

COMPROMISE

Compromise can mean (1) settling for something less or different, (2) exposing someone or something to risk or (3) balance, tolerance, caving in, give and take, finding middle ground, meeting halfway. “Com” means “together.” “Pro” says “in favor of.” “Mise” is French for “putting.” So, it’s being in favor of putting something together.

DISCUSS: How have you dealt with compromise in business and your personal life?

Margaret Thatcher, former British Prime Minister: “Consensus is the process of abandoning beliefs, principles, values and policies.”

James Russell Lowell, American poet: “Compromise makes a good umbrella, but a poor roof....”

Lord Edward Cecil, ex-colonial leader in Egypt: “Compromise: an agreement to do what both (sides) agree is wrong.”

Janis Joplin, rocker, dead at 27, O.D.’d on heroin and alcohol: “Don’t compromise yourself. You’re all you’ve got.”

DISCUSS: Is compromising healthy or unhealthy? What’s your plumb line for assessing that?

Straddling The Fence Can Smart

Is compromising a sin? How does God define sin? Paul writes, “*If you do anything you believe is not right, you are sinning.*” (Romans 14:23) James, Jesus’ half-brother, adds: “*It is sin to know what you ought to do and not do it.*” (James 4:17)

DISCUSS: If Jesus had settled for being merely “a good moral teacher,” where would you and I be now?

Eating Crow Tastes Like Rooster

One of Jesus’ best friends became the all-time sell-out. Let’s do Luke 22:31-33, 54-62.

DISCUSS: For a few coins Judas turncoats. Were Peter’s protests a compromise? Differentiate betrayal, denial and compromise.

Life After Compromise

Soon after He bolted from the grave, Jesus appeared to Peter and his fishing buddies, returning to port with empty nets. **Let's go there in John 21:1-17.**

Three times Peter had disavowed knowing the Lord. Now Jesus offers Pete three Mulligans to confirm his loyalty. To further prove His unconditional love, Jesus appoints "Chicken Man" to be His spokesman. Two months later Peter's high octane preaching in Jerusalem would find 3,000 Passover celebrants giving their allegiance to Jesus – all in a single day!

When our compromise is sin, we'll suffer its natural consequences in this life, but thankfully the believer has God's forgiveness (paid at Christ's expense). Furthermore, God doesn't brand us as damaged goods (1 Corinthians 1:1-9).

With God's Holy Spirit each believer has a power-packed, temptation resistor. Let's read its tutorial here in one of Paul's letters to the early, New Testament believers. "What makes you think you're any more temptation-proof than your ancestors?" he asks. **We pick it up in 1 Corinthians 10:11-13.**

DISCUSS: Does God dump you in a landfill when you screw up? What's His m.o. when His kids sin?

Tempting Tips

When deciding to please people or God, take Door #2. **This is how God puts it in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18.**

God doesn't expect us to clean up our act before we invite Him into our lives. No, when we get to know Him, we naturally change. So "live based on what you *know*, not how you *feel*." **What God wants us to know is in Romans 12:1-2.**

These three tools will help you make God-pleasing choices:

(1) A guide – The Bible is our plumb line (**2 Timothy 3:10-17**). The Old Testament book of Proverbs is loaded with God's wisdom for living-in-real-time. By reading and heeding one of its thirty-one chapters a day, your month will rise to new heights.

(2) A guard – Ask God to guard your heart, mind and body, and He'll give you peace (**Philippians 4:6-7**).

(3) A gauge – Form a small core of believers to keep encouraging you to do the right thing (**Hebrews 3:12-14**).

The Extreme Compromise

All of us have crashed short of God's standard of sinless living. The outcome is permanent separation from Him. But His undeserved gift to us, by our choosing to rely on Christ's sacrifice to save us, is living forever with Him (Romans 3:23, 6:23).

In ancient times the Jewish faithful brought animals to the priest to be sacrificed, and God would "cover" their sins temporarily. That system was set aside when Jesus, the only sinless Sacrifice, took on Himself *every* sin – past, present and future – and served our death sentence for us in full! Then He rose from the grave, defeating death's power to condemn us to hell.

What's the worst compromise? It's when we settle for running our life instead of turning it over to God. If that's you, please wait no longer to tell Him: "Dear God, I believe You sent Your Son to pay the ultimate price to buy me back from the clutches and penalty of my sin. I now give myself unreservedly to You, as best I know how. Walk with me, please, and guide me into making choices that bring credit to You. In the uncompromising name of Jesus, amen!"

His Deal

www.HisDeal.org

george@HisDeal.org

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