



Sunday – February 11, 2024

The Lakeland Hills Leader

Lakeland Hills church of Christ

2510 Lakeland Hills Blvd
Lakeland, FL 33805
(863) 688-4336

Schedule of Services

Sunday

9:00 AM Bible Study
9:50 AM Worship
6:00 PM Worship

Wednesday

7:00 PM Bible Study

Visit our Website:

www.lakelandhillschurchofchrist.com

For Sermon & Class outlines,
Bible Study Materials and
Other Information.

Visit our Facebook Page:

www.facebook.com/LakelandHillschurchofchrist for events,
information, and links to our
YouTube Archives

Visit us on YouTube:

www.youtube.com/channel/UCu7AG_3jUtpBDlr2NPqB3iw for
Live Streams and Video
Archives.

Elders

Bob Marschall
Leon Miller
Larry Wisdom

Deacons

Bucky Day
Sherman Johnson
Michael Sadler
David Williams

Evangelist

Chuck Kozens

EVOLVING STANDARDS OF DECENCY

By Dennis Abernathy

In 1958, Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren spoke of the “*evolving standards of decency*.” The implication was that when it comes to morality, change is progress. The late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, in an essay, coined the phrase “*defining deviancy down*.” His thesis was that, as a society, America has been “*re-defining deviancy*” exempting conduct, that was previously stigmatized, and quietly raising the “*normal*” level for behavior that was abnormal by earlier standards. Therefore, America has simply redefined deviancy down by explaining away and making normal what a civilized, ordered, and healthy society long ago labeled “*deviant*.”

On the flip side, innocent behavior is fast becoming condemned as deviant! In this way the real deviants are unmasked, and, of course, appear to be not Bonnie and Clyde, but Ozzie and Harriet. Who can deny that we are seeing evolving standards of decency, and the reason is, we are defining deviancy down?

Such is certainly seen in the sexual realm with the predominance of the LGBTQ phenomenon. First, it was same-sex marriage, and now it is the transgender phenomenon. Today we are being told that you are whatever you feel you are. Young people are confused as we move further along the ever-changing gender-neutral road. Biology, science and decency are being ignored as the concepts of masculinity and femininity are being destroyed in young children. For example, Mattel, the manufacturer of Barbie dolls, now has transgender dolls, and a Times Magazine article said: “*It can be a boy, a girl, neither, nor both.*” In public libraries “drag queens” are hosting story hours for children.

Marriage has deteriorated to the point that it is defined according to one’s own desires. Anything goes, and young people are growing up with no understanding of what “marriage” and “home” really mean. Transgenderism is the latest behavior being defined by our sexually-crazed society as being normal, and we are told, not even parents have a right to question their young children about the perverted ideas being put into their minds. Gender is being redefined, and new “genders” are being manufactured, and all of this is supposed to be progress, putting us on the right side of history. But progress in the wrong direction is not something to celebrate, especially when it goes against the natural order of creation, or even the established facts of science.

We are fast normalizing the bizarre, leading to chaos, irrationality, and absurdity. “*We must return to the creation account to remind ourselves that God created only two genders: male and female. Without a belief in God as Creator, there is little hope in making sense of our lives and the roles we are intended to have in marriage, the family, and sexuality.*” WE Will Not Be Silenced p. 171-Erwin W. Lutzer.

Godlessness and aberrant sexuality always go hand in hand! (See Rom. 1: 21-25). Isaiah 5: 20 says: “*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.*” Think on these things.

THE LORD KNOWS THOSE WHO ARE HIS

Paul told Timothy how he could “present [himself] approved to God” (2 Timothy 2:15). By diligently studying the Scriptures and learning how to handle them correctly, he would please the Lord. He then cited the poor example of Hymenaeus and Philetus. They engaged in “worldly and empty chatter” that led to “further ungodliness,” and they had “gone astray from the faith” (2 Timothy 2:16-18).

These same groups exist today – those who accurately handle God’s word and those who misuse it and lead others astray. Sadly, not everyone can tell the difference. While we may stand for the truth, others may reject our message and accuse us of false teaching while they follow erroneous doctrines. This can be discouraging, but Paul gave this consolation: “The Lord knows those who are His” (2 Timothy 2:19). Those around us may not be able to tell the difference between right and wrong. They may think that we are no different from those who teach error. But God knows the difference. He knows who is on His side, providing us with a “firm foundation” for our labors (2 Timothy 2:19). So, remember that the Lord knows those who are His. We do not need to be overly concerned with what others think of us or how they might regard our work. If we do our work faithfully for the Lord, we can be assured of the reward He has promised.

By Andy Sochor