

Personal reasons, including recent events in my life, and in the lives of those for whom I care the most, make me wonder if I haven't reached my limit with what it means to be tolerant. I never watch the news anymore, because more times than not, I am either mortified, disgusted, or heartbroken by what I see and hear. I can't help but think that the definition of being tolerant has changed somehow. Does being 'tolerant' also mean turning a blind eye to the things that are wrong? Who decided which behaviors fall into the gray area? Certain topics are black and white, right, and wrong.

I just searched Google to provide the definition of 'tolerant.' The definition that was given said, "Showing willingness to allow the existence of opinions or behavior that one does not necessarily agree with."

When I looked up the definition of the same word in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, there were four different definitions listed for the word 'tolerance', one dealing with the body, and the other was about vegetation. The second definition listed, comparable to the Google definition was, "Sympathy or indulgence for beliefs or practices differing from or conflicting with one's own." A definition listed for the word 'tolerance,' and for 'tolerant' was, "The capacity to endure pain or hardship (endurance, forbearance)."

I have always believed myself to be a tolerant person. Forbearance and endurance are positive attributes, and I believe most would agree that these are strong, solid words on which one can depend on to support their values and principles. I have always had sympathy for the underdog, and I have been willing to listen with an open mind to those who have differing opinions than my own. But if I'm honest, my willingness and indulgence for certain behaviors has waned. Some of these twisted ideals have caused the very pain and hardship I feel forced to endure.

Recently, I was in a discussion with a group of ladies who have the same basic beliefs I do. The subject came up about how so many people ask, "How could God let this happen?" Within a week of news, we see the stories of war, school shootings, murders, drug abuse, domestic violence, tortures, human trafficking, prostitution, pornography, molestation, racial tensions, robbery, suicide, diseases, horrific accidents, fires, natural disasters. Why indeed, would God let this happen?

We unanimously concluded that God did not let these things happen. God has not gone anywhere. He is where he has always been, but we have removed him from our lives. He was removed from schools when I was a child. He has been removed from homes. Some may say he has even been removed from the church. We were given a special gift, a nation blessed by God for all the world to see, and we have blown it, big time.

As I recall, God was specific about giving humans a free will to choose. Aside from the natural disasters, the terrible things I mentioned are a direct result of man's poor choices. They are a direct result of sin. Truly, we can't even blame God for the natural disasters. If you build your house next to the ocean, there's a good chance a storm might come up. If you have planted your farm in Tornado Alley, don't be surprised if a tornado takes out a barn now and then. No, these things aren't God's fault. He has been so very merciful, patient, longsuffering...and dare I say, tolerant?

The scriptures are clear. In the following verses, I see no wiggle room for interpretation. These are all taken from the NKJV, via Biblegateway.com.

2 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!***

I'd say these words are pretty accurate in describing the world we are living in today, wouldn't you? I stand guilty in some of these areas, and I pray for God's forgiveness every day. That's the cool thing about God. He knew we would behave like this, yet he still loves us, and has been beyond tolerant. As despicable as we are, he sacrificed his own son to provide a bridge between us and himself. But notice the last sentence in the scripture above, which I purposely underlined. In my 'personal' opinion, he is telling us to stop this awful behavior and separate ourselves from those who blatantly choose to misbehave and 'deny the power of God.' It is my belief that he is growing less tolerant every day.

In the name of Merriam-Webster's definition of tolerance, I must bring up the subject of those who are trying to make the rest of the world accept their choice of 'identifying' as an alternate gender from the one that God created them to be. If God made you a woman, you're a woman! If he made you a man, you're a man! I also think this has harmed the efforts toward peace when it comes to racial or ethnic biases. A person's skin color or heritage are who God created them to be. He could have made the entire world like a black and white photograph, but instead he created a world full of infinite, glorious, varieties of color. I wholly agree that 'we the people', need to learn to get along with each other, no matter what race or background one comes from. In my opinion, one's sexual preference or orientation does not belong in the Civil Rights arena, at all.

As someone who has personally sought counseling for depression, I understand being confused about who I am in the grand scheme of things. I understand how someone could have problems with their sexuality, which, just like my depression, is more than likely due to hormonal imbalances, home environment, societal environments, parental beliefs, or life choices. I recently heard a commentary that mentioned how there are more surgeries performed to change genders in, for example, Los Angeles, vs. say, Ohio. If this is truly a genetic issue and not a choice, why so many surgeries in one location vs. another? Yes, I realize the populations vary, but that argument is mute. Also, a great deal of money is being made at the expense of hurting and vulnerable people.

#### *Romans 1:24-2*

*Therefore, God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.*

#### *Romans 1:26-27*

*For this reason, God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise, also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.*

It is not my intention to bash individuals who profess to be gay. I'm just trying to say that I am tired of being told to tolerate these questionable opinions as indisputable truths, and to be forced to endure the inappropriate public displays from an exceedingly small percentage of society. Because I disagree and choose to stand up for my own opinion, and for what the scriptures above reflect as God's opinion, I am labeled as intolerant and a 'hater.' I don't hate anyone. I just hate the things people are capable of doing. God knew we would commit these sins, but he also tells us that these things ought not be. It is not his will that any should perish, but that all come to repentance.

I believe we are in the last days, and the wickedness of our world will come to an end, soon. I believe in God, the Creator of the universe, and I believe in the holy scriptures. I respect your choice to agree with me, or not. I am not pushing my opinion on anyone. This website is my safe place to express what is in my heart. As long as my Lord gives me breath, or fingers to type, I will praise him with my written words. As long as he gives me a voice, I will continue speaking up for what I believe is right, in the name of my Lord, Jesus Christ.