

THE CHRISTIAN & HIS RELATIONSHIP TO MORALS

Rom 12:1-5

INTRODUCTION:

- A. This nation, at one time had fairly decent morals, but is quickly becoming like so many heathen nations that have gone before
- B. The morals of our day are very lax, to say the least. All that is necessary to be aware of this is to look around us with open eyes.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT IS THE REASON FOR WHAT WE SEE

- A. Sin is not looked upon as sin anymore
 1. In my youth - the decades of the forties and fifties – the institution of marriage was respected by most people. The sin of homosexuality was unheard of except in rare cases.
 2. Abortion & single-parenting was equally almost non-existent
 3. Drinking and gambling were looked down on as productive of no good and sinful. (website of First Christian Church in Portland, OR **Beer and Hymns-Sat. 3/16 @ 5pm** *lifted directly from their website*)
- B. There has been a general relaxing of attitudes toward morality
 1. As far back as 1970 the Lutheran church stated they would "allow Lutherans to look favorably on the development of a sexual relationship between a married person and someone other than his marriage partner." (Louisville Courier Journal July 3, 1970)
 2. Recent Ann Landers column reported about a preacher performing marriage ceremonies for older couples, not legally binding, (to keep social security). Ann commended him as a servant of the Lord
 3. Ex-President's sexual escapades and efforts to try to cover up
 4. Joseph Fletcher, past professor of Social Ethics, Episcopal Theology School, Cambridge, Mass, (now deceased.), in his book Situation Ethics said: "Every man must decide for himself what is right." - "any act - even lying, premarital sex, abortion, adultery, and murder -- could be right depending on the circumstances."
- C-. Certainly this nation and society was not perfect, but sin was not glorified, glamorized and condoned by the majority of the people.
- D. Just as Christians do not remain static - they continue to become better as they allow God's word to work in their lives; so do sinners become worse and worse 2Tim 3:13
- E. Obviously we can't determine morality from standards of men, so how do we determine what is morally right and good, so we can please God

II. WHAT IS MORALITY OR HOW SHALL WE DETERMINE?

- A. Earnest Hemingway defines it as: "What is moral is what you feel good after and what is immoral is what you feel bad after. Is this our standard of morality?"
- B. Webster: (a) "of or relating to principles of right and wrong in behavior Ethical. (b) Expressing or teaching a conception of right behavior. (c) Conforming to a standard of right behavior. (d) Sanctioned by or operative on one's conscience or ethical judgment."
- C. Shall we use these definitions in determining morality? I believe the Bible sets forth a good definition of morality.

1. One of the best places to go to illustrate this is 2Sam 13:12,13, where Amnon's plot to have his sister, Tamar, is revealed.
2. Let's examine this passage and see the principles taught

III. MORALITY AS DEFINED IN SCRIPTURE: 2Sam 13:12,13

- A. "Such a thing ought not to be done in Israel" Lev.18:9
 1. It is against God. Some things ought not to be done
 2. Yes there are absolutes - there is a standard of behavior
- B. "Whither shall I cause my shame to go?"
 1. This was against another human being, made in God's image Gen 1:26,27; See also Matt 25:40,45; 1Cor 8:12
 2. Consideration must be given to others, not just self
- C. "Thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel"
 1. It was a sin against himself 1Cor 6:18
 2. There must be control or rein upon self (self-control)
- D. C. S. Lewis used the analogy of a fleet of ships or an orchestra to illustrate these principles.
 1. All must be headed for the right port - a common goal
 2. All must be kept in proper relationship - must not collide
 3. Each must be in good sailing condition - good repair
- E. In the book (Mere Christianity p.57) is found this quote: "Morality, then seems to be concerned with three things. (1) Fair play and harmony between individuals. (2) Harmonizing the things inside each individual. (3) The general purpose of human life as a whole; what man was made for."

IV. THE CHRISTIAN'S RELATIONSHIP TO MORALITY

- A. The Christian must be a morally good person, but not just by the world's standards
- B. The Christian must be morally good by God's standards
 1. Turn our attention first and foremost toward heaven Matt 6:33; Rom 12:1,2; Isa 55:8,9; Eccl 12:13; Matt 7:21
 2. We must treat others right; will it be harmful to others 1Cor 8:8,13; Phil 2:3-8
 3. We must keep ourselves "fit" for Master's use 1Jhn 2:15-17; Prov 14:12; Lk 9:62; Jas 1:27
- C. All these included in 1st and 2nd commandment Matt 22:36-40

CONCLUSION:

- A. This has been just an overview of the world's view of morality contrasted with the Bible's view of morality.
- B. If the morals of the world in general is to improve, then we as Christians must show in our lives the Bible's standard of morality and be very vocal in our disapproval of the world's standards of morality.
- C. We must make our lives right with God and let others know that we want them and expect them to conform to God's standard so that we can all be with God in eternity.
- D. That's what Jesus said in Matt 5:13-16 in regard to us being the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Let your light SO shine before men.
- E. In future lessons we will be making some applications of these principles to some specific areas of immorality that is prevalent in our society.