

## Principle and its importance

A principle is about values as in love, compassion, humility and justice etc or even hate, arrogance and cruelty etc. A good principle is embracing good values and a bad principle is not.

If you are motivated by bad principles and make it look like you are good and caring then you are lying to others. You should not be trusted.

The fact that people with harmful doctrines (such as the Bible doctrine that God as master of life has the right to order us to kill) may never put them into practice only means they never had to. It is not grounds for praise. Religion readily says that itself about philosophies such as atheism or utilitarianism and it is right that bad teachings not being acted on does not mean they should be tolerated. But that means we can say the same thing about it - it teaches doctrines that would harm and which are to be abhorred even if they never get into a position where they do a lot of damage. You are not a good person but a hypocrite if you will not condemn something bad and wait until it does harm.

People can be on opposite sides and you might think they have opposite moralities. But in fact both sides can have adopted the same moral principles but disagree on how to use the principles. For example, the pro-abortion person and the pro-life person both agree that killing babies in the womb is wrong. It is just that the pro-abortion side is not convinced abortion kills a person and the other side thinks it does. It is the method of using the principles they have the disagreement over. It is important to be able to discern good principles and you can only do that by testing the goodness of your principles. The more people agree on what principles better the more we learn and we learn together.

Too often today, people care more about what you do than what principles you hold. If say religion/politics has bad principles, many people do not mind as long as it gives them money and runs hospitals and schools for them and acts as moral guardian.

With regard to the person who holds to an evil principle that seems to be not put into practice -

#It is bad in itself. It is not called evil for nothing.

#It opens the door to getting practiced.

#Stops the person objecting if others practice it - if they don't want to be a hypocrite.

#Says something about the kind of person that is.

#It seems to do no harm at times. Remember a seems is not good enough.

#It does do harm indirectly and in a non-obvious way.

#Calling it harmless empties the word evil of any meaning. That is another evil principle!

#And if you have a dark principle, you cannot complain if others have dark principles you don't like. It makes you a hypocrite if you challenge somebody for doing evil. They do evil because they practice evil principles.

#Bad principles lead to more bad principles and an openness to many more.

Consider the statement: "Moral principles are not relative but their application is." That looks like relativism. It would be if it meant you must believe that love and justice and mercy are absolute values but you can invent how you apply them. That would be a contradiction. Inventing say how to treat employees fairly contradict the principle of justice. You cannot make it fair for a person with billions to pay his accountant 1 cent per hour. Thus to say the application is relative is to say the principle is relative. It is treating the principle as relative as well. The principles may have to be applied differently according to the best needs. But that is trying to base yourself on the facts and the evidence not on mere opinion.

What if you hold to an evil principle that you cannot put into practice?

It is not about if the principle can be put into action or not. And do not forget, that adopting a bad principle you cannot act upon is an act.

You are no better as a person than the person who has a bad principle that is being or can be acted upon.

If the principle itself cannot be acted upon, it is still real. It is still your principle and your mask will slip and lead to bad example for others.

A principle is about truth. Truth is not about you. Truth is truth no matter how much you want it not to be. Once you oppose principles you become a lie. You automatically make your life a lie and thus lie to others. To seek a middle ground between the truth and the lie is to create a half-truth and a half-truth is a half-lie. Morality is not on your side or anybody's side. It is not about sides. It is not even on God's side. It is what it is. Your need for painkillers does not mean they exist for you or anybody. They just exist. The moral crusaders do think morality is on their side. That is what the notion of a moral God and so on is really about. It is paradoxically immoral to think morality is on your side. The reality is that morality can be bad for you. Moral people often organise their lives to invent ways to stop that happening. They keep away from any situation where they sniff a need for them to sacrifice something big. They pay unskilled people to bandage the sick while they would not do it themselves. Their prayers are pleas that others can make the sacrifices.

Moral principle says if you have no idea of what is objectively moral or what it means then it is objectively moral to make an attempt. You need objective morality and the concept is forced on you even if you say morality is relative – such a saying is unnatural and forced and warped. It is better to guess and live the morality you have for errors will show up in time if it is wrong or needs fixing. Guessing and testing is more important than grounding it or caring or knowing why it is morally correct. Practicing what you understand to be objective morality is a principle and the most foundational and important and basic moral principle of all. If you have to guess the best guess is that morality is about maintaining the well-being of others and yourself.

A good principle and a bad one are not opposites. The bad principle is bad not because it is a lie but because it manipulates the truth and uses the truth to make itself look sensible. Two extremes are not necessarily opposites.