**Morality: It’s Relationship to God and Man**

**Introduction**

1. What is morality? How do we know? Where does it come from?
2. What is morality’s relationship to us?
3. How should this cause us to live our lives?

*Morality – conformity to the rules of right conduct; moral quality or character; virtue in sexual matters; a doctrine or system of morals; moral instruction. – (dictionary.com)*

1. Morality’s Relationship to God
2. Morality and free will. (Genesis 39:6-12)

*“How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”* (v. 9)

* Morality only makes sense with free will – Joshua 24:14-15
  + God always makes the distinction between right and wrong – Genesis 2:15-16; Deuteronomy 30:19
* How does God decide? When was morality created? 🡪

1. Morality is defined by God’s nature!

* *“The philosophic argument of whether something is right because God wills it or God wills it because it is right is answered in the biblical perspective that God's expressed will of right is an expression of God's essential and unchanging character. Right does not exist as something apart from God upon which he arbitrarily decides or upon which he stamps his approval.”* (John Trokey – “The Standard of Morality, Truth Magazine)
* God does not decide what is right. He IS right, and He cannot turn one way or the other. (James 1:13)
  + 2 Peter 1:2-4
    - We can have life (spiritual) and be godly through knowing Him, because He IS life and godliness. We can partake in the divine nature because of His promises. This is AFTER escaping the corruption in the world, because that is against the divine nature.
  + 1 John 1:5-7
    - God is light. This is an absolute, just as darkness is an absolute.
    - True light – illumination; making things visible.
    - True darkness – the absence of light.
    - There cannot be darkness with light or light with darkness. It’s one or the other.
    - This is God’s nature.
  + 1 John 2:28-29
    - God IS righteous. Same principle. You cannot PRACTICE unrighteousness and be born of God. Because that is against His divine nature.
* False Standards of Morality
  + Might makes right. (Those in power determine what is right and wrong)
    - *If it’s not against the law it’s not a sin?*
  + Right is determined by the group. (Values clarification, situational ethic, homosexuality, abortion as examples, toleration of different viewpoints, except for the intolerant).
    - *If the people I’m with are okay with it, then it must be right?*
  + Man is the measure. (“I will do as I please.” Cf. Judges 17:6; 21:25)
    - *It seems okay to me?*
  + Right is what brings pleasure. (Epicureans. Hedonism)
    - *How can it be bad when it seems so good?*
  + There is no right. (Antinomianism. “I ought” should be replaced by “I feel”)
    - *It doesn’t matter one way or the other. It’s all relative?*
* All are subjective. Morality is not. (rules of right conduct; doctrine or system; instruction) Morality is objective.
* God defines morality. What does this mean for man? 🡪

1. Morality’s Relationship to Man
2. God created man to be an image of Him.

* Genesis 1:26; Ecclesiastes 12:13
  + We are the only part of creation that can partake in the divine nature (cf. 2 Peter 1:2-4).
  + We do that by keeping God’s commandments, because they are derived from His nature! (cf. Ephesians 5:1)
* Man is incapable of showing himself morality – Jeremiah 10:23
* So Jesus reveals it to us! – Ephesians 4:17-24
  + He is the authority of morality! (cf. Matthew 28:18)

1. As Children of God we have the responsibility to live moral lives! (Genesis 39:6-12)

* 1 Peter 1:13-19
  + God is moral. He defines morality. So you, as children of His, be moral individuals! All summed up in one word, “HOLY!”
  + Because you weren’t redeemed with something immoral, but with *“the precious blood of Christ.”*
* If you fail…
  + It will destroy yourself – 1 John 2:15-17; 3:7-9
  + It will destroy your influence on others – 1 Peter 2:11-12; Matthew 5:13-16

**Conclusion**

1. Morality is defined by God’s nature.
2. It was not chosen or made, it just is.
3. As God’s creation, we are to live moral lives, according to the true moral standard – God’s nature.