

In our attempt to try to understand and probe the overwhelming and snowballing nature of the moral crisis in our culture, Os Guinness reminds us of psychologist Karl Menninger's 1973 book, *Whatever Became of sin?* Guinness states "The notion of evil, Menninger argued, had slid from being 'sin' defined theologically, to being 'crime' defined legally, to being 'sickness' defined only in psychological categories....What was 'deviant' fifty years ago is today just par for the course" (pg. 28).

The moral degeneration in our culture can best be probed with the help of the three terms: "*permissive*," "*transgressive*," & "*remissive*."

Permissive:

If God is dead, and there is no future life, "*nothing would be immoral any longer, everything would be permitted.*" (F. Dostoyevsky in his refrain in *The Brothers Karamazov*).

"If God is dead,' all sorts of other things die too, including truth, selfhood, character, the power of words to describe reality, and for some people even reality itself. For the skeptic who pushes, there is no stopping point-at least in thought." (pg. 28). Os Guinness.

Transgressive:

"*It is forbidden to forbid*"
(1968 Sorbonne slogan;

"*Bad as I wanna be*"
Dennis Rodman;

"*Madonna told me to break every rule I could think of, and then when I was done to make up some new ones and break them.*" ~

Choreographer for Madonna.

There are limits to our Transgression, including boredom:

"*We can't go any further without starting over.... What other violence can you show? What other drugs can you do? What other thing can you get pierced? It's all been done.*" ~ Marilyn Manson

Remissive:

This word means being careless or negligent about doing something that is expected.

"Society, the say, is 'eroding,' unraveling,' fraying,' 'melting down,' and the like. Or, as one political leader expressed it during the scandals around the Clinton presidency, 'You can stop a flood by putting our finger in the dike, but how do you stop a mudslide?'" (pg. 29).