

## More than a Conqueror

### Romans 1:17-32

- We left off with Paul saying that “**he was not ashamed of the gospel**” and he gives two reasons > **1<sup>st</sup>** because it revives people lives, without it people are dead in their sins, their going through the motions of living but in reality its without any real purpose. As their existence is all about satisfying self, which scripture says is impossible > **Prov 27:20**. **2<sup>nd</sup>** it reveals God’s love, He loved us so much that He sent His Son to die on the cross for us, therefore Paul says no matter what the cost He will stand and not be ashamed.

#### V17-32

- Before we get into the message I want to share something else about **V16** and why none of us should ever be ashamed. Notice Paul calls this “**The Gospel of Christ**” any letter handed down from Caesar would immediately get the respect of all who are aware of its existence, just like if you were carrying a letter stamped coming from the president of the United states and stamped with his seal of approval, well Paul is saying the gospel message came from someone more powerful than the emperor or the president, its from The Son of God.
- **V17-18** this verse and specifically this phrase brought two men who were responsible for the Protestant Reformation and the Wesleyan Revival into a right understanding of Who God is and who they are not, and this understanding caused people to come out of mere **religion** and into the **joy of salvation by grace**. “**The Just shall live by faith**” our faith is not in ourselves, its not in what we can do, or what others can do, its all about what God has done.
- This phrase comes from **Hab 2:4**, but its quoted three times in the NT > **Rom 1:17**, **Gal 3:11**, and **Heb 10:38**, Romans explains “**the just**” Galatians explains “**shall live**” and Hebrews explains “**by faith**”. You see it’s the Righteousness of God that first must be revealed to us, and once we see His Righteousness and how Good He is, then were able to truly comprehend our helplessness, and stop thinking I can somehow save or redeem myself.
- **V18** should be man’s greatest fear but sadly its not, because if you share this verse with many people they object saying how can a loving, forgiving, merciful, God pour out His wrath against His creation, to them it doesn’t make sense. But the problem is they equate “**The wrath of God**” with human anger, which can be motivated by selfish, personal reasons, but God’s wrath is completely righteous and perfect in character.
- In looking at this verse it not only speaks of God’s wrath but that we deserve it, notice it says its revealed from heaven because of ungodliness and unrighteousness, from men who not only reject the truth but also suppress the truth in unrighteousness. That means that they will lie, cheat, and do anything, no matter how dishonest and despicable to keep others from coming into God’s truth, and sadly that is what we have on our college campuses.

- Suppress means to hold down, to try and suffocate in order to kill it, so they've heard the truth, they just won't heed the truth, and so man is guilty before God, this is why you see so much devastation in the world, man has turned his back on God, and shook his fist at God, and the result is a generation of people who have no fear of God or respect for His Word. There are four stages Paul describes that has led to man's tragic state
- **V19-20 1<sup>st</sup> Intelligence**- human history began with man knowing Who God is, not evolution, or some big bang theory, he didn't begin worshipping some beast like man made statue or idol. Man knew God and that He had created him, and that he was to rely on Him for wisdom, direction and guidance, these facts were not hidden from him. But knowing the truth doesn't mean that you are going to obey and follow the truth, and man did not.
- **V21-23 2<sup>nd</sup> Ignorance**- this is what disobedience led to, for although man knew God and all that God wanted to do for him, he rejected it, and refused to worship Him and be thankful to Him, thus becoming godless, selfish, and causing their thoughts to become "**empty**" futile means worthless, and their **foolish**- morally senseless, **hearts darkened** > **Eph 4:18**.
- Having held down God's truth and rejected His glory, man who was created to worship had to worship something, and this introduced idolatry, as he changed the glory of God for substitutes that he himself made, so glory for shame, incorruption for corruption, truth for lies > **Is 44:9-17**- the idols are all worthless as man has made them.
- **V24-27 3<sup>rd</sup> Indulgence**- from idolatry to immorality is just one short step, for if man is his own god then he can do whatever he pleases without fear of judgment. In exchanging the truth for a lie he embraces a belief that better suits is lifestyle, for the lie is he is his own god and he should worship and serve himself and not The Creator.
- It's the same lie Satan used to deceive Eve and lead her into sin, "**yea has God said**", the result of self deification is always self indulgence, and Paul mentions a sin that was rampant in his day and has become acceptable and celebrated in our day homosexuality. What's interesting is this sin is repeatedly condemned in scripture > **Gen 18:20, 1Cor 6:9-10, Jude 7**, Paul characterizes it as vile and unnatural, even against nature, and not only were the men guilty of this but also the women as well.
- So bad was this sin that scripture says God gave them up, what does that mean? Does that mean its unforgivable, that there is no coming back from it no not at all, that's not what its saying. This meant God permitted them to go on in their sin and reap the sad consequences I was a teenager when aids first became known publicly and the fear that gripped everyone as millions of died, now just take a pill and continue your lifestyle without conviction.
- Sex was meant to occur between man and woman, and in the context of marriage for bonding and procreation, it was never suppose to occur between same sexes that is made very clear in this verse, but what has man done, suppressed the truth, changed it into a lie, now you have churches interpreting this verse as it supports homosexuality its so sad.

- **V28-32 4<sup>th</sup> Impenitence**- you would think that once man has experienced the tragic consequences of his sin that he would repent and seek God but the opposite occurs. He becomes worse as not only is man's rebellion displayed against God in his actions but also in his thinking > debased mind means he is spiritually insane, in his rebellion against God.
- **V29-31** gives a list of how a spiritually insane person behaves, and now incredibly these sins that are condemned by God are acceptable in our society, in fact most are encouraged as healthy behaviors. **V32** which is why those who practice such things also encourages others to do the same, which is why it won't stop or get better people, the only way this goes away is when Christ comes back and judges this world.
- So when someone says I can't believe all that is happening today, and wonder where does all this violence, cruelty, immorality come from, you tell them it happens when people abandon the true knowledge of God, and refuse to repent and submit to Him and His Word, then God responds by abandoning sinful man to their ungodly ways, to reap the consequences of their fleshly desires. I know that isn't the popular answer but it's the truth.