

Holy Sex
Sexual Purity in a World Gone Mad
3 - How Does it Turn into Such a Mess?
The Downward Spiral of Sin
Romans 1:18-32
Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney

STEPS that lead to moral bankruptcy and confusion.

1. You Suppress the Truth

Romans 1:18 "...who suppress the truth in unrighteousness"

Our natural tendency apart from the grace of God is to "suppress" the truth - to push it down and walk across it, thinking that we can make good decisions on our own.

Little thoughts can lead to big sins with great big consequences!

"Some people have spectacular failures where in an instant they abruptly burst into flames, crash, and burn. But the more common way people get into trouble evolves from hundreds of tiny decisions - decisions which go undetected - that slowly, like water tapping on a rock, wear down a person's character. Not blatantly or precipitously, but subtly, over time, we get caught in a web of cutting corners and compromise, self-deceit and wrong thinking, which goes unchallenged by anyone in our lives." Patrick Morley, *Man in the Mirror*, 1997

You need God's Word and God's people at close range in your life if you're going to avoid sexual chaos and confusion! Don't dare take your cues from the world.

Hebrews 4:12-14 "For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account."

If you live a life of consistently ignoring or suppressing God's truth, it'll be the most natural thing in the world for you to just slide on down to this next step.

Apart from the Word of God, we don't think much of the glory of God. It's ONLY in God's Word that we find big picture connections between God's glory and our daily life.

2. You Refuse to Honor or Glorify God

Romans 1:21 "because although they knew God, they *did not glorify Him as God...*"

To glorify God means to make much of God - to put Him in His rightful place and delight in Him, so that despite circumstances, disappointments, and shattered dreams that are attached to this world, you still have a satisfaction in something greater that bubbles up from deep within and quenches you even when the things the world says should matter most are leaving you parched.

The human heart craves worship.

"We worship God when, while we partake of His good gifts, something occurs in the deepest parts of our soul that forbids glory terminating on the gift itself or on our enjoyment of it but that runs deeper into and extends out to the Giver. Apart from understanding God and worshipping Him in this way, everything becomes superficial. Everything - from dinner to sex to marriage to kids to work to arts and literature - it's all shallow, all

trivial. But when you understand the driving force behind everything, all of a sudden there's an eternal amount of joy at our disposal, because everything we do is enlightened and enlivened by the endless glory of the eternal God." Matt Chandler, *the Explicit Gospel*, pp. 36, 37

Sin – especially sexual sin – is nothing more than our quest to fill a void for satisfaction. Sex was never intended to quench and satisfy your total thirst for real joy in life.

"You can get a large audience together for a strip-tease act – that is, to watch a girl undress on the stage. Now suppose you came to a country where you could fill a theatre by simply bringing a covered plate on to the stage and then slowly lifting the cover so as to let everyone see, just before the lights went out, that it contained a mutton chop or a bit of bacon, would you not think that in that country something had gone wrong with the appetite for food? And would not anyone who had grown up in a different world think there was something equally queer about the state of the sex instinct among us? One critic said that if he found a country in which such strip-tease acts with food were popular, he would conclude that the people of that country were starving." C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, C. S. Lewis, pp. 75-76

God never intended for sex to be the altar at which you worship!

A relationship with God, through His Son, Jesus Christ, is the only thing that will deeply satisfy you and keep you from digging through the scrap heaps of sin, trying to satisfy what only He can satisfy.

3. You'll Develop An Ungrateful Heart

Romans 1:18 "because although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful..."

Dissatisfaction is the breeding ground for most sin.

An ungrateful heart will start to manifest itself in your relationship to God and other people, especially those closest to you. Nothing will ever be enough. In your eye everyone falls short... including God.

4. Fantasizing

Romans 1:21 "although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts..."

At this point, you begin to entertain foolish thoughts. You start allowing your mind to speculate, day-dream, and fantasize about things.

You'll move deeper into sin, and all thoughts of God will be extinguished.

Romans 1:28 "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting."

"In our members there is a slumbering inclination toward desire, which is both sudden and fierce. With irresistible power desire seizes master over the flesh. All at once a secret, smoldering fire is kindled. The flesh burns and is in flames. It makes no difference whether it is sexual desire, or ambition, or vanity, or desire for revenge, or love of fame and power, or greed for money... Joy in God is in course of being extinguished in us as we seek all our joy in the creature. At this moment God is quite unreal to us, He loses all reality, and only desire for the creature is real... Satan does not here fill us with hatred of God, but with forgetfulness of God... The lust thus aroused envelops the mind and will of man in deepest darkness. The powers of clear discrimination and of decision are taken from us... It is here that everything within me rises up against the Word of God." Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall Temptation: Two Biblical Studies*, p. 132

The person who will not put forth the effort to control his thoughts will soon lose control of his actions.

2 Corinthians 10:5 "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, **bringing every thought into captivity** to the obedience of Christ."

5. Darkness of Heart

Romans 1:21 "... and their foolish hearts were darkened."

This is where you cross a line and head into places you never intended to go.

But there's a way out. Christ died to set us free! Turn to God in repentance. Put God number one in your life again. Begin to pursue God with the same intensity and passion with which you have chased the lusts of your flesh. Decide to quench your thirst in God.

Psalm 16:11 "You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures evermore."