

## There Are No Absolutes

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The world was horrified when reports unfolded the story of Jeffery Dammar, often referred to as “The Milwaukee Murderer.” Dammar confessed to brutally murdering more than 35 men by drugging them, drilling their skulls, adding acid, and keeping them semi-conscious. He found sexual pleasure in torching them. After his arrest, he was asked how in the world he could commit such evil. His blunt reply was insightful. “I don’t believe in God, therefore, what I did was not evil.” In an Atheistic universe, there are no moral absolutes. Ethics in essence are transcendental.

I will never forget that moment when my professor pronounced his favorite mantra in class. It was a course in Existential philosophy and the professor was a great admirer of Fredrick Nietzsche the German atheistic philosopher and the radical theologian Paul Tillich. He has no time for moral absolutes or objective truth; they don’t exist in his postmodern world. In the middle of his lecture, the professor raised his voice and proclaimed, “There are no absolutes.” Needless to say, I was amused. I gently raised my hand and said, “Professor are you absolutely sure?” He was absolutely confused. That was the end of his absolute. You are standing on the pinnacle of truth while denying the existence of truth. The truth is there is no truth. It sounds impressive even profound but it is meaningless nonsense.

What is wrong with the statement, “There are no absolutes?” There are numerous problems with this premise but we will consider three significant ones. The primary problem with the proposition is that it is *subjective*. Those who use it do not provide an argument but dogmatically proclaim it like the good professor. How do they know there are no absolutes? On what ground do we make the claim? By what logic does one arrive at this conclusion? Isn’t the statement itself an absolute? Since it's subjective it has no right to oppose other claims. Subjectivism has no exclusive privilege of authority. Where everyone is right no one is right, for the word right has lost its meaning.

The second problem with the statement is that it is *contradictory*. It affirms what it denies. It is a contradiction. Like the statement "All statements are false" What about this statement? Is that false too? A contradiction is a false statement. According to Aristotle the father of logic, "A cannot be A and non-A at the same time and in the same sense." It can't be both raining and not raining at the same time. It can't be both cold and hot, dry and wet, up and down, bright and dark, night and day at the same time unless one is psychotic.

A wise saga says, "He who tries to break Logic will be broken by it." Try crossing the road with no regard for logic. Yes, I see a truck but a truck and a non-truck are the same, therefore I will bravely cross the road. If you did that you would be totally flat to discuss the matter. Reality is logical, therefore, human life is possible. We may deny absolutes, but we cannot escape them. If there are no absolutes it's okay to be a racist, a rapist, or a dictator. Hitler would be as virtuous as Mother Teresa. We may deny it in theory but can we face it in reality? Try a practical approach. Take a gun and point it to the temple of the atheist's head and say, "Could you please repeat the statement 'There are no absolute.'" His face will soon warm up to the reality view.

The final problem with the proposition is that it's *unlivable*. Anyone can make a claim but when the rubber meets the road will it pass the reality test? Consider the true story of a philosophy student who wrote an ethics paper arguing that there are no absolutes. Judged by the research standards it was well presented. The professor, however, gave it an "F" with a note explaining, "I do not like blue covers." When the student received his paper, he was so upset he stormed into the professor's office protesting, "This is not fair! This is not just! You shouldn't grade my paper on the color of the cover! The professor looked the student in the eye and asked, "Is this the paper that argued that there are no absolutes?" "Yes! Yes! That's the one," replied the student. "Well then," said the professor, "I do not like blue covers." At that point the student realized absolutes are inescapable, we all live by it. C.S. Lewis was right "You cannot call something crooked unless you know what is straight." Without God, we are empty, lost, and without hope.