



IS THAT NORMAL?

A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

Everyone wants to be normal. But being normal these days can be hard to define. We are programmed to think that “normal” equates to being typical or average.

People assume they are normal even when they can't define the term. They don't know what normal is, but they claim to be normal anyway.

What is normal? What does it mean? If people who are very different from each other think they are all normal, hasn't the term lost its meaning?

One dictionary defines, *NORMAL* as: “Functioning in a natural way; lacking abnormalities or deficiencies.”

Another has, “Fitting or conforming to a standard.”

Another says, “Not abnormal.”

Well, that doesn't give us much, but maybe a start.

To be “normal” in today's society is generally equated with being “typical” or fitting in with society around you. Thus, being “abnormal” is the opposite: i.e., not fitting in.

“Normal” is not a synonym for “typical.” “Normal” is like “natural.” It indicates a value standard whereas “typical” indicates the absence of a value standard. So if thinking right is part of being normal, then it is essential to have a standard with which to measure right from wrong. Otherwise, “right” and “normal” would have no measurement, and without a standard for right and wrong, the term “normal” becomes meaningless.

If a man believes that normalcy is whatever passes as typical, then everything becomes acceptable and normal, and there can be no measure of right and wrong, good or bad. Man is left to sail through the ocean of life in a ship without a rudder, and without a compass to guide him. He has dismissed God and his law.

God created man with the need for guidance. If he is to succeed in life he can't be left alone to find his own way. Relying solely on himself to determine what is right or normal is a recipe for heart ache, pain, and failure. He is destined to go from one wreck to the next.

If man is his own and only guide, “normal” becomes

changeable from person to person, depending upon his point of view. What is his mindset? His background? If “normal” is viewed from each individual perspective it has no standard.

If a man is moral, then “normal” usually includes being or acting right. If he isn't moral then he isn't concerned with right or wrong ... nor is he concerned with being normal. He is only concerned with himself and what he lusts after at any given moment.

The question of what is normal goes to psychology, anthropology, and history ... because if man and local culture determines what is normal then the standard is changeable from year to year, from place to place ... with each change due to the prevailing belief at the time.

The philosopher Protagoras (490–420 BC) taught that **man is the measure of all things**, which is interpreted to mean that there is no absolute truth, but that truth is whatever each individual deems it to be. So this is actually the doctrine we are concerned about in this study. Is each individual man the measure of all things concerning him? Or is there a higher standard?

This is what leads us to ask, is there a “normal” for us? If there is, then who defines it? It is incumbent on us to seek normalcy. We have a natural instinct for it.

Let's dispense with the idea that “normal” means “typical.” Typical can be, and is usually, not good. One who conforms to a criminal or depraved community might be typical, but he certainly isn't good or normal ... not if “normal” can be defined as a standard of right.

How about word meanings?

CHANGING WITH THE TIMES

Is there a standardized definition of normalcy?

As times change, mores (customs) change. This affects what we think of as normal. Some words fall out of use and new ones come into use. This is important because our only way of defining what is normal is by words. We think by words. We express ourselves by words, so we need to know what words mean in order to express ourselves.

This requires us to have a vocabulary. But a society's vocabulary degrades with the introduction of foreign words, slang, wrong definitions, or poor education. When words are forgotten or used wrongly vocabularies are weakened, and this diminishes our ability to communicate.

The problem is that when words lose their standard definitions people don't really know what they are saying or thinking. This impacts intelligence itself.

Slang can cause word meanings to change into bizarre and silly things. A poor vocabulary degrades intelligence because it robs a person of the tools he needs to think and communicate.

Thus, we can lose the meanings of words ... like the word "normal." And that can rob us of our ability to think clearly. How do word meanings change? They change due to people using them carelessly, improperly, and inaccurately. Then the deformed or damaged words are unable to define our thoughts.

Modern dictionaries tend to include slang in their definitions, giving slang words equal status with the original meanings ... as if both are equally acceptable.

This is not what dictionaries are supposed to do. Dictionaries are supposed to establish standard meanings for words so they can be used accurately. When words lose their standard meanings they lose their usefulness. Dictionaries should not be for listing all the silly ways people use words. Rather, a dictionary should be a reference source to preserve the correct meanings of words. Truth can be lost in as little as one generation if it doesn't maintain a standard for word meanings.

Words like "freedom," "privacy," "truth," "Israel," and "normal" become meaningless when people misuse them or stop using them at all.

When Samuel Johnson published the first comprehensive dictionary of the English language in 1775 he gave the English speaking people a standard for word meanings. From then on, English writers and speakers had a common reference by which they could communicate their thoughts accurately and consistently. When a man spoke or wrote, the hearer or reader could know exactly what was being communicated because the meanings of the words were standardized. This gave the English language the ability to be both spoken and written with accuracy, thus facilitating advanced communication in both prose and law. In effect, Johnson's dictionary made it possible for English speaking people to develop a higher intellect. Being able to express their thoughts with precision allowed them to develop better perception and intelligence.

Today that process seems to be reversing as word meanings are becoming unimportant and/or forgotten.

The size of the vocabulary of a typical adult these days is considerably less than it was 50–100 years ago. Instead of accurate and standard words, today's generation uses new hybrid jargon that has grown out of cultural mixing, social media, and the babel gibberish picked up on the streets or from modern songs ... often a mixture of low-class bywords not much better than the cacophony of grunts and squeals emitted by animals in a noisy jungle.

Jungle animals can communicate on a guttural level, but they cannot aspire to a higher intelligence. By their sounds

and actions, they can communicate hunger, excitement, fear, or that the Sun has gone down. But they can't reason as to how these things happen or what they might mean.

For animals that is normal. More is not expected of them. That is the way God created them. But God created man with the potential to think and communicate on a higher plane. Sadly, some men choose not to use this gift. They prefer to live like animals devoid of God's spirit.

GOD USES WORDS TO COMMUNICATE HIS LAW

Communication is much more than merely speaking. It must accomplish understanding.

19. ... *I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both you and your seed may live:*

Deuteronomy 30:19

God's creatures all have the potential to learn. But man is the only creature with the potential to contemplate God. So the question we are concerned with relates to the spirit of man. That which is "normal" for animals is not "normal" for man. It is a spiritual consideration. A man's spirit determines what he thinks to be normal. If man follows God's spirit, then his concept of normal is thus determined.

What is a normal spirit for man? What level of perception and intelligence does God want to see in us, and how do we attain it? Man is born with a God-given potential to grow in awareness and intelligence ... to think and commune with God on an increasingly higher level. Man's brain can perceive higher ideas and communications. He can hear and learn things of God. It is our potential.

I suspect this is what is meant in Genesis 1:27:

27. So God created Adam in his image, in the image of God created He him;

Clearly, this cannot imply that we physically look like God. However, we have the God-given potential to hear and learn truth. This sets us apart from the rest of creation. Man, existing in God's spiritual image, can attain to a higher plane. Scripture refers to this as being "born from above."

NORMAL IN GOD'S EYES

When a factory produces a new car, that car comes with an owner's manual that acquaints the new owner with how the car was designed to work. This allows the new owner to know what is normal regarding his car. For the car to work properly all the parts must work together with precision. As long as all the parts work correctly the car performs normally ... as it was created to work. So the question of what is normal for the car is easily answered.

Using this example we can discuss a way to think about what is normal for man. God created man and gave him instruction to be normal. So He gave man an owner's manual if you will. God's law is man's owner's manual. Also,

God gave man a spirit to inspire him to learn. But He wants man to make the choice to listen or not listen.

God's law defines what is NORMAL (workable) in the life of a man like the car factory has instructions on how a car works. God's law is an unchangeable standard. If we choose to not educate ourselves with the owner's manual it will cause our lives to break down ... like a car breaks down if we don't maintain the standards built into it at the factory.

Everyone has a standard by which he operates as intended. God created man and gave him laws to explain that standard. That standard is man's "normal."

When we consider what is normal for us, we must ask how we were created, and how we work. To know this we must look to the Creator. We, as a people, cannot know how we were created and how we work, or what God intends for us, unless we refer to his law. It is our owner's manual. We must learn his law in order to learn what is normal for us. Failing that, we are doomed to abnormality and trouble.

Knowing and understanding God's laws requires us to invest time and effort. But it is worth it because the dividends are great. A life lived under God's guidance is the pinnacle of happiness and fulfillment for man.

God calls us to be separate from the world system ... to a higher spiritual ability and intelligence. To be what He created us to be, He wants us to choose to worship and follow Him ... and He wants us to not be ruled by the world system's works and the flesh. This makes us truly "normal."

God created us with great potential. But we cannot reach that potential if we ignore the owner's manual. We must strive to attain to that potential. It is our path to a higher life ... to have eyes that see, and ears that hear.

He gave us eyes so we would not be blind. He gave us ears so we would not be deaf. Since He gave us these gifts, He expects us to use them. Those who choose to not use them can never be normal. They will be prey to the wiles of their adversaries. They will exist in bondage. They cannot steer their ship of life into safe harbor because they have no guidance system.

We are created with the potential to choose to follow Him. But we must voluntarily make that choice. If we choose to seek Him, He grants us spiritual light and life. He expects us to accept this gift. He expects us to avail ourselves of it.

This is what God intended to be normal for man. However, the spiritually blind never attain normalcy.

10. And in every deceit of injustice in them that perish; because they receive not the love of the truth in order to be saved.

11. And through this God is sending them a working of delusion, that they should believe the lie:

12. That they all who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness, might be judged.

2 Thessalonians 2:10-12

Here is how Peter defines "normal" for us:

- 1. Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ:*
- 2. Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,*
- 3. According as his divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that calls us to glory and goodness:*
- 4. Through which were given to us precious and great promises: that through these you might be partakers of the divine nature, being escaped from the lust and corruption that is in the world system.*

2 Peter 2:1-4

Peter defined God's standard of "normal" for man. It is the only way for us to attain to a normal life. For us, the only "normal" consists of following God's law and guidance.

Modern philosophers teach people that there is no absolute truth; that normal is different for each person ... that there is no set standard of right and wrong for everyone.

The universities and the churches today teach that what is right for one man may not be right for another man. They tell us that what is normal for one man may not be normal for another. For example, they want us to believe that it can be normal for people to be homosexual, or "gender neutral," if that is what they choose. They want to redesign creation and accept all things from all people as "normal."

Lawmakers today would have us believe that a male today can be a female tomorrow if that is "its" choice. In effect, we are being taught that each person can choose his own "normal," and be his own god because there is no absolute standard of normalcy for mankind. God doesn't exist. Anything goes.

This is the quintessential rejection of God. Acceptance of this philosophy puts man adrift in a ship with no rudder or guidance system. Without God's guidance, man has no moral compass. He has no reference to know right from wrong, good from bad.

NORMAL = ALIVE SPIRITUALLY

"Normal" for us equates to being alive in Christ. Operating outside that normal range leads to blindness and ignorance (i.e., spiritual death). You can compare this to a child growing up. If the child never develops mentally or physically, he will be handicapped and unable to understand or deal with the world around him. Likewise, a person who is never born from above, never acquires spiritual life with its gifts and abilities that accompany it. He will be handicapped (as the Bible calls "blind" and prone to "delusion") and he will be unable to understand the basics and truths of God's creation. He will have no interest in truth and freedom. He, being abnormal, will be attracted to things that are repulsive and unwanted to a normal person who follows Christ. He will be blind to truth.

In the normal order of life under Christ, people who are

spiritually alive aspire to family-centered life, love and respect for those who value truth. He will have a normal attraction to goodness. He will stand out from the crowd. He will be **normal** but obviously not typical.

On the other hand, those who reject normalcy (i.e., faith in Christ) may think they are normal. But in fact, they are only **typical** (fitting in with the crowd). They are not normal in the sense of God's plan for man. They are attracted to sin and depravity and assume it is normal. Accordingly, they can't access the full use of their brains. They are stuck in a state of diminished perception and have not the capacity to relate to God. In other words, unless they turn to Christ they can never be normal. They can only be typical.

As a child must grow up into an adult, it is also necessary for an adult to advance to the stage offered by God to be born from above. With God's gift of new life, our minds become opened and enabled to understand and love the things God has for us (familial, deep, godly love). When we are born from above we gain capacity and ability, and are no longer subject to, or attracted to, those things that are unprofitable and degrading. We don't desire them. Wickedness and rebellion will not take root in a society that is born from above. Error can happen, but there is a clear distinction between error and rebellion. Anyone can err, but only the spiritually dead are prone to rebel against God. And that rebellion can be seen by those of us who are born from above. It marks those whom we are instructed to avoid.

17. *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; and avoid them.*

18. *For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.*

Romans 16:17-18

Those who are spiritually dead do not know they are dead. Nor can they see that we are alive. They cannot distinguish between good and bad. They find themselves in bad company and bad relationships, and cannot understand why their lives are out of control. They are unable to find the true love and blessings that only come from a life generated from above. Only those who are alive can see others who are alive (born from above). This is true normalcy.

Jesus taught that no man can love mammon (money) and God. The Pharisees chided Him for saying this since they were lovers of money. To them it was normal. But the Jewish normal was an abomination to God.:

14. *And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.*

15. *And He said to them, You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed (i.e., normal) among men is detestable (i.e., abnormal) in the sight of God.*

Luke 16:15

What does Jesus think about typical practices today? People call them normal, but they are abominations.

Today it is typical to race mix, pursue money and usury while neglecting family, send children to be corrupted by public schools, accept homosexuality, gender neutrality, worship the state as god (i.e., lawmaker), feel no need to educate yourself about the Bible and true history ... I could go on, but you get the picture.

GIVE CREDIT WHERE IT IS DUE

Who tells you what is normal? In the land of the blind, the one man who can see is considered abnormal. America has never been as blind as it is today. Sodomites in Sodom and Gomorrah considered Lot as abnormal. The Jews considered Jesus abnormal. In order to be normal in the sight of God, we must not conform to the Beast System. The law/word of God is our standard for "normal."

If God has been good to you, give Him credit. Don't assume it is merely good luck. If you don't feel comfortable trying to fit in with the Beast System, thank God. If God has blessed you with true love, give Him the credit. It is not merely good fortune. It is God blessing you and pointing you toward normalcy. Don't let his blessings go unappreciated. Don't neglect them. Recognize them for what they are.

If, on the other hand, you are experiencing the loss of inner peace, the loss of love, the loss of perspective and insight, if you cannot discern right from wrong, then turn and look to Jesus for guidance. Repent and confess to Him that you want light and LIFE! Tell Him you are tired of drifting and you want to be normal in his sight.

17. *And now, brethren, I know that in ignorance you acted, as did also your leaders.*

18. *But God which foretold by the mouth of all his prophets, that his Christ is to suffer, he thus so fulfills.*

19. *Be repentant therefore, and be converted, for the blotting out of your sins, so the times of refreshing shall come from the face of the Lord;*

Acts 3:17-19

HOW SHALL WE PLEASE GOD?

How can we be normal in the sight of God? He has commanded us to be "holy" as He is holy. Again, the English language has been misused. "Holy" does not mean "very good" or "great." Rather, it means **separate**. He commands us to be separate ... separate from the herd ... separate from the world system (Beast System). He does not want us to be typical, or conformed to what the world thinks is normal. No! We are to be separate.

Do you not fit in with the American society? Thank God! Remember, that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable to God. Do you seek to be successful? Good! But by who's standard will you measure your success?

God bless you with normalcy.

Ben Williams