

The Danger of Normalizing Sin

A Study of the Book of Romans

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Key Truth: The folly and darkness of mankind is expressed in our desire for the abnormal instead of the normal.

Robertson McQuilkin, one-time president of Columbia International University wrote this about the Christian Life: “Average is not necessarily normal. For example, the average temperature of patients in a hospital may be 100 degrees, but such a temperature is not normal. The average score for a group of friends on the golf course may be 85 for the day, but par may be only 72.” (R. McQuilkin, *Victorious Christian Living*, p. 3). The disparity between *average* and *normal* that McQuilkin observes about the Christian life is also evident in our secular world. What’s considered normal in our world today may simply be average or, in God’s eyes, abnormal. Since God has clearly revealed his standard of righteousness in his Word, we are without excuse when we attempt to create a new standard of what we consider right. Therefore, it is dangerous to dismiss God’s righteous standard and to seek to *normalize* sin.

DISCUSS

Read **Romans 1:20-28** and discuss with the group a statement or concept that stood out to you or impacted you in the sermon entitled “The Danger of Normalizing Sin.”

DIG IN

1. Exchanged Glory by normalizing Idolatry. (Romans 1:23-24)

Normalization: “Social processes through which ideas and actions come to be seen as 'normal' and become taken-for-granted or 'natural' in everyday life.”

In what ways do you see sin being “normalized” today?

In verses 22-23, what did Paul say mankind has exchanged, and for what? Why is this a dangerous trade downward?

In what ways has this led to impurity (v. 24)?

2. Exchanged Truth by normalizing Falsehood. (Romans 1:25-26a)

In what ways have we exchanged “truth about God” (theology) for a lie? In what ways is this a further spiral downward?

3. Exchanged Natural Relations by normalizing Unnatural Relations. (Romans 1:26b-28)

In verses 26-27, Paul highlights the dangerous consequences of this downward spiral into sinfulness. What are the consequences he points out?

In what ways is deviant, sinful sexuality a social consequence rather than a cause of our troubles?

In what ways might we reverse this descent into sin and degradation?

DO

What are practical ways the Christian Church can address this problem and promote its remedy?