

***1 Thes. 4:1 (KJV)***

*Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.*

Paul has a lot to say about moral living and today’s Epistle is a prime example of that. He very strongly warns us against sexual promiscuity and avarice.

What we have to consider in reading his admonishments is the era in which they were written. The world of Paul’s time and place was dominated by pagan religions much of which were fertility rites. Commerce was based on the principle of dog eat dog, caveat emptor, buyer beware.

Christianity came along and ran head on against the prevailing society, against the immorality of that society. Christianity was a counter-culture religion.

As an example of the Church’s teaching we can read ***Romans 12:1-2 (KJV)*** *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup>And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

From the beginning the Church has been the yardstick of moral and ethical behavior. Yet today there are those that proclaim that Christianity should not be the benchmark but should adapt itself to the social and ethical mores of our present day society, that the teachings of the Church should reflect the changes that have occurred in our culture.

I have a problem with that line of thought. Sin is sin. Greed is greed. Dishonesty is dishonesty. What was true in the teachings of the Church in Saint Paul’s time are just as

relevant today. Today's world is just as pagan as the time that Paul lived. Today's world is just as corrupt as the time that Paul lived and today Mammon rules the world as its chief deity.

The Church as a whole has abdicated its role as the defender of morality. Today most of the "mainline" denominations have become so "relevant" that they are no longer effective against the onslaught of rampant depravity.

We have so lowered our standards as a society that there are no more remaining moral or ethical standards.