

Biblical Morality, Part 1

OVER THE PAST 18 MONTHS or so we have sent a number of short articles* to lay out the case that God exists, that it is rational to believe in Him, that we are a part of His creation and that He loves us and cares for us and wants what is best for us. Some of this we learn simply from His creation (Romans 1:20) but much else we learn from His **revealed** will —which is His word: The Bible.

SINCE NO HUMAN CAN BE OMNISCIENT (have complete knowledge), we must look outside of ourselves for moral guidance. As our Creator, it is God who set in place the laws of physics AND the laws of morality. Since God wants what is best for us, and He IS omniscient, only He is in the position to reveal to us the laws of morality under which mankind can flourish.

GOD HAS REVEALED THOSE LAWS but mankind has repeatedly shown that they have little interest in following His morality. When we violate His laws (of either physics or morality), there are always consequences. And too often, we blame God for the suffering when it is WE who have sinned!

GOD COMPARES HIS RELATIONSHIP TO US as similar to the parent-child relationship (Matthew 23:37; John 1:12; 2 Corinthians 6:18), one that reflects the difference in knowledge and the parent's need to set limits on a child's behavior **for the good of the child**. We who are now parents understand that much better than we did when we were children!

HOW THEN SHOULD WE LIVE? Among the prohibitions God gives us is that of fornication —a word rarely spoken these days but a word that encompasses all types of sexual immorality. 1 Corinthians 6:18 tells us to “Flee fornication” and Galatians 5:20 calls it a “deed of the flesh” and lists it alongside the sins of idolatry, sorcery, drunkenness, jealousy, and others. The warning is clear — we are to stay away from fornication. But do you understand what it is?

IN SHORT, ANY form of unlawful (by God's Law!) sexual behavior is a form of fornication. In fact, the ONLY sexual behavior approved by God is within a God-ordained marriage between a man and a woman. ANY sexual behavior outside of that

**The articles referred to are available at www.indianriverchurchofchrist.com.*

violates God's law and is a form of fornication.

IT DOES NOT MATTER if man (through the state) redefines marriage to include sodomy (the old word for homosexual behavior), polygamy (being married to more than one person at a time), or bestiality (which I don't even want to define!). Society may no more, without consequence, overturn God's definition of marriage (one man and one woman for life — Matthew 19:4-6) than it may pass an effective law against gravity.

NOR DOES IT MATTER if a particular local church or more widespread denomination that calls itself "Christian" takes a vote to decide to allow or even bless some other form of "marriage" or sexual behavior. If they do not follow God's law, then they have turned their backs on God Himself!

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, our 16th President, is reputed to have asked "If you call a tail a leg, how many legs has a dog? Five? No, calling a tail a leg doesn't make it a leg." In his statement we see the futility of some who go out of their way to redefine terms as a way of concealing their true intent — and many are led away from the truth by such devices. An informed knowledge of God's true word is the best defense against such people and that knowledge can only be obtained by a diligent **study and application** of the Bible in our lives. We need not fear that study and application because, in following Jesus, we may have "life more abundantly" (John 10:10).

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE about what the Bible says on this or any other topic, then give us a call or visit our website.

The Indian River Church of Christ

We meet in the Shopping Center at 2 South Main Street in Philadelphia NY.

We assemble Sunday mornings at 10 for Bible study and at 11 for worship.

We also assemble Thursday evenings at 7:15 for Bible study.

Our website is www.indianriverchurchofchrist.com.

Our phone number is (315) 629-4155