

March 4, 2022

# THE PLUMBLINE

A PUBLICATION OF THE VIRGINIA STATE ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS

## NORTHERN VIRGINIA CONFERENCE 4TH ANNUAL MEN'S RETREAT MARCH 18-19, 2022



Speaker: Rev. Jim McComas  
Director, FWB Family Ministries

**\$75.00**

[Download the flyer here](#)  
[for the schedule and](#)  
[more information!](#)

*See page 2 for details, schedule,  
registration, and contact information!*

# Northern Virginia Men's Retreat

REGISTER HERE BY  
MARCH 4TH

Includes 3 meals, snacks, and lodging; bring personal items and bedding/sleeping bag.

For those who want to reserve a room at the Holiday Inn Express (at personal expense), use the link above.

**RAPIDAN BAPTIST CAMP**  
559 Baptist Camp Drive  
Rochelle, VA

## FRIDAY

Check In: 4 - 6 P.M.  
Evening Meal: 6:00 P.M.  
Service: 7:00 P.M.

Fellowship: Before & After  
Every Service and Meals

## SATURDAY

Breakfast: 7:30 A.M.  
Service: 8:30 A.M.  
Fellowship 9:45 A.M.  
Service: 10:45 A.M.  
Lunch: 12:00 P.M.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT PAUL COLLINS, NORVA CLERK 331 VINE ST.  
HARRISONBURG, VA 22802, VACOLLINS5@GMAIL.COM, 540-271-2074

## VAFWB ON THE CALENDAR

- MARCH 4-5: NORTHERN VIRGINIA TEEN RETREAT AT RAPIDAN BAPTIST CAMP
- MARCH 5: TIDEWATER ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING
- MARCH 6: OPENING SERVICES IN THE NEW BUILDING AT NEW LONDON CHURCH (FORMERLY KING OF KINGS FWB CHURCH, FOREST, VA)
- MARCH 12: JOHN WHEELER, NORTHEASTERN CONFERENCE AT MACEDONIA FWB CHURCH, SALTVILLE.
- MARCH 12: CENTRAL VIRGINIA ASSOC. MEETING
- MARCH 18-19: NORTHERN VIRGINIA MEN'S RETREAT AT RAPIDAN BAPTIST CAMP
- MARCH 27: GO TRAINING AT GREAT BRIDGE FWB CHURCH
- MARCH 30: PR DIRECTOR, PULPIT REVIVAL SERVICE, HOPE FWB CHURCH, PLYMOUTH, NC



# Can Something Right be Wrong?

D. Bruce Barnes

We have heard it said, “Two wrongs don’t make a right.” The Scripture never allows any wrongdoing to be justified, regardless of the outcome. Although wrong is never right, can something right also be wrong?

Since New Testament times, believers have enjoyed Christian liberty. This is the privilege of a believer to direct his own Christian life by conscience in matters that are not moral or in conflict with Scripture. Christian freedom precludes nonessentials being promoted as virtuous. It also discourages the assignment of sin to something not forbidden or commanded in Scripture.

As wonderful as Christian liberty is, it is not an absolute law. Even Christian liberty has certain boundaries between which it operates. Paul establishes four principles that help us understand how Christian liberty works. From Paul’s teachings in I Corinthians, we will characterize these principles by a question.

## 1. Is it Best?

“All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient” (1 Corinthians 6:12a).

Paul is not saying that sinful things are now lawful. He refers to many Jewish restrictions observed in the Old Covenant. It means that some of these old things no longer apply since believers are part of a new covenant in Christ. However, he does not imply that he and his Jewish friends attend the local barbecue buffet and “pig-out” in Christian freedom. Paul says that “all things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient.”

The word expedient means “profitable.” Therefore, many actions may be deemed lawful but not necessarily profitable. Some permissible areas may not be the best when considered among more beneficial pursuits.

Paul challenges us to question ourselves. Are our actions best in Christ, for Christ, and for others, or is it merely self-seeking and self-satisfying? We need to learn how to live in truly best ways, not just allowable. We must ask ourselves the question, is it best?

## 2. Does it Bind?

“All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any” (1 Corinthians 6:12b).

Paul reveals that even lawful actions can control a believer’s life. Such is possible when a person determines to exercise Christian freedom regardless of his actions’ effect. Paul demonstrates the proper attitude. He says that even a lawful action will not bind him if his displaying control better serves the cause of Christ in that action.

Christian liberty allows individuals to make choices about life. Yet sometimes, the cause of Christ might be better served by our showing restraint even in areas permitted by Christian liberty. The dedicated Christian should be ready to give up what is wrong and be prepared to set aside the allowable for something better. Paul emphasizes that he will not let even lawful actions bind his life so that those actions stand in the way of better things happening.

*Cont'd., Can Something Right be Wrong?*

### 3. Does it Build?

“All things are lawful for me, but all things edify not” (1 Corinthians 10:23b).

Paul consistently emphasizes the need for edification. Edification means “to build up.” This is one of the three primary purposes of the church (the others being evangelism and Christian service). Paul indicates that just because an action may be religiously acceptable does not mean it provides the best spiritual structure. Some activities are better than others simply because of the better foundation these provide.

In building a house, a contractor may legally make many choices regarding the quality of the framing and structure. This may encompass the quality of the nails, lumber, and various materials for the edifice and decor. It may meet all the legal building codes when the house is complete; yet it may not possess the inherent quality that another structure exhibits.

Choices within Christian freedom may be acceptable in a legal sense, but some of these preferences may also produce a less sturdy Christian fellowship. Paul reminds us that although many actions fall under the realm of acceptable Christian practice, all do not contribute to edification.

We must analyze our actions and choices based on their benefit to others—not ourselves. As believers in Christ, we no longer live for that which brings personal pleasure. Instead, we live for the edification we can bring to the church and those around us.

### 4. Does it Bless?

“Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31).

The ultimate test of every action is God’s pleasure in it. Do our efforts bless God? Unfortunately, we live in a church culture where seemingly everything goes, and practically any lifestyle is acceptable. The church is pressed to accept the world’s philosophy and standards—all under the name of progress, liberty, or unity. Those not following that mindset are scolded for being too restrictive on issues and for running people off.

Could we counsel God that Christianity would be more effective and that we could reach more souls if only He would make it a little easier on people? Perhaps more people would listen if hell were not so hot or offensive. If Christian living were not so narrow, maybe more people would naturally fit in. What portion of Scripture can we advise God to remove so the church could be more effective in the world?

Such is folly! That which blesses God is obedience to His Word and His will. This was God’s message to Saul through the prophet Samuel. He said, “Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 Samuel 15:22).

Authentic Christian living is not a self-seeking, self-gratifying existence. The faithful Christian life looks beyond personal

*Cont'd., Can Something Right be Wrong?*

convenience to consider the pleasure God takes in our actions. Paul says, "Do all to the glory of God." May the Lord help us to have tender hearts to His truth. May we also be willing to put our desires aside by asking . . .

**Is it best? Does it bind? Does it build? Does it bless?**

**CHURCHES SEEKING PASTORS, YOUTH PASTORS, OR ASSOCIATES**

- Pastoral Search: First Free Will Baptist Church, Richmond, VA; call Bruce Barnes: 757-407-1183 or email [dbrucebarnes@vafwb.org](mailto:dbrucebarnes@vafwb.org).
- Pastoral Search: Genesis Free Will Baptist Church, Kingsport, TN; call Newl Dotson: 276-502-4684 (cell) or 276-546-4400 (work).
- Youth Pastor Search: A Virginia church is seeking a fulltime youth pastor. Call Bruce Barnes: 757-407-1183 or email [dbrucebarnes@vafwb.org](mailto:dbrucebarnes@vafwb.org).
- Associate Search: Unity Free Will Baptist Church, Chesapeake, VA; contact Pastor Earl Sutton at 757-639-5088 or email [suttonle45@gmail.com](mailto:suttonle45@gmail.com).



**While we have your attention...**

**No one wants to think about death**, but death is inevitable. Have you prepared your estate in a way it will benefit your children and the ministries you love? **Free Will Baptist Foundation** has partnered with **Cornerstone Estate Planning** to provide help in this crucial area of life. Contact the Foundation today for more information:



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