



Cape Coral Church of Christ

1010 S.W. 20th Avenue

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<http://www.thelordsway.com/capecoralfl>

Schedule of Services

Sunday: Bible Study: 9:30 A.M.

Worship: 10:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday: Bible Study: 6:00 P.M.

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Biblical Morality

Our postmodern culture argues that the Bible is an outdated, irrelevant text. Therefore, it is wrong to appeal to it as an authoritative standard for morality. Robert Williams, in his book, *Just As I Am: A Practical Guide to Being Out, Proud, and Christian*, offers the following argument in defense of homosexuality: "The point is not whether or not some passages in the Bible condemns homosexual acts; the point is that you cannot allow your moral and ethical decisions to be determined by the literature of a people whose culture and history are so far removed from your own. You must dare to be iconoclastic enough to say, 'So what if the Bible does say it? Who cares?'"

Sadly, Mr. Williams echoes the sentiments of a lot of folks when he dismisses the moral relevancy of Scripture. People have a problem with authority, especially Biblical authority. Folks want to be religious, but they also want to be free to do as they choose. This is not something new. It was said of the children of Israel in the days of the judges, "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (17:6; 21:25).

An iconoclast is somebody who challenges or overturns traditional beliefs, customs, and values. For the iconoclast, truth is whatever he wants it to be. Anything in the Bible which is objectionable is declared

to be culturally irrelevant. The argument is generally framed as follows. The Bible is thousands of years old. The fastest Moses, Jesus, or Paul ever traveled was five or six miles an hour. Today, we can board a plane and fly anywhere in the world at six hundred miles an hour. How can the Bible possibly be relevant in our modern, highly technological world? The answer is pretty simple. A man can lust, covet, or slander his neighbor at six hundred miles an hour just as easily as he can at six miles an hour. Make no mistake, our world is far more technologically advanced than the world of the Bible, but people are still the same.

The Bible anticipated the iconoclasts and their attacks on the integrity and relevancy of Scripture when it asserted, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8). Is there a part of the Sermon on the Mount that doesn't resonate today with the honest reader? What truth in God's ancient book can be demonstrated to no longer be true?

Either the Bible is the word of God or it isn't. It claims to be inspired, authoritative, all-sufficient, and by implication inerrant (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). Those claims can be defended. Therefore, to reject what the Bible says about morality or any other matter is to reject the authority of the Creator Himself. Biblical morality may not be popular, but it is right!

Temptation

"Better shun the bait than struggle in the snare." - John Dryden

Every single one of us faces temptation. It is powerful and should not be underestimated. Jesus knew of this and said to His disciples, "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26:41). And even in the example prayer, He said, "And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one...." (Matt. 6:13).

Jesus understood what it meant to be tempted. "And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan..." (Mark 1:13). But thank God the Hebrews writer gave us some great encouragement, "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:15-16).

Thankfully the Bible helps us understand the process of temptation, even going back to when Eve succumbed to it in the Garden of Eden. "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate" (Gen. 3:6). Here we see the methodology of Satan, also described for us by the apostle John. "For all that is in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life - is not of the Father but is of the world" (1 John 2:16). Through the flesh, the eyes, and one's pride, Satan hurls his darts and, if we are not careful, we succumb.

James adds the process of how sin develops. "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death" (James 1:14-15).

Remember the words of Paul, "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13).

The Sin Problem

The world has a problem with sin. John the Apostle writes, "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19). Although written centuries ago, the words are still true.

The church is not immune from the struggle of sin. Because the church is composed of human beings, she remains imperfect. However, the church is the place to be to find strength and success in dealing with sin. It is imperative that even those in the church be reminded of the consequences of sin.

1. It Separates from God. According to Isaiah, our continual sinning will push God away and close His ears to our prayers (Isa. 59:1, 2).

2. It Robs Our Happiness. David speaks of the misery and unhappiness of sin in his Psalm of penance (Psa. 51).

3. It Hardens the Heart. "The deceitfulness of sin," the Hebrew writer contends, "will ultimately harden the heart" (Heb. 3:13).

4. It Destroys. Paul warns that sin destroys the soul now and forever (1 Tim. 5:6; Rom. 6:23).

What Do You See?

"For whoever lacks these qualities [faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, godliness, brotherly affection, and love] is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins" (2 Peter 1:9).

Too many of us do not see what we need to see (Jer. 5:21). While we might be able to see today, we do not see tomorrow. We do not see what is coming in judgment and eternity. Because of this we do not plan. We do not try to change. We do not seek to get stronger, etc.

While we might be able to see today, we do not see yesterday. We do not see how sinful and wretched we were. We do not see that we've been cleansed of sin. We do not see that we have been washed and made new. When we have obeyed the Gospel and our sins have been forgiven, this is cause for celebration (Acts 8:39). This calls for thanksgiving! If we know we've been forgiven, let us be thankful.

Many cannot see beyond the now. We cannot see beyond this world. Many cannot see their own sin. Many cannot see their growth (or lack thereof).

Let us keep our eyes wide open and healthy. Let us see ourselves for who we are. Let us see our glorious God for who he is and what he desires for us.

Living without Fear

In *Don Quixote*, there is a character named Sancho Panza. One night, Sancho had hung from the ledge of a window, afraid to let go. As the light of day dawned, he found that his toes were about an inch from the ground.

How often are we so close to a blessing from God, and because of fear or uncertainty, we won't let go and claim the blessing. We must live by faith. This means letting go and trusting God. The worst thing that can happen is to fall into His "everlasting arms."

"The eternal God is a dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms..." (Deut. 33:27).

On our way to a positive day, let go and let God's positive will take control of your life. He is far more qualified to run it than you are. Trust Him! Fear is merely a state of mind. It is a choice. Paul wrote, "for God has not given us a spirit of fear ..." (2 Tim. 1:7).

Don't hang on the edge of God's blessings. Reach out and accept them. Take another step toward your goal. The next step may be the key.