

FOR LOVERS ONLY - LOVE IS NOT CRAZY VII

False assumption VII *“Shoulds” are good.*

²⁸ *“What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work today in the vineyard.’* ²⁹ *‘I will not,’ he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.* ³⁰ *Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, ‘I will, sir,’ but he did not go.* ³¹ *Which of the two did what his father wanted?”* *“The first,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you.* ³² *For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.”*

Matthew 21:28-32

⁷ *Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

II Corinthians 9:7

I. Compelled, impelled, or freely chosen.

A. The word “should” expresses obligation, compulsion, or duty. It implies that we have no choice; that if we do other than we should, we are bad or condemned.

B. Our goal as Christians is freely chosen love of the Lord and our neighbor. (Matthew 22:37-40)

³⁷ Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

C. We cannot love unless we are free to not love—and to see the consequences of both choices.

D. The underlying concept here is freedom.

E. As Christians we are saved and completely accepted, and will never be rejected because we sin. (We will receive correction, never punishment)

F. God never hits leaves or demeans His children. Yet we can feel and act as if we will lose love if we sin.

II. Motive is everything. / Why do we do what we do?

A. Motivation is everything to God. If our motivation is compulsion or a feeling of obligation, a “should,” it is not love. (II Corinthians 9:7)

B. Paul would not even accept a gift unless it was “spontaneous and not forced.” (Philemon 12-14)

¹² I am sending him--who is my very heart--back to you. ¹³ I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel. ¹⁴ But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favor you do would not seem forced but would be voluntary.

- C. We must “freely” choose life or death. “Life” consists of honesty, love, responsibility, forgiveness, and fulfillment. “Death” consists of deceit, separation, irresponsibility, judgementalism, and unfulfillment.
- D. We are to obey the lanes. We are to run in out of “love bound” obedience, never “duty-bound” obedience.
- E. As Christians pursuing a deeper life, if we want certain outcomes, we need to change. This is different from changing to avoid being bad.
- F. We know we are coming out from being under the law when we change from “have to” to “want to.”
- G. Make a list and circle those items that you do out of obligation rather than out of love, in order to be good rather than because of the blessings God gives when we do them
- H. When has something you loved become a chore when it became a “should.”?
- I. Only when we are free can we love freely. If we are in slavery to the “shoulds” because of guilt or fear we are not ready to love. We must first be set free.
- J. We don’t need the law to keep us in check, God will keep us in line. Our love and deep relationships within the body of Christ will keep us in line. And finally, we are miserable when we are bound.
- K. Which current “have to” in your life would you like to experience as a “want to.”?

L. “Shoulds” want us to “have to.” We must, or we are bad. We have no choice. “Shoulds” used in this way will always fail. And those “shoulds” are never good.