

Moral Standards

In his novels and plays the French philosophy Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) denied the existence of God. Hence, man can no longer discover in God's will the appropriate values and principles for his life. Sartre admitted no moral law, no eternal purpose, all eternal objective truth is gone. He quotes Dostoyevsky: "If God is dead then anything is possible." Unfortunately this philosophy describes the mood of our times. We live in a society that is rapidly moving further and further away from the Judeo-Christian heritage that has shaped our culture. The fact is that once the Christian faith has been abandoned Christian morality will not long survive. I thought about this after I read in the *Ottawa Citizen*, Susan Riley's article Monogamy an outdated expectation. She argues that today there are few compelling, practical or moral arguments in favor of lifelong monogamy-the alternative is no longer unthinkable. It is common place. She says that we are caught in a painful time lag: last century's expectations and this century's reality. She advocates that we must start thinking differently about relationships. Even our children should be told that falling in love with someone else isn't wrong, even that having more than one sexual relationship at once isn't wrong. The only thing what is wrong is lying about what is going on. We should contemplate time-limited contracts, marriages that come up for renewal periodically. If this is not moral bankruptcy, I don't know what it is. And it is even sadder that our capital's leading newspaper prints this immoral diatribe.

Since good and evil in the West are being redefined, relativized and trivialized, Christians should clearly state God's expectations. His laws are true for every culture and age. Marriage is still monogamous. Not only lying about adultery is wrong, adultery itself is still a sin.

As God's people we have a responsibility to our society. We must do more than criticize the paganization of our culture. God's call to His people in every age is to be radically different from the prevailing culture, standards and lifestyle. We must seek holiness. "You must not do as they do in Egypt, where you used to live," God told Moses to say to Israel, "you must not do as they do in the land of Canaan where I am bringing you. Do not follow their practices. You must obey my laws and be careful to follow my decrees. I am the Lord your God" (Lev. 18:1-4). God exists. He is not silent. He speaks through His Word - the Bible. This fact guarantees life's meaning and provides moral boundaries.

Johan D. Tangelder
October 1992