

Normalizing Righteousness

Sunday, November 10, 2019

A few weeks ago I introduced the idea of Normalizing Righteousness based on the concept of Social Normalization or the process through which ideas and behaviors that may fall outside of [social norms](#) come to be regarded as "[normal](#)".

From the world's perspective this means that ideas and behaviors that are contrary to God's Word have, overtime, come to be accepted as normal and acceptable. On the other hand, what God has declared to be good and right is now regarded as outdated, abnormal and even wrong

It is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophetic declaration...

Isaiah 5:20, 24 (NIV)

20 Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

24 ...for they have rejected the law of the Lord Almighty and spurned the word of the Holy One.

My challenge has been to reverse that process by making righteousness a normal part of our everyday lives

Practical Ways to Normalize Righteousness

Key Texts:

Matthew 5:14-16 New International Version (NIV)

14 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. **15** Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. **16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

1 Peter 2:11-12 New International Version (NIV)

11 Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. **12** Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

Thoughts to Consider

1. There will never be an exhaustive list
2. These should continue to be works in progress
3. These are not meant to be legalistic rules that save us, or which are applied in judgement against others

CATEGORY: Drugs and Alcohol

PRINCIPLE: These have the ability to change who we are

SCRIPTURES:

Proverbs 20:1 New International Version (NIV)

20 Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise.

PRACTICAL INCORPORATION:

- Abstain
- Don't keep it in your house
- Don't be afraid not to drink when you are with others who do
- Remind yourself how stupid people can get when they are drinking and/or taking drugs

CATEGORY: Cultural Trends and Celebrations

PRINCIPLE: We are called to be different

SCRIPTURES:

Exodus 23:2 New International Version (NIV)

2 “Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong.

2 Corinthians 6:17 New International Version (NIV)

17 Therefore, “Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.”

PRACTICAL INCORPORATION:

- This world is really messed up. I've seen some of my friends back east that have fallen away from God & you can see them try to fit in the world by partying, the way

they dress, talk. They are never going to fit in, they belong to God. The world thinks we are weird & different, but really, we are quite normal, they just need their eyes opened to see.

- We don't celebrate Halloween
- Maintain your scriptural integrity when it comes to issues that are contrary to God's Word i.e. Homosexuality, Transgenderism, Polyamorism

CATEGORY: Social Media

PRINCIPLE: Our social media should reflect our relationship with God

SCRIPTURES:

Psalm 71:15 New International Version (NIV)

15 My mouth will tell of your righteous deeds, of your saving acts all day long—though I know not how to relate them all.

Psalm 66:16 New International Version (NIV)

16 Come and hear, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me.

PRACTICAL INCORPORATION:

- Keep Social Media clean
- I share God's Word and the Truth about Him on my social media accounts (Dana Deaton)
- Shorten the distance between who you say you are in Christ and what your social media declares (Diane Blackwell)

CATEGORY: Living Out Our Faith Publicly

PRINCIPLE: Our light needs to shine in this world

SCRIPTURES:

Matthew 5:16 New International Version (NIV)

16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

PRACTICAL INCORPORATION:

- I tell people in the drive-thru and store that I'm praying for them. (Dana Deaton)
- Praying for our food at restaurants, (Fernanda Carner)
- asking people how you can pray for them (Fernanda Carner)
- I live unashamed daily about how amazing God is I am a true testimony to His grace. I proudly speak about all He has done for me. (Angela Smith)
- We always say grace before our meals and this includes public places. Even if it's a friend or colleague that I am out to eat with, regardless if they are a believer or not. I do not hesitate to say grace. (Angela Smith)
- All of the above when we are in public