

Which Character Is Moral?

A. T. Jones

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MORALS is character, and science is knowledge; therefore, moral science is character-knowledge. The study of moral science is the study of the knowledge of character.

What *character* is it that Christians shall study—human or divine? What *knowledge*—science—of character is it that Christians shall accept as the true, and so the one worthy of study—human or divine?

It must not be forgotten, in the study of any science, that a *guess* is not *knowledge*, *conjecture* is not knowledge; *hypothesis* is not knowledge; but that knowledge is to *know*, to know for *certain*. It is to know, and know that we know.

Where shall the certainty of knowledge be found? —Only in God; for “he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?” (Ps. 94:10). To accept man’s knowledge of things is to drink of the turbid streams of the valley or from common sewers, rather than to go to the Fountain Head. Why delve and dwell in the uncertainties of human knowledge, when the divine knowledge, the fountain of all knowledge, is open to all?

What, then, does God say is the certainty of knowledge on the subject of character—morals?

What is it as to human character, human morals? —Here it is: “Both Jews and Gentiles ... are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: there is no fear of God before their eyes” (Rom. 3:9-18). “Out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man” (Mark 7:21-23).

That is a sketch of human character by the One who certainly knows. And the study of human moral science is simply the study of that sort of character. It is, therefore, as plain as A B C that human “morals” is simply the grossest immorality; and the study of human “moral science” is but the study of immorality. Strictly and truly speaking, there is no such thing as human *moral* science; for moral science is the science of morals, and human morals are nothing but immorality, and the science of it is nothing but the science, the knowledge, of immorality.

But how long can people study immorality before they become moral? How much of the science, the knowledge, of immorality must a person acquire in order to be moral? —It is perfectly plain that the whole worldly idea and conception of moral science is not only “science falsely so called,” but is a fatal delusion.

On the other hand, how is it with true morals? What is the certainty of knowledge as to divine character, divine morals? Here it is: “I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee.” “And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and before whom no man is guiltless” (Ex. 33:19; 34:6, 7). “God is love” (1 John 4:8). “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). “I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee” (Jer. 31:3).

And “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge [the science] of the glory [the character] of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” And “we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory [character] of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory [from character to character], even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Cor. 4:6; 3:18).

Here is a character that is entirely worthy of the most devoted contemplation. Here is the very perfection of morals. Knowledge of this character is the truest moral science. And the diligent, earnest, prayerful study of this blessed transformation of the soul, through the faith of Jesus Christ and the power of the Spirit of God, from evil to good, from wickedness to righteousness, from sin to holiness, from the human character to the divine character, from immorality to morality, —the study of this is the study of the true science of morals, and is the only true moral science.

Shall not this, therefore, be the only character studied, or even referred to, in any Seventh-day Adventist school? If not, why?