

# Tolerance and Intolerance

by Robert Turner

I like brown shoes, and wear them most of the time. However, if you insist upon wearing black shoes I will argue the point. Go right ahead! I'm a very tolerant man with respect to shoes.

But some of my friends tell me I am intolerant in religious matters. They can't understand why a kind hearted, tolerant fellow like me would say they must obey God's commands and practice in religion only that which God has authorized. (Well, maybe that is the way they put it.)

Some intolerance" is born of egotism-- self-loving individuals who think they are the center of the universe, hence their ways must be accepted by all. This is bad (Jas. 4:11-12). But there is an "intolerance" of a sort, which is born of love. I love my granddaughter, and insist that she not eat the shoe polish. (The brown, that is.) And there is an "intolerance" born of respect for superior authority, and deep concern for those who fail to respect that authority. Paul contended with the Israelites frequently (a) because he loved them, and (b) because he knew they could not be saved while they followed their own erroneous ways.

It is well and good to be tolerant in matters of indifference--and in matters where the rights of men are equal. But to "tolerate" sin and transgression of God's law is to assume the right to "judge" that law (Jas. 2:9-f.) or to relegate divine matters to the category of black and brown shoes.

"Tolerance" is often a disguise for a lack of concern! "