

Pastor Scott L. Harris
Grace Bible Church, NY
July 5, 2015

Citizenship in a Degenerating Society, Part 1
Romans 1:16-32

Introduction

America, America! God shed His grace on thee, but you have lost self-control, and redefined liberty.

Last week I wrote and posted an article, *A Brief Christian Response to the SCOTUS Decision on Marriage*. My purpose was to simply encourage you that though we grieve over yet another giant step downward into the cesspool of immorality that has been taken by our nation and for those that will be harmed by this, we are to remain steadfast in our commitment to live for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ and to proclaim Him to all people. We know things are going to decline further, but we will not become distressed or fall into despair because our God is greater and He is working out His plan for the ages. In the end, God wins.

Over the past week I have been made aware of some of the responses others have had to *Obergefell et al. v. Hodges*, which by the way, I did read in its entirety in preparation for today's sermon. Some writers have provided much wisdom in analysis and recommendations. Many responses have been politically charged rhetoric either for or against with little evidence the writer understands the decision. There has been a large response of government entities, companies and individuals using rainbow colors to show approval of the ruling. (They do so in ignorance that God already designated the rainbow as a sign of His covenant with Noah in Genesis 9. I think it is good to remind people of that meaning and open a conversation about both God's judgment and mercy). While I am greatly disappointed in particular people and by how many have jumped on that bandwagon in complete ignorance of both the ramifications of this ruling and what actually occurs in the LGBT community, yet at least many of the media outlets have revealed their true colors and we now know why their reporting has been so biased for so many years. The most disappointing have been pastors who have revealed their own political and theologic ignorance in the advice they have given to the church. One of these irritated me enough that I posted a response on our website and Facebook page.

While it would be easy to use all our time today talking this specific issue, I instead want to talk about the broader issue it brings up. How are we as Christians supposed to respond to a degenerating society? This includes not only maintaining the right perspective, but also living in a manner that is pleasing to our Lord, and engaging our society with the truth of God's word in both its warnings of judgment and hope of forgiveness. I will be doing this over the next two weeks. Today I will give you a brief legal history of how we got here and its ramifications. Then I want to show you where our society fits theologically from Romans 1. Then next week I will talk about the importance of your citizenship in heaven and how that guides you to living properly while still here on earth.

A Brief Legal History of a Degenerating Society

Since I am not a lawyer and this is not a law class, I am not going to trace all the SCOTUS decisions that have set the precedent for *Obergefell et al. v. Hodges*, but I do want to trace some of the major decisions that have led up to this.

The first is the 1947 *Everson v. Board of Education* in which the court began to the use of the phrase "*separation of Church and State*" to define the First Amendment as a freedom from religion instead a freedom of religion. What had been a restriction on government began to become a restriction on people. Next is the 1962 decision in *Engel v. Vitale* that removed the required saying of the non-sectarian Regents prayer here in New York (*Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessing upon us, our parents, our teachers and our Country*). It was made without any judicial precedent. Senator Sam Ervin (NC) commented, "*I should like to ask whether we would be far*

wrong in saying that in this decision the Supreme Court has held that God is unconstitutional and for that reason the public school must be segregated against Him.”

His statement was close to the truth, for this was followed quickly in *Murray v. Curlett* in 1963 in which SCOTUS struck down allowing prayer in school. That same year in *Abington Township School District v. Schempp* the court struck down Pennsylvania’s requirement to have ten Bible verses read daily without interpretation, comment or questions asked and with a provision to excuse students and therefore voluntary participation. These decisions and the many made since upon their precedents have helped fuel the shift in our society into secularism, for the only religion allowed in the schools now is atheism, and with that, the Bible became viewed as irrelevant in establishing moral standards for society.

In 1973 in *Roe v. Wade*, the Court created a new “right” to legal abortion based on the due process clause of the 14th Amendment and the “right to privacy.” The right to life of the child was ignored. This was raw, judicial activism.

In 1996 in *Romer v. Evans*, the Court struck down Colorado Amendment 2 which was an initiative by the people of the state passed in 1992 to prevent homosexuals being given special status as a protected class. The law insisted that everyone be treated equally in law. The majority opinion was based on their perception that the people of Colorado voted for it based upon their animosity toward homosexuals. A raw exercise of judicial power that not only removed the right of the people of Colorado to determine a matter Constitutionally reserved to them, but also disparaged them personally at the same time.

In 2005, the Court redefined the meaning of “public” and “private” in the Fifth Amendment in *Kelo et al. V. City of New London*. Since then private property can be taken (forced sale) by government and transferred to another private owner as long as there is a public benefit such as increased tax revenue.

In 2012, the Court upheld the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) after the majority determined it could redefine the words actually in the law - the individual mandate fine became a tax - so that it could uphold Congress having the right to pass the law as a tax since the law would otherwise violate the Commerce Clause. The Court did this again this year when it saved Obamacare again by redefining an Exchange not established by the State as an Exchange established by the State. The dissent written by Justice Scalia called this reasoning, “*absurd*” and resulting in “*words no longer have meaning.*” He now refers to the law as SCOTUS Care since the court seems to be working on the overriding principle that the ACA must be saved.

Obergefell et al. V. Hodges continues in the line of these kinds of court rulings having a basis in raw judicial power in creating a new right as pointed out in the dissents by Justices Roberts, Scalia, Thomas and Alito. Roberts commented, “*The majority’s decision is an act of will, not legal judgment,*” adding later, “*The Court today not only overlooks our country’s entire history and tradition but actively repudiates it . . .*” Robert’s dissent focuses on the fact that neither the Due Process clause nor the Equal Protection Clause support the Majority opinion despite their failed arguments to the contrary. As he states later, the constitution “*had nothing to do with it.*” Scalia’s dissent is scathing showing that what he calls “*today’s judicial Putsch*” is “*a naked judicial claim to legislative - indeed, super-legislative - power; a claim fundamentally at odds with our system of government.*” Thomas, who concurred with all the dissenting opinions, points out in his dissent that the Majority failed to understand both liberty and the purpose of marriage. Alito’s dissent focused on the fact that the Constitution leaves the question of marriage to the states and that the decision “*usurps the constitutional right of the people to decide . . .*” He concluded, “*But all Americans, whatever their thinking on that issue, should worry about what the majority’s claim of power portends.*”

Legal Ramifications of Obergefell v. Hodges

As Christians, we don’t need to worry, but we are concerned and want to prepare for what is coming next. Contrary to the claims that this decision will not be detrimental to those who believe marriage is only to be between a man and a woman, all the evidence is to the contrary. Already in states either

recognizing homosexual “marriage” or having non-discrimination laws, Christians who do not want to participate have been sued and have lost their businesses. Here are three of the most well known cases to illustrate:

Aaron & Melissa Kline of Oregon declined to make a wedding cake since it would be an artistic expression and therefore participation in the “wedding,” and not just a commodity (all baked goods in the store could be bought by anyone). They have lost their business, been fined \$135,000 and been placed under what is in effect a gag order from talking about it. So much for the First Amendment.

Here in New York, Robert and Cynthia Gifford were set up for a law suit when they declined to host a same sex ceremony at Liberty Ridge Farms. Despite the fact that such a ceremony is against their religious convictions and that it would take place in their personal living space, they were still fined \$13,000.

Elane Huguenin, a devout Christian photographer in New Mexico, has been fined \$7,000 plus legal fees because she declined to photograph a same sex commitment ceremony even though same sex marriages were not legal in New Mexico. What is frightening about this case is that Judge Richard Bosson in his concurring opinion said that the Huguenins “*now are compelled by law to compromise the very religious beliefs that inspire their lives,*” adding “*it is the price of citizenship.*” He thinks that is right and a good thing.

There has not only already been the oppression of Christian businesses, but also the expansion of public displays of perversion (LGBT Pride parades, Macy’s, St. Patricks, etc.), and the expansion of indoctrination of children in schools that LGBT lifestyles are not just to be tolerated, not just to be accepted, but to be celebrated. This decision will push that into all the states.

The warnings in the dissents by Justices Roberts, Scalia, Thomas and Alito are sobering. Regarding the First Amendment, Roberts wrote, “*The majority graciously suggests that religious believers may continue to “advocate” and “teach” their views of marriage. The First Amendment guarantees, however, the freedom to “exercise” religion. Ominously, that is not a word the majority uses.*” He went on to point out “*Indeed, the Solicitor General candidly acknowledged that the tax exemptions of some religious institutions would be in question if they opposed same-sex marriage. There is little doubt that these and similar questions will soon be before this Court. Unfortunately, people of faith can take no comfort in the treatment they receive from the majority today.*” Scalia, Thomas, and Alito concurred and said similar things in their own dissents.

All four also highlighted how the majority “*sully those on the other side of the debate . . .*” in which they “*portray everyone who does not share the majority’s “better informed understanding” as bigoted*” (Roberts). “*These apparent assaults on the character of fairminded people will have an effect, in society and in court*” (Roberts). Alito wrote, “*[The decision] will be used to vilify Americans who are unwilling to assent to the new orthodoxy. In the course of its opinion, the majority compares traditional marriage laws to laws that denied equal treatment for African-Americans and women. The implications of this analogy will be exploited by those who are determined to stamp out every vestige of dissent.*”

The dissents also pointed out this decision will result in legal chaos. Roberts points out “*the majority’s reasoning would apply with equal force to the claim of a fundamental right to plural marriage.*” (Law suit already filed). What then will come behind that? Thomas pointed out “*The majority’s inversion of the original meaning of liberty will likely cause collateral damage to other aspects of our constitutional order that protect liberty.*” In particular, he warned it “*threatens the religious liberty our Nation has long sought to protect,*” and “*Its decision will have inestimable consequences for our Constitution and our society.*”

They also warned that is another huge step in fundamentally changing our system of government. Roberts wrote, “*If an unvarying social institution enduring over all of recorded history cannot inhibit judicial policymaking, what can?*” “*The Court’s accumulation of power does not occur in a vacuum. It comes at the expense of the people.*” Alito wrote, “*What it evidences is the deep and perhaps*

irremediable corruption of our legal culture's conception of constitutional interpretation." Scalia warned, "Today's decree says that my Ruler, and the Ruler of 320 million Americans coast-to-coast, is a majority of the nine lawyers on the Supreme Court."

The Degeneration of a Society - Romans 1:16-32

The apostle Paul was set apart for the ministry of the gospel. As stated in Romans 1:16-17, Paul was never ashamed of the gospel because he recognized it as *"the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, but the righteous man shall live by faith."* Romans is his most extensive presentation of it.

The gospel is good news, but it begins with the bad news that man is unrighteous and therefore justly under God's wrath. This includes the immoral unrighteous (Romans 1:18-32), the moral unrighteous (Romans 2:1-16), the religious unrighteous (Romans 2:17-29), and all humanity because there are none who are righteous (Romans 3:1-20). Paul then goes on to explain how God demonstrates His righteousness in justifying sinners on the basis of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 3:20-5:21) whom He then sanctifies (Romans 6:1-8:39). His promises to believers are as sure as His promises to Israel (Romans 9-11). Paul then concludes with exhortations for those made righteous by faith in Christ Jesus to live a transformed life in keeping with that belief.

Paul's description of the immoral unrighteous in Romans 1:18-32 also reveals the decline that occurs as people suppress the truth and move farther away from God and righteousness. The first departure is a failure to worship God and give Him thanks. ¹⁸ *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,* ¹⁹ *because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.* ²⁰ *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.* ²¹ *For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.* ²² *Professing to be wise, they became fools,* ²³ *and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.*

God made it evident that He is the creator and therefore worthy of worship by His creatures both within man (conscience) and to man (Creation itself). Belief in God is innate within man and the outward evidence that there is a Creator is everywhere you look, and certain of God's attributes such as His power, divine nature and goodness are clearly seen in the Creation. I have spoken on this many times in the past, so I am not going to repeat the obvious here. Even from a science perspective, which is my undergraduate training, the laws of physics are against everything being a cosmic accident, the random consequences of a hypothetical Big Bang. Man is without excuse, yet man demonstrates his ungodliness and unrighteousness in his suppression of the truth in unrighteousness.

The suppression of truth begins with the failure to give proper worship and thanks to the Creator. Instead of believing what God has revealed, man begins to speculate and his foolish heart is darkened, that is, he loses his ability to perceive and understand. Instead of becoming humble because of this, he becomes proud to believe his own speculations, and professing to be wise, he becomes a fool.

In ancient times this suppression of the truth resulted in the exchange of the worship of the Creator for the worship of created animals and man bowed down to idols made of wood, stone and metal shaped in the form of man or beast. Even the Greeks, who are considered so wise because of their philosophers, worshiped a pantheon of gods and their society was filled with idols. Pagan societies worshiped all sorts of things both living and inanimate.

Though there is an increasing paganism and idolatry in the United States, the suppression of truth in our society is better described by 2 Peter 3:3-6. ³*Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will*

come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, ⁴ and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." ⁵ For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, ⁶ through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.

Evolutionary philosophy rose in the later part of the nineteenth century, and by the later part of the twentieth century it had become dominant in American education and in government entities. In many school districts, it became not only illegal to teach Creation, but it also became illegal to question evolution. Science that cannot be challenged is religious philosophy, not science. Many churches thought they could accommodate evolution with various theories of interpreting Genesis 1-11, but all of them destroyed the reliability of the Bible. They could no longer believe that God created the world in six days or that there was a worldwide flood during the days of Noah, for speculations that had a veneer of science replaced God's revelation as the source of truth. Those following these theological accommodations eventually concluded that no book in the Bible was reliable, and neither was what is recorded about Jesus. And for them, since the gospels record that Jesus believed the Genesis account, then He would be untrustworthy to know and reveal truth. Jesus was reduced to just an ancient historical teacher of ethics.

Modern man in America professed to be wise, but he became a fool. He had a godly heritage, but it became less and less important. American society made this step a long time ago. A steady diet of evolution and secular philosophy for generations has taken its toll upon society and even upon those who still think of themselves as Christians. Despite the polls made over many decades that show a vast majority of Americans self-identifying as Christians, their actions and stated beliefs on other things demonstrate that only a small percentage are Biblical Christians who worship and give thanks to God and to God alone. Let me illustrate this historically with what has happened to two American holidays.

When I was a child, the reason for Thanksgiving Day was already being usurped as "Turkey Day," a day for football and gluttony instead of giving thanks to God. We were very involved in church, but Thanksgiving was a family day, but even so, I can't recall even hearing about a worship service held on Thanksgiving Day, only some special services on the Wednesday night prior. I started holding Thanksgiving Day services here out of my own conviction that at least one church should do so. When my children were young, I started to notice historical revisionism in some children's programming saying that the Pilgrims celebrated to give thanks to the Indians. God was left out of it. That idea has become dominate.

When I was a child the Christmas carols with their words were still played in shopping centers, manger scenes were common and churches focused on celebrating the birth of Christ. However, Santa Claus and getting presents were fast becoming dominate in the culture even then. We have now reached the point at which Christmas carols, if played at all in public, are only music without the words. Manger scenes have been largely banned from display on public properties and the term "Christmas" is being replaced by "holiday" lest someone be offended by a reference to Christ. And most disturbing are the many churches that no longer hold worship services if Christmas falls on a Sunday, so that even for professing Christians, the term Christmas has come to mean a day of giving presents and feasting.

Romans 1:24-25 tells us God's response to those who no longer honor Him or give thanks. ²⁴ *Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. ²⁵ For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen."*

God pulls His hand of protection away and yields people to what they want to do and to the natural consequences of those actions. This is a major aspect of the revelation of His wrath. God gives such people up to the strong desires of their own hearts toward impurity, with the particular word here (ajkavqartoV / akathartos) indicating moral impurity, especially in relationship to sexual sin.

While there has always been sexual immorality, it was previously recognized as such and society suppressed it. The first noticeable change in this area began in the 1920's as fashion quickly changed and became more risqué among the wealthy. Cultural backlash and economic depression suppressed this during the 1930's and 40's, but many forces coalesced in the 1960's to produce a cultural rebellion among many teens and young adults that became dominant in the 1990's as those people moved into positions of cultural and political leadership. Chief among these various influences were the decline of the church following WW II, the loss of generational family influence in the mass movement of people to growing cities for economic reasons, the rise of psychology to dominate child rearing philosophy and practices, the uses of contraceptives - especially "the pill" - which reduced the procreational possibilities due to recreational sexual activity, and the rise of the welfare state that removed responsibility from fathers and enabled single mothers to raise children independent of the fathers. Over one third of all children born in the United States are now born to single mothers, and in some communities, it is three quarters. The sexual revolution degraded society and unleashed epidemics of various sexually transmitted diseases that have done great harm to millions.

Corresponding to all this in American culture was the exchange of the truth for a lie. The vast majority of Americans claim to believe in God, but they live as if He does not exist. They worship and serve the creature - man himself - instead of the Creator. Why? Primarily because Americans have embraced the speculations of evolution, a fairy tale for grown-ups, and are following the materialistic and hedonistic philosophies that arise out of it. Philosophies that are perhaps simply explained by the phrases, "*he who dies with the most toys wins,*" and "*you only go around once in life, so go for the gusto.*"

Sexual immorality and theological apostasy do not remain static. They continue to decline. Romans 1:26-27 explains the next step down. ²⁶ "*For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural,* ²⁷ *and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.*"

God pulls His hand of protection back further and yields people to follow their degrading passions which Paul specifically describes here as that of lesbians and sodomites, but bi-sexual and trans-gender would also fit. All sexual sins are serious because as Paul points out in 1 Corinthians 6:18, "the immoral man sins against his own body." They bring worse natural consequences, and sexually transmitted diseases are serious. Here in Romans 1:27 Paul points out that sodomites receive in their own persons the due penalty of their error. The media does not report on the natural consequences of sodomy, but it is serious and tragic. There are not only all the sexually transmitted diseases, but there are a host of gastrointestinal medical problems caused by the physical damage and contamination caused by their practices. Their morbidity rate is much higher with life spans only averaging into the 40's instead of 70's and 80's for the general population. It is politically correct to warn people about the dangers of using tobacco because of its detrimental effect on health, but it is hateful to warn homosexuals for the same reasons.

The issue here is practice, not marriage, and American society began to embrace homosexual perversions a long time ago. More than thirty years ago television began to introduce homosexual characters in their situation comedies as a way to make it more acceptable to American society, and it worked. Homosexual philosophy and pride has been pushed in American universities for even longer. Please understand that Obergefell V. Hodges is not a step down into this level, it is simply the result of this society being at this level for a long time. It is a step down into the next level.

Romans 1:28-32. ²⁸ "*And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,* ²⁹ *being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips,* ³⁰ *slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,* ³¹ *without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;* ³² *and although they know the ordinance of*

God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.” Hearty approval gross sin is what has happened with the legalization of homosexual “marriage.”

God has largely been excluded from the debate in public matters including this one. It is understandable that secularists want to ignore him, but why do Christians so often refrain from declaring what God has said on a subject and especially so in a public discussion? While it may just be trying to be polite in some cases, I believe the greater reason is fear of rejection, being thought of as uneducated, or suffering slander or other forms of persecution.

When God is no longer acknowledge, He moves His hand back again and yields people to the speculations of their own minds which are depraved. Justice Scalia specifically points out in his dissent that the majority “*opinion’s showy profundities are often profoundly incoherent*” after which he gives multiple examples and concludes, “*The stuff contained in today’s opinion has to diminish this Court’s reputation for clear thinking and sober analysis.*” We have become a society of dominated by depraved minds which is why so often we hear not only politicians, judges and other community leaders, but also just people on the street say things that make no logical sense and can be in direct contradiction to the evidence before them.

Conclusions

This is how we have arrived at the current condition of The United State (singular) of America in 2015. A ruling class has developed that has usurped our Constitution and declared themselves wiser than all others and therefore supreme, but they have only made public that they are indeed fools as described by Scripture.

The questions remain before us, What shall we do? How should we then live? We are long past time for today, so I will have to address those questions next week, but I do want to quickly point you to Philippians 3:17-21 before I close. This is the passage I will expand on next week.

¹⁷ Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. ¹⁸ For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, ¹⁹ whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. ²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

Things are bad and they will get a lot worse, but as Christians, we have a hope that transcends every circumstance. We also have directions for how to live while we await that blessed hope.

Sermon Notes: *Christian Citizenship in a Degenerating Society, Part 1*
Romans 1:16-32

Introduction

Regardless of what happens in society, Christians are to remain _____ in living for the glory of our Lord
Responses to Obergefell v. Hodges has been _____; some good, some political, some ignorant

A Brief Legal History of a Degenerating Society

1947 *Everson v. Board of Education* - it began to redefine First amendment as freedom _____ religion
1962 *Engel v. Vitale* - _____ precedent, it removed public school sponsored non-sectarian voluntary prayer
1963 *Murray v. Curlett* - it removed _____ from public schools
1963 *Abington Township School District v. Schempp* - removed required _____ reading from public Schools
1973 *Roe v. Wade* - without precedent, it created a _____ to abortion supposedly on 14th Amendment
1996 *Romer v Evans* - it struck down a state initiative based on their own perception of _____
2005 *Kelo v. City of New London* - it _____ meaning of “public” and “private” in Fifth Amendment
2012 - it _____ the words in ACA to mean tax so that it would not violate Commerce Clause
2015 - it again redefined _____ in ACA to preserve it - Scalia commenting “*words no longer have meaning*”
2015 *Obergefell v. Hodges* - without precedent, it _____ a new right and _____ marriage and liberty

Legal Ramifications of Obergefell v. Hodges

Christians are not to worry, but we are to be concerned and _____ for the future
Aaron & Melissa Kline of Oregon - fined \$135,000, lost business, have a gag order prevent them talking
Robert and Cynthia Gifford of NY - Fined \$13,000 and have stopped doing weddings in their farm / home
Elane Huguenin of NM - Fined \$7,000 for not taking pictures of gay ceremony not legal in that state
Judge Bosson thought it good to by law _____ people to compromise the religious beliefs that inspire them
_____ of public displays of perversion (LGBT parades) and indoctrination of children
Dissents warn that First Amendment rights will be in _____
The opinion _____ opponents as “bigoted” and “less informed” which will be used to stamp out dissent
Dissents warn this opens the door to legal _____ - plural marriage, constitutional order, liberty
Dissent warns this is another huge step in _____ our system of government

The Degeneration of a Society - Romans 1:16-32

Romans is Paul’s most extensive presentation of the _____
The good news of the gospel begins with the bad news of man’s sinful _____
Romans 1:18-32, The description of the immoral unrighteous _____ the degeneration of a society
God has made Himself clearly _____ both within man (conscience) and to man (Creation itself)
The suppression of truth begins with the _____ to give proper worship and thanks to the Creator
In ancient times, man’s foolish speculations resulted in _____

2 Peter 3:3-6 describes the suppression of _____ in our own times

Evolutionary _____ became dominant in American education and government by the late 20th Century
Churches that tried to accommodate evolution destroyed their ability to _____ any of the books of the Bible

Modern Americans have turned from their godly _____, and professing to be wise, have become foolish

For the vast majority of Americans, Thanksgiving Day is no longer about thanking _____

For the vast majority of Americans, Christmas is about _____ and feasting instead of celebrating Jesus

Romans 1:24-25 - God yields people to their _____ desires and their consequences

The cultural rebellion of the 1960's resulted in a sexual revolution that now _____ society

Sexual _____ has degraded society, redefined family, and unleashed epidemics of STDs

Americans profess belief in God, but live as if he doesn't exist, because they embrace _____ philosophies

Romans 1:26-27 - the next step down in sexual immorality and theological apostasy

Sexual immorality has _____ consequences, and homosexuality even worse ones

Americans began embracing homosexual practice over _____ years ago

Obergefell v. Hodges is a step down into the _____ described in Romans 1:28-32

God is largely _____ from the debate of public matters even by professing Christians

When God is not acknowledged, He yields people to their _____ minds & they no longer think straight

Conclusions

A ruling class has developed that has _____ the Constitution - thinking they are wiser & therefore supreme

Philippians 3:17-21 - our text for next week

Christians have a _____ that transcends circumstances - and gives directions for living in the present

KIDS KORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help.

Young Children - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. **Older Children** - Do one or more of the following: 1) Discuss with your parents the importance of knowing history. 2) Discuss with your parents why society has become so immoral

THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. How did you respond to the SCOTUS decision redefining marriage and liberty? Do you believe the Constitution is a "living document" or an historical document? Why is that important? What have been the consequences already in legalization of homosexual "marriage?" What do you expect to happen in the future? What other legal ramifications do you expect due to Obergefell v. Hodges? Have you read the dissents of the opinion? Why did Paul write Romans? How does he present the gospel in it? How does God's wrath reveal itself against unrighteous men? How has God made Himself known within man? How does He clearly reveal Himself to man outwardly? What begins the suppression of truth? How is that seen today (2 Peter 3)? Why is that foolish? What are its consequences? How is God's wrath revealed in His yielding people to their own desires? What do people do as a result? What have been the consequences of the sexual revolution? How has theological apostasy contributed to God yielding man to the degrading passions of homosexuality? What is the "*due penalty of their error*" that they receive? How does Obergefell v. Hodges show America has declined into the next step down of Romans 1:28-32?