15-16) *"For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil."*

Psalms 11:4-6 -- (of David) *The LORD is in His holy temple; the LORD is on His heavenly throne. He observes the sons of men; His eyes examine them. The LORD examines the righteous, but the wicked and those who love violence His soul hates. On the wicked He will rain fiery coals and burning sulfur; a scorching wind will be their lot. (NIV)*

Apparently God understands we're a rather thick lot and generally don't get the picture the first, or even the fifteenth time around, so He made sure there'd be no misunderstanding about this: God hates all who do wrong.

And what about Jesus? What is the Lord's attitude toward sin and sinner? In Matthew 23:33, the Lord calls the Pharisees and teachers of the law "snakes" and "vipers". Are these the words of a tame and passive Lord, tolerant of all? In Mark, chapter six, the Lord Jesus instructs His apostles: "And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave, as a testimony against them." (Mark 6:11)(NIV) This charge is repeated twice in the parallel passages of Matthew 10:14 and Luke 9:5, as well as a fourth time in Luke 10:10-12.

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Luke 10:10-12 -- (Jesus speaking) *"But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God is near.' I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town."* (NIV)

These do not strike me as words of **toleration**: **"Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you."** Where is the meek and mild, Milquetoast Christ of liberal supposition? Surely He is not to be found in the holy Scriptures. And, lest anyone erroneously believes these instructions from the Lord Jesus were nothing more than mere exercise in rhetoric, turn to the thirteenth chapter of the book of Acts for evidence of their actual, literal application.

Acts 13:51 -- *But they [Paul and Barnabas] shook off the dust from their feet against them, and came to Iconium.*

How about the Lord's confrontation with the moneychangers in the temple, as recorded in all four of the gospels (chiefly Matthew 21:12-13, Mark 11:15-17, Luke 19:45-47, John 2:13-16)? This hardly impresses me as the tolerant and gentle Jesus of liberal lore. In Luke, chapter three, verse seven, John the Baptist calls the people who'd been coming out to be baptized by him a *"brood of vipers"*. Like the Lord Jesus, John wasn't interested in making people "feel good about themselves", but rather draw attention to and expose their sin, in order that they might *"bear fruits worthy of repentance"*. (Luke 3:8) Again, as previously stated in chapter three of this volume, the key word here is *repentance*. Whereas many professing Christians today preach tolerance and "feeling good about oneself", it is the exposure and realization of sin that leads to repentance; one who is unaware of his depravity is hardly in a position to repent.

What then are we, as Christians, to do? Luke 6:27-36 and Matthew 5:43-48 both unequivocally teach a **love** of one's enemies. Which is it to be? Love or hate? Is this a contradiction? Clearly not, as the word of God is perfect, it is impossible for it to contradict itself. What then can this mean? Perhaps a study of the actual Greek words used here will shed more light on this matter.

The Greek word translated as *love* in the passages referred to from both Luke six and Matthew five is the word *agapao*, which means **to love in a social or moral sense**. It is the same word used in Matthew 22:37, as well as in its parallel passage of Mark 12:30, where Jesus answered an expert in the law, saying: *"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."* (Matthew 22:37) This is **not** to imply that one's love for God should be equated with one's love for one's enemies. Indeed, the passage quoted above attaches several qualifiers, in that one's **love** for God must be with **all one's heart, soul and mind**. These qualifiers were not affixed to Christ's charge that believers *"love their enemies"*. This passage does indicate, however, that one's love for God should be a **moral** love, as opposed to an **affectionate** or **brotherly** love.

The word used indicative of one's *love* for one's enemies is not the Greek word *etheleo*, meaning **to prefer** or **to be inclined towards**. (This is the Greek word used in Mark 12:38, where the Lord Jesus warns: *"Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and be greeted in the market places...."* (NIV) Nor is it the Greek word *phileo*, meaning **to be a friend** or **to have affection for**. (This is the Greek word used in Titus 3:15, where the Apostle Paul writes: *Greet those who love us in the faith.* It is also the same word used in the eleventh and twentieth chapters of the gospel of John, where it is used to describe Jesus' love for Lazarus on the occasion of Lazarus' death, where the Jews observe of Jesus' **affection** for Lazarus: *"See how He loved him!"* -- John 11:36, and later of Jesus' love for the Apostle John: *Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved....* -- John

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20:2. It is also the word used by the Lord in Revelation 3:19, where He declares: "*As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.*" Nor is it the Greek word *philadelphia*, meaning **fraternal affection** or **brotherly love**. (This is the Greek word used by the Apostle Peter in his first epistle where he writes: *Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren...*; the second word translated as *love* in this passage [see below] is *agapao*, where Peter continues from above: *...love one another fervently with a pure heart.* (1 Peter 1:22)) Nor is it the Greek word *philanthropia*, meaning **love for mankind** or **benevolence**. (This is the Greek word used in Titus 3:4, where Paul writes: *But when the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared....*)

Therein lies the answer: Christ's command that His followers *love* their enemies is **not** an adjuration for a **brotherly, affectionate** or **benevolent love**, nor is it a directive that one have a **preference for** or an **inclination toward** one's enemies -- any which would certainly be in contradiction to the numerous passages throughout the whole of Scripture (both Old and New Testaments), which clearly demonstrate God's hatred of any and all displays of unrepentant sin -- it is a call to love **morally** or **socially**. In this there is no contradiction. We, as Christians, are called to love our enemies as we would love any being, in a general, moral sense, not in an affectionate or brotherly manner, as such would be in clear defiance toward God's expressed loathing of such behavior and cause us to **share in their wicked work** (chiefly II John 9-11 and Leviticus 19:17).

How then are we, as Christians, to specifically respond to an arrogant, unrepentant continuance of sin? Are we to follow Christ's lead and that of God the Father, as previously illustrated throughout this chapter, or are we to follow the example of the world and tolerate all? The psalmist David wrote of this when he inquired of the LORD: *LORD, who may dwell in Your sanctuary? Who may live on Your holy hill?* (Psalm 15:1)(NIV) He answered his own question in the following verses, reciting several qualifiers, one of which is he *who despises a vile man but honors those who fear the LORD.* (Psalm 15:4)(NIV) Was David **intolerant**, as well?

Psalm 101:1-8 -- (of David) *I will sing of Your love and justice; to You, O LORD, I will sing praise. I will be careful to lead a blameless life -- when will You come to me? I will walk in my house with blameless heart. I will set before my eyes no vile thing. The deeds of faithless men I hate; they will not cling to me. Men of perverse heart shall be far from me; I will have nothing to do with evil. Whoever slanders his neighbor in secret, him will I put to silence; whoever has haughty eyes and a proud heart, him will I not endure. My eyes will be on the faithful in the land, that they may dwell with me; he whose walk is blameless will minister to me. No one who practices deceit will dwell in my house; no one who speaks falsely will stand in my presence. Every morning I will put to silence all the wicked in the land; I will cut off every evildoer from the city of the LORD.* (NIV)

Psalm 139:21-22 -- (of David) *Do I not hate them, O LORD, who hate You? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them my enemies.*

Was David *tolerant* of those who hated his LORD? It seems not. Today, he'd no doubt be labeled as one of the "intolerant, religious right", but I somehow fail to believe this would have, in any way, disturbed him or caused him to lose any sleep. Psalm ninety-seven declares: *You who love the LORD, hate evil!* (Psalm 97:10)

Proverbs 13:5 -- *A righteous man hates lying, But a wicked man is loathsome and comes to shame.*

Proverbs 14:7 -- *Go from the presence of a foolish man, When you do not*

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perceive him in the lips of knowledge.

That last passage certainly seems to be advocating dissociation. Do other passages from God's word corroborate this instruction? As already illustrated in chapter five, the Old Testament contains an abundance of passages where the Israelites were commanded by God not to make treaties or covenants with their pagan neighbors (chiefly Exodus 23:31-33, 34:10-16, Deuteronomy 20:16-18). The Old Testament also contains several eye-opening examples of how disobedience of these commands was answered by God (chiefly I Samuel 15:1-35, I Kings 11:1-13, Ezra 9 and 10, Nehemiah 10:30, 13:23-28). But, what of the New Testament? Liberals like to imagine that God somehow changed His mind (and character) in the New Testament, and has suddenly now become all-too-tolerant of behavior He'd previously condemned. What does the New Testament teach of fellowship with the unrepentant?

I Corinthians 5:9-13 -- *I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner -- not even to eat with such a person. For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person."*

Romans 16:17 -- *Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.*

II Corinthians 6:14-17 -- *Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people." Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the LORD. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you."*

James 4:4 -- *Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*

Ephesians 5:11-12 -- *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.*

These don't seem to be advocating **tolerance** to me. ***Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.*** (NIV) Today, while it has become fashionable in many circles, particularly throughout the liberal media, to label those who oppose them as "intolerant", those who know the word of God should not vacillate from a condemnation of conduct they know to be iniquitous, and realize that as Christians they should wear this "intolerance of unrepentant sin" label as a badge of honor. Indeed, **intolerance** of wickedness is a sign of true regeneration and a Spirit-filled life.

II Chronicles, chapter thirty-four, relates the account of King Josiah's reformation in the land of Judah. Verses three through seven record how this young king of Judah destroyed the idols and

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purged his land of wickedness. Whereas, had he done this today, Josiah would no doubt find himself the defendant in an unremitting litigation, and a principle target of the profligate Left, the word of God cites Josiah in that *He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, and walked in the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left.* (II Chronicles 34:2)(NIV) Would that the same could be said of us today. For, were we truly sons of our Father in heaven, we, as He, would not take pleasure in those who do wrong, but rebuke them, lest we too become partakers in their guilt.
