

January 29, 2017

Christian Morality
Titus 3:3-7

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

A recent Gallup poll found three-fourths of Americans saying that moral values in the United States are getting _____. We're going to explore the _____ of America's moral decline and the solution. For several years the moral standards and values of our _____ have been declining. It seems the whole moral world has just _____ upside down. Some in our culture have worked hard to _____ religious values so that Christians feel pressured not to speak out about _____. What a shame! What confusion! National laws have _____ how some look at the sanctity of life and marriage, so that we no longer have freedom of conscience to _____ sin without being labeled or punished for it. Others have made it their life _____ to silence the Bible on any moral issue. This isn't new; people have never wanted to hear what they do is _____. They would rather excuse sin than _____ of it.

When people said the moral values of America are declining, the Gallup researchers asked them _____. People offered several reasons: lack of respect, poor parenting, scandals, increased crime and violence, the breakdown of the typical two-parent home. All of these certainly contribute to declining moral values, but many of them are symptoms of the problem and not the _____ cause.

Our moral confusion comes from the fact that many Americans no longer give God the _____ and the _____ that He deserves. They no longer take Him seriously. Some in our culture have told God to just be _____ and to leave us alone. The worst thing that we can do is to abandon God and His ways. Choices have consequences. The consequences of abandoning God are revealing themselves in our land. We have _____ to the wind and reaped a whirlwind.

Our reading today comes from Paul's letter to Titus 3:3-7. Read the paragraph from McGuffey's Eclectic Reader.

The National Cultural Values survey found America is losing its _____ of God. According to the survey, 87 percent of Americans say they _____ in God; and 52 percent say they believe the _____ is God's authoritative word. Yet only 36 percent believe people should _____ by God's principles; only 15 percent say that they will live by their own principles even if they conflict with God's principles; and 45 percent prefer to _____ God's teachings with their own values. They've replaced the God of Heaven with their own thinking.

Many people live not in immorality, but in amorality. One is "amoral" when he doesn't _____ about right and wrong or morality. Amoral people never feel accountable to God. Many today don't know the God of the Bible, so they make up a god after their own _____. They imagine what they _____ God to be like. When they find the God of the Bible doesn't match

their imagined ideas, they _____ the God of Heaven for the god that's in their own imagination. But we can never _____ the God of Heaven with a dreamed-up god.

The god people create in their _____ is only an imaginary god. He doesn't _____ anything of them morally or spiritually, so they're happy with this god. But the God of the Bible, the true God of Heaven, is not like man-made gods. He is entirely holy; He is absolutely righteous; and He is totally moral. He doesn't tolerate or approve sin. He doesn't overlook or excuse some sins, while punishing others.

Read what the Bible says in 1 Peter 1:14-19.

A famous preacher today says that Jesus never referred to anyone as a _____, but that preacher needs to read the New Testament more closely. At various times, Jesus _____ denounced sinners as snakes, dogs, foxes, hypocrites, corrupted tombs, and unwashed dishes. Jesus didn't want His hearers to _____ the point. God condemns sin, but Jesus doesn't leave us the way that He finds us. Jesus didn't _____ us so that we could keep on practicing sin. He graciously wants to _____ the sins away from our souls; He also wants to transform our lives.

The God of love forgives and wants us to overcome our sins; He blesses the repentant who _____ their hearts and lives. Repentant people _____ over their sins, forsake them, and then they begin living righteously for God. They don't want to _____ the evil that they've done. After David sinned against God by committing adultery with Bathsheba and killing her husband, Uriah, he _____ forgiveness. He wrote, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, you will not despise" (Psalm 51:17). Psalm 34:18 says, "The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and He saves the crushed in spirit."

People rarely _____ over their sins anymore. Instead, they excuse them or justify them. They love to _____ somebody else or even blame God for their sins. When have you, friend, been broken-hearted and contrite over your personal sins, the things that you've done that are _____? When have you taken responsibility for your sins? When have you, friend, confessed your sins and your _____ for having committed those sins; then that's a part of repentance.

The apostle Paul rebuked the church in Corinth for ignoring sin and for their arrogant _____ about sin. God's Word says, "It's actually reported that there is _____ immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to _____? Let him who has done this be removed from among you" (1 Corinthians 5:1-2). Paul rebuked that church at Corinth for _____ the sin instead of taking action against the man who committed it.

The inspired apostle then does take _____. He writes in verses 3 to 5, "For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. When you're assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you're to deliver this man to Satan for the

destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.”

Many are _____ to hear such language coming from the Bible, because they think Christ never judges sin; oh, yes He does! Jesus called for people to repent so they wouldn't be _____. The Lord Jesus said, “No, I tell you; but unless you _____, you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:5). The Lord Jesus will not continue to extend His _____ to those who refuse to repent.

Many people presume upon the patience and the grace of God. They honestly believe that God would never _____ anybody, but God's grace and forgiveness have limits. The Bible says, “Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not _____ the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:19-21). You cannot live a sinful lifestyle and expect to go to _____. God is serious about sin.

Read what the Bible warns in Hebrews 10:26-31.

Christ is not content to _____ us where He found us. The Lord Jesus takes a man where He finds him and helps him to _____ what he wants him to be. A Christian is a person that Christ has transformed. He takes us out of _____, and He puts us into a _____ that is clean and righteous. He wants to transform your life, but Christ cannot _____ us out of sin if we are unwilling to see the sin that's in our lives. We don't have to keep on living in sin. We can _____ our sins.

Read the text, Titus 3:3-7, again.

Christians don't see themselves as _____ than others. The Christians that I know realize that they were once lost in sin but saved by the _____ of God. They live _____ lives for what God has done for them. We are all strugglers in this life to become the kind of person that _____ the Lord Jesus. My favorite saying is, “I'm not all I _____ to be; I'm not all I _____ to be; I'm not all I'm _____ to be; but thank God that by His grace I'm not what I _____ to be.”

A person who loves God will not be _____ to keep on committing sin. The Bible says, “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the _____ of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it didn't know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears that we shall be _____ him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who has this _____ in him purifies himself just as he is pure” (1 John 3:1-3).

Love and faith lead a Christian to _____ the Lord in every respect. Christians who love the Lord are not _____ to lead their old lives. They want to _____ in their faith, their holiness, and their love for God and man. Paul told the young preacher Timothy, “Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an _____ in speech, in conduct, in love,

in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12).

Some preachers will not _____ against sin. They do a great disservice! When Christians fail to speak against sin or they fail to set an example of holiness, they _____ the younger generation. It’s no _____ that many young adults see no sin in sex outside of marriage, or having a baby out of wedlock. This is no small matter! Not only is fornication immoral, it’s also a major _____ of children growing up in single-parent homes and in poverty.

Someone says, “Well, Phil, you’re being awfully _____ on people.” No, I’m not being hard. I’m being _____ and _____. A cruel person would never tell you sin is wrong or ask you to _____. A cruel person would _____ at sin and tell you to just forget it. That may seem kind or tolerant, until we realize this: God does not forget about unresolved sin, He _____ it. Friend, God still says “the wages of sin is _____” (Romans 6:23).

Our tolerant culture may overlook your sins, but God will not overlook unresolved sin. God instead wants you to repent; He wants to cleanse you of your sin by the _____ of Jesus. He loves you and He sent His Son, Jesus, to the cross to _____ you. Why not come to Him for cleansing?

“The clock of life is wound but once, and no man has the power to tell just when the hands will stop at late or early hour. To lose one's wealth is sad indeed. To lose one's health is more. To lose one's soul is such a loss that no man can restore.” Somewhere in the world, thirty people died while I was reading that short poem. One hundred twenty people die every minute. Their spirits return to God to be judged for the lives that they’ve lived.

The Lord Jesus said, “If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it’s _____ for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. If your right hand makes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it’s better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell” (Matthew 5:29-30). Jesus isn’t interested in our being blind; what He wants us to do is to _____.

You might ignore the sin in your life today, but you cannot ignore it _____. God expects you to turn your life around and to put your _____ in Christ Jesus. When you _____ with all your heart, _____ of your sins, _____ the name of Jesus Christ before others, and are _____, you’ll find God’s grace and forgiveness. At the time of baptism, God _____ away all our sins (Acts 22:16), and He does it through the blood of Jesus Christ. He adds us to His _____; He makes us His child. Baptism is an immersion in water for a penitent person who professes his faith.

That’s why we should come to Christ in true repentance and be baptized, just as Peter taught in Acts 2:38. If you’re a Christian, maybe you’ve fallen away, and you need to come back to the Lord. Today, is the day to do it. There’s no better time!