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 **Meeting Times**

 Sunday Bible Study-9:30 am Sunday Morning Worship-10:30 am Sunday Evening Worship-6:30 pm Wednesday Bible Study-7:00 pm

 **Spring Meeting March 19th-23rd
 Different speakers each evening**

### color-wheel.jpg

### “Coordinating Colors”

Some people say that, compared to women, all men are at least a little colorblind. I don’t know whether that’s true, but I can say from my own experience that I struggle sometimes to distinguish my black socks from my navy blue ones. Often, especially in the hazy light of early morning, I can only tell the two apart by holding them against

something I know for certain is black — a pair of trousers, for example.

I also own a necktie whose color has baffled me from the day I received it. When I hold the tie out in front of me, I am certain it is some mysterious shade of light brown — an odd beige or tan, perhaps. Certain, that is, until I hold it against a shirt or sportcoat of determinate hue, at which point I can see that it’s really a peculiar shade of gray. (I accidentally wore this tie once with a tan jacket and brown slacks. My wife thought I had taken leave of my senses — my fashion sense, anyway.)

We often make the mistake of judging our spiritual “color” by looking at ourselves in isolation — essentially, comparing ourselves to our own standard of righteousness. The problem with doing that is we almost always meet our own standard. The Bible tells of a time when such thinking was the norm: *“In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes”* (Judges 17:6; 21:25). Does that mean everyone in Israel in those days was approved of God? Certainly not. But they weren’t looking to God’s law as their measurement. Everyone did what seemed right to him — whether it was truly right or not.

That’s the trouble with a self-composed standard: it always looks right. *“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death”* (Proverbs 14:12; 16:25). Or, as Solomon put it in another proverb, *“The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise”* (Proverbs 12:15). We can easily be self-deceived when we follow our own path without first making sure it is in line with the Lord’s: *“For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself”* (Galatians 6:3).

We can make the same mistake in looking at other people, too. We sometimes say of our neighbors, *“They’re not Christians, but they’re good moral people.”* What we’re doing is comparing them with ourselves — if they look okay next to us, they must be okay before God.

That’s a fearfully dangerous perspective: *“For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise”* (2 Corinthians 10:12). Someone may be “good” in our subjective assessment, but our standard is not the defining measure — God’s word is. As Paul says, we dare not get into the habit of comparing anything against ourselves, any more than a carpenter measures his boards against pieces he has already cut, rather than by the ruler.

The only safe way to distinguish our spiritual “color” is to hold ourselves up against the Scriptures and compare (James 1:23-25). Similarly, the only safe way to tell others whether they are heaven-bound is to open the Bible with them, and invite them to make that same comparison. We don’t want to be guilty of sending anyone before God’s judgment wearing the wrong color garment (Matthew 22:11-14)! Michael D. Rankins