


CLING TO WHAT IS GOOD



A hand is visible in the lower-left corner, holding a yellow fishing net. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly a rocky shore or a large rock, with some blue and white lines, likely fishing gear, visible. The overall scene is dimly lit, with a dark sky above.

**“LET LOVE BE WITHOUT HYPOCRISY.
ABHOR WHAT IS EVIL; CLING TO
ROMANS 12:9 WHAT IS GOOD.”**

ALSO SEE 1 THESSALONIANS 5:15, PSALM 34:14

GOOD AND EVIL

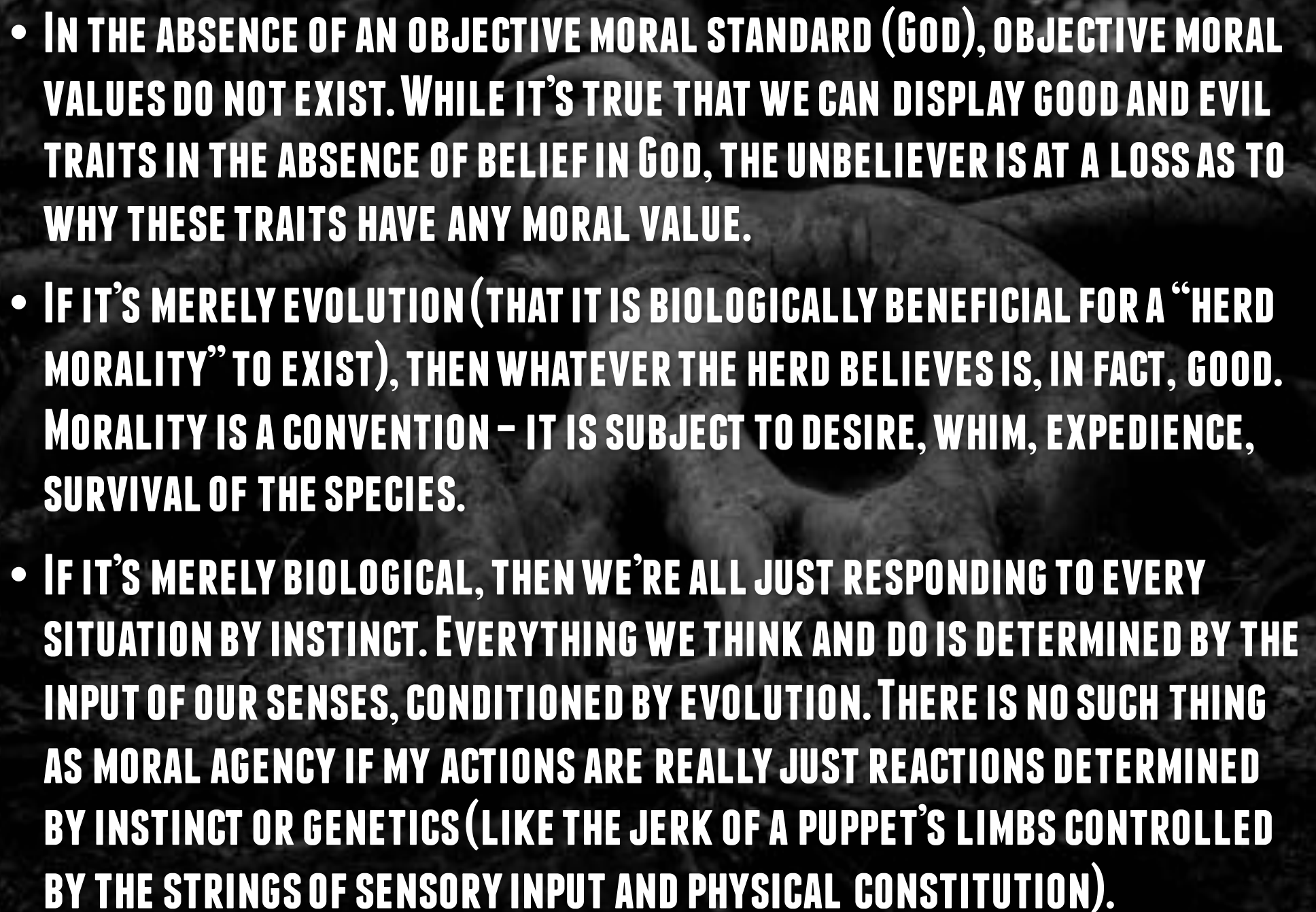
- **ONE OF THE UNEXPECTED CONSEQUENCES OF OUR INCREASINGLY DIVIDED POLITICAL CLIMATE IS THAT IT HAS PUT “GOOD” AND “BAD” IN THE FOREFRONT OF OUR THINKING.**
- **“HIS POLICIES ARE GOOD FOR AMERICA”, “THIS IS GOING TO BE BAD FOR MIDDLE CLASS AMERICANS”, “I THINK HE’S A GOOD MAN WITH BAD IDEAS” – COMMON ATTITUDES THAT BETRAY AN ACCEPTANCE OF MORAL VALUES IN AN OFTEN AMORAL CULTURE.**
- **IF “GOOD” AND “BAD” DO NOT HAVE AN OBJECTIVE MEASURE, THOUGH, WHY DO PEOPLE SO FREQUENTLY VALUE THINGS/IDEAS/OTHER PEOPLE IN THESE TERMS?**

WHAT IS GOOD?

- **PROVERBS 20:23 – WHAT MAKES SOMETHING “GOOD”? IS IT BECAUSE IT’S POPULAR? IS IT PERSONAL PREFERENCE? FOOD, CLOTHES, ENTERTAINMENT, ETC. ARE ALL DETERMINED BY TASTE. IS THERE SUCH A THING AS TRUE GOODNESS? OR HAS THE WORD JUST BECOME A PLATITUDE (AS IN, “BE GOOD TODAY, KIDS” OR “THAT MUFFIN WAS GOOD”)?**
- **IT WAS ONCE “GOOD” TO PERSECUTE HOMOSEXUALS (DRIVE THEM OUT OF TOWN, ALIENATE THEM, ETC.). NOW IT’S “GOOD” TO GIVE THEM SPECIAL STATUS. WHAT DETERMINES THAT? WHAT MADE THAT CHANGE POSSIBLE? IS THERE ACTUALLY A “GOOD” RESPONSE?**
- **REMEMBER, SATAN PROFITS WHEN WE APPLY ELASTICITY TO “GOOD” IN MORALITY (GENESIS 2:9, ISAIAH 5:18-23).**



THE SOURCE OF GOOD

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- **IN THE ABSENCE OF AN OBJECTIVE MORAL STANDARD (GOD), OBJECTIVE MORAL VALUES DO NOT EXIST. WHILE IT'S TRUE THAT WE CAN DISPLAY GOOD AND EVIL TRAITS IN THE ABSENCE OF BELIEF IN GOD, THE UNBELIEVER IS AT A LOSS AS TO WHY THESE TRAITS HAVE ANY MORAL VALUE.**
 - **IF IT'S MERELY EVOLUTION (THAT IT IS BIOLOGICALLY BENEFICIAL FOR A "HERD MORALITY" TO EXIST), THEN WHATEVER THE HERD BELIEVES IS, IN FACT, GOOD. MORALITY IS A CONVENTION – IT IS SUBJECT TO DESIRE, WHIM, EXPEDIENCE, SURVIVAL OF THE SPECIES.**
 - **IF IT'S MERELY BIOLOGICAL, THEN WE'RE ALL JUST RESPONDING TO EVERY SITUATION BY INSTINCT. EVERYTHING WE THINK AND DO IS DETERMINED BY THE INPUT OF OUR SENSES, CONDITIONED BY EVOLUTION. THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS MORAL AGENCY IF MY ACTIONS ARE REALLY JUST REACTIONS DETERMINED BY INSTINCT OR GENETICS (LIKE THE JERK OF A PUPPET'S LIMBS CONTROLLED BY THE STRINGS OF SENSORY INPUT AND PHYSICAL CONSTITUTION).**

- **IF NATURALISM IS TRUE, THEN IT BECOMES IMPOSSIBLE TO CONDEMN THINGS THAT ARE COMMONLY (FASHIONABLY?) CALLED BAD. IT'S ALSO IMPOSSIBLE TO PRAISE BROTHERHOOD, EQUALITY, OR LOVE AS OBJECTIVELY GOOD.**
- **WHEN A SOCIETY, EN MASSE, REPLACES ITS COLLECTIVE ETHICS, ALL WE CAN DO IS SIT BACK AND ACCEPT IT. THAT BECOMES GOOD.**
- **BUT SOMEONE MIGHT SAY IT IS IN OUR BEST INTEREST TO ADOPT A MORAL LIFESTYLE. CLEARLY, HOWEVER, THAT IS NOT ALWAYS TRUE. IF THERE IS NO GOD, AND WE ARE ALL JUST ACCIDENTS ON AN INSIGNIFICANT SPECK IN THE UNIVERSE, THEN OUR HIGHEST PRIORITY IS SELF-INTEREST – SURVIVAL, PROCREATION, COMPETITION, SUPERIORITY.**
- **OBJECTIVE “GOOD” MIGHT ONLY LEAD TO SELF-DESTRUCTION. WHY WOULD A NATURALIST ACCEPT THIS? ON WHAT BASIS CAN AN ATHEIST ARGUE THIS IS GOOD? HOW CAN ONE BE A MORALIST WITHOUT ACCEPTING THE EXISTENCE OF AN OBJECTIVE, SUPREME, UNALTERABLE SOURCE OF MORALITY?**

- **IF OBJECTIVE MORAL STANDARDS EXIST, THEN GOD MUST ALSO EXIST, AS THE SOURCE OF “GOOD” AS AN OBJECTIVE STANDARD. MORALS DO EXIST, THEREFORE, GOD EXISTS. GOODNESS COMES FROM HIM AS ITS ULTIMATE SOURCE. HE IS GOOD (PSALM 25:8, 34:8, 119:68).**
- **THE LAW THAT EMANATES FROM HIM IS GOOD (PSALM 119:39, 19:7-11).**
- **THIS MAKES SENSE, SINCE A GOOD SOURCE LOGICALLY PRODUCES SOMETHING GOOD FROM ITSELF. A GOOD TREE PRODUCES GOOD FRUIT (MATTHEW 7:17-18). GOOD WATER CAN BE DRAWN FROM A SPRING THAT IS GOOD.**
- **JESUS MADE IT CLEAR THAT “GOOD” IS NOT HUMAN-DERIVED (MATTHEW 19:16FF).**
- **SO WHY NOT JUST BE GOOD WITHOUT WORRYING ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT GOD EXISTS? BECAUSE GOODNESS BY ITSELF HAS NO ETERNAL OUTCOME. WE CAN NEVER BE GOOD ENOUGH FOR GOODNESS TO BE A SATISFACTORY END TO OUR LIVES (EPHESIANS 2:1-10).**

SO WHY CLING TO GOOD?

1 PETER 3:8-13, PROVERBS 11:27

