

REVEALING UNRIGHTEOUSNESS | ROMANS 1:18-32 | PASTOR MARK BOFILL | 8/18/2024

I. God's Morality Revealed (v.18-20) | II. Man's Immorality Revealed (v.21-23) | III. Man's Unrighteousness Revealed (v.24-32)

INTRO: Nothing keeps people away from Jesus Christ more than **their inability to see their need for Him and their willingness to admit it**. In (Mark 2:17) Jesus said, *"Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick."* **If we deny the problem, then the problem will remain, but if we admit the problem, then there is a possibility of a solution.** / As we begin this next section (1:18-3:26), Paul REVEALS man's main problem... i.e., **ALL ARE CONDEMNED BECAUSE OF SIN!**

I. GOD'S MORALITY REVEALED (18-20) – The picture here is a court scene...

A. The Wrath of God is Revealed (18) – WRATH, can be defined as **Extreme Anger**, but this is not an impulsive outburst of anger aimed at people that God does not like. Rather, it is a **determined response of a righteous God, against sin** (cf. Ps 78:49-51; 90:7-9; Jer 25:15; John 3:36; Eph 5:6, etc.). In fact, Jeremiah referred to God's Wrath as **a Cup of Fury, to be poured out**.

1. It is Revealed – The grammar emphasizes that it is "constantly revealed" The word means to *uncover*, to *make visible* or to *make known*. **God reveals His wrath in two ways:**

- a. **Indirectly** through natural consequences when violating His universal moral laws
- b. **Directly** through His personal intervention, e.g., *OT: Flood, Sodom & Gomorrah, Babylonian captivity*.
- c. **However, The most graphic revelation** of God's wrath and hatred against sin was **when He poured out His divine judgment on His Son on the cross! (Matt 27:35,45-46) "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?"**

2. God has different kinds of wrath:

- a. Eternal Wrath – Hell, Separation from God, i.e., **damnation (2 Thess 1:9)**
- b. Eschatological Wrath – The day of the Lord (**2 Pet 3:10**)
- c. Cataclysmic Wrath – The Flood, Sodom & Gomorrah, and what we know as "Natural Disasters."
- d. Consequential Wrath – Sowing and Reaping (**Gal 6:7-8**)
- e. Abandonment, i.e., *Removing His Grace and Restraint*, and letting people go to their sins (Psalm 81:11,12; Prov 1:23-31). This is what we see here in our text.

3. God's wrath is against UNGODLINESS – Lack of reverence or devotion to worship of the true God. (**Jude 14-15**) – *"Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, 15 to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." (4x's in v.15)*

4. God's wrath is against UNRIGHTEOUSNESS – It is a lack of conformity to God's Righteous Laws, which manifest in **thought, word, and deeds**; specifically, the 10 commandments.

5. God's wrath is against Men who Suppress the Truth – Suppression carries the idea of **holding something down**. (*Much like the boy who smuggled his dog into his room to spend the night. When he heard his parents coming, he put the dog in his toy box and sat on its lid, then tried talking to his parents while ignoring the repeated thump of his poor pet! The idea here is continual and aggressive striving against truth*).

- a. Although man has evidence from their **Conscience (1:19; 2:14)** and **Creation (1:20)**, Men choose to resist and oppose God's truth by holding fast to their sin (**Ps 14:1**), *"The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who does good"*

b. These men are **Self-Condemed** (2 Thess 2:11-12), "And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Paul also mentions that...

B. The Knowledge of God is Revealed (19) – Every man has a **CONSCIENCE** and is **Without Excuse**, (2:15) – WHY? Because, **God had shown it to them!** – Evidentially, by "All Matter!" – In (Acts 14:17), it says that God... "did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." (cf. Matt 5:45)

C. The Attributes of God are Revealed (20) – The attributes of God are **Visible Through Creation!** (Psalm 19:1-6) "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork..."

- **Made Things Reveal God's Attributes** – The sun, moon, and stars **reveal His Brightness**, and the seasons **reveal his Wisdom**, while zebras and giraffes **demonstrate His uniqueness and Originality.**
- **Made Things Reveal God's Eternal Power**, i.e., the heat of the sun, the power of wind, and the driving rain reveal that **God has all of this under His sovereign control.**
- **Man is therefore, Without Excuse!** – **All Creation witnesses against him**, which means that **NO ONE** has a valid **EXCUSE** to conclude that there is no God. (Yet so many act-like little children, sitting on their toy boxes, holding down the truth!)

P/A – **God's Moral Character is revealed in His Righteousness (1:16-17)** and **Goodness** even in Creation. But Ultimately, **God's LOVE for Mankind is REVEALED in His Son, Jesus Christ!** (John 3:16)

II. MAN'S IMMORALITY REVEALED (21-23) – The **Rejection of a Moral God** automatically produces immorality within the heart of mankind! – **IMMORALITY**, simply defined, means: **NOT MORAL** and predicts evil or licentious behavior in the heart of unbelievers. **It's obviously evident in...**

A. Choices of Man (21) – Among 'those' who choose NOT to believe in God's Existence, i.e, (the Ungodly and the Unrighteous), Paul explains that **they DO NOT glorify God for who He is!** (They Choose!)

1. Man is **UNTHANKFUL** for who God is – **No Gratitude**, they thank mother nature for the rain!

2. Man becomes increasingly **FUTILE** in thought (Ps 94:8-11), "Understand, you senseless among the people; and you fools, when will you be wise? 9 He who planted the ear, shall He not hear? He who formed the eye, shall He not see? 10 He who instructs the nations, shall He not correct, he who teaches man knowledge? 11 The LORD knows the thoughts of man, that they are FUTILE!"

3. **Man's Hearts are Foolish and Dark** – In (John 3:19-21), Jesus said, "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21 But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God." (God gives us the choice to choose light or choose darkness)

B. Claims of Man (v.22) – **Man's profession is that 'they are wise,'** which is self-confidence in one's own intellect. – Ironically, what they believe to be **Progressive thinking**, is rather **Digressive thinking** according to God's standard. – Paul clarifies this in his statement, "they become fools!" (1 Cor 3:19-20)

"For the Wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their own craftiness"; and [once] again, "The LORD knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are FUTILE."

C. Changes of Man (23) – Here, Paul tells us the first of three Exchanges that man chooses: **Man has changed "The Glory" of an incorruptible God.** – Darkened hearts are quick to make visible idols for themselves, which are corruptible images, **making God to look like a Man or and Animal.** – Their Dark, Twisted Imaginations still produce such, but **today they call it ART!** (*i.e., Abominable Art*)

- Any image created to resemble God is AN INJUSTICE to who GOD actually is! (*cf. Ex 20:3-4*)

P/A – **Man's morality is not Evolving into a greater capacity** but is **Devolving** to a state that is comparable to the animal kingdom (*i.e., acting like animals*) – **You will become what you worship!** – When our moral meters no longer gauge true morality, it is just a matter of time when we fall into total depravity!

III. MAN'S UNRIGHTEOUSNESS REVEALED (24-32) – In His righteous wrath and judgment, **God gives man up to an evil heart's desire**, allowing one to experience the self-destructive result of sin

A. Man's Dishonor (24) – Simply put... **God gave man up to Uncleaness** – **This is filthy behavior!** – **God also gave man up to the LUST of their Own Hearts**, which is Unrestrained sexual perversion of all sorts! – As a result, **God allowed man to Dishonor Themselves** – **By committing shameful acts** (*Dishonorable deeds result in DISGRACE – Unrighteous man choose to fall from God's grace!*)

B. Man's Deception (25) – **Man exchanged the TRUTH about God for THE LIE!** – This is the second thing that man chooses to exchange. **It's a denial of God's Existence!** – Man worshipped and served the **CREATURE, rather than the CREATOR** – (Psalm 135:15-18) *"The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. 16 They have mouths, but they do not speak; eyes they have, but they do not see; 17 They have ears, but they do not hear; nor is there any breath in their mouths. 18 Those who make them are like them; so is everyone who trusts in them."* (*Once again, Idolatry*)

- **Man was made to worship God** – Paul threw in a quick doxology, *"who is blessed forever, Amen!"* – **But when we choose lies over truth, we better be prepared to reap serious consequences!**

C. Man's Delight (26-27) – **This is the third thing** that man Chooses to Exchange, *i.e., their sexuality.* In context, it's a combination of **sexual immorality** and **idolatrous worship**, to which **God give them up to**, *i.e.* their own **VILE PASSIONS.** The Greek phrase, *"atinia pathos,"* describes more than mere evil lust, but a deceased condition that is **ungoverned** or **out of control.** – Here, **Paul identifies homosexuality, in all its forms (male and female), as an example of how** God has given humans over to impurity and desire.

1. Mentioned first are the Women, i.e., Females/"thelus" (26b), who choose to EXCHANGE "their natural use" of compatibility and reproduction with a male, to that which is contrary to nature! – This verse clearly condemns **LESBIANISM**, of which **many claim is Not mentioned in the Bible.** – Such practices are clearly considered a perversion of God's created design (Lev 18:22, 20:13) – Ironically, **in most cultures women are the last to be affected by a moral collapse.** (*What about our current culture?*)

2. Mentioned next are the Men, i.e., Males/"arrhen" (27) – Men fall under the same category, as indicated by the word, **"Likewise."** – Men also manifest **"vile passions,"** of which, their sin is likewise dishonorable and a disgrace.

a. The charge (27a) is that man left the **natural heterosexual relations** with women, for **homosexual relations with other men** – Their sin is described as, **burning: “ekkaio,”** i.e, **to set on fire, in their lust for one another,** men with men, committing what is shameful.

b. Men received the **DUE PENALTY for their error (27b)** – Homosexuality is a sin which has within itself a penalty of self-destruction. – Sometimes it is **the penalty of disease,** which is the **consequence of violating nature’s order.** Sometimes it is **the penalty of rebellion,** resulting in **spiritual emptiness and all its ramifications.** – **Here are a few Biblical fact about Homosexuality:**

- This sin was recognized **before the mosaic law was given (Gen 18:20)**
- This sin was judged by the mosaic law, written down/ recorded **(Lev 18:22)**
- This sinful lifestyle leads to **physical death (Rom 1:26,27)**
- This sinful lifestyle leads to **spiritual death (1 Cor 6:9-10)**

P/A – Homosexuality attempts to **REDEFINE** God’s design. It **REVERSES** God’s function for the woman, which ultimately **RESULTS** in **confusion** and **disorder in society!**

Moving on with a WORD OF HOPE – For those involved in homosexual practices, please understand that this is **not something that you were born with, neither is it a sickness.** Simply put, it is **SIN.** And that ought to be encouraging, because **there is a REMEDY, JESUS CHRIST!** – Homosexuality is a sin from which one can recover. (*Confess it and turn from it!*)

D. Man's Distorted Mind (28) – Paul tells us that **God’s final giving up** is the result of **their not wanting to retain God in the full and complete knowledge they possessed.** It is an **atheistic conclusion,** which writes God out of the picture! – It’s the... **“God Is Dead”** mentality. – It’s the... **“I don’t need”** or **“I don’t want God,”** philosophy; so as **to live in supposed freedom** without restraints. **[MY WAY!]**

- **Because they refused to approve God as God, so God refuses to approve them.**

1. God therefore gave man a **debased mind (28b)** – i.e., **reprobate, perverse, depraved, degenerate, or rebellious!** – Rebellion against God is not only **displayed in their actions, but in their thinking!** – I heard it somewhere that if you, **Sow a thought, reap an act. Sow an act, reap a deed. Sow a deed, reap a habit. Sow a habit, reap a destiny!** (*And if the debased mind never repents and believes on Jesus Christ, he or she has chosen eternal separation and damnation!*)

2. The things that they do are **not fitting, “katheko,”** which means **not appropriate, contrary to God’s design (28c)** – As a result, **they succumb to every form of ungodly thought, word and deed!** – The **natural outcome** is **degeneration** on **a continuing downward spiral of sin,** manifesting a life that is **full of unrighteousness,** towards and with fellow-man in society, as we see next in **(vv 29-31).**

E. Man's Depravity (29-31) – **Man's depraved mind** leads them into a variety of **unsociable practices;** things which **“ought not to be done.”** – **This list describes the breakdown of the human community** and because the standards of God's righteousness have disappeared, we see that society is disintegrating before our very eyes.

1. In (v.29) Man became filled with all kinds of unrighteousness – The list begins with the most sacred gift between a husband-and-wife **Sexual immorality,** which is **fornication; Wickedness,** which is an **inclination to evil and taking pleasure; Covetousness,** which is a **desire to have what other have**

Maliciousness, a disposition to injure and get revenge; **Envy**, jealousy for what others have. Then there's **Murder, Strife, Deceit, Evil-mindedness; Whisperers**, and moving on to (v.30), *Paul mentions...*

2. (v.30) – **Backbiters, Haters of God, Violent, Proud, Boasters, Inventors of Evil Things**, and what stands out to me is, **Disobedient to Parents**, which there is **seemingly a surge of** in our society today!

3. Paul concludes with a list of UN's (v.31) – **Undiscerning, Untrustworthy, Unloving, Unforgiving, Unmerciful**. All of which oppose a healthy society. – But without Jesus Christ, **this is what becomes of mankind**. – **But on the contrary, we... as believers' in Jesus Christ, are to forsake these practices.** (Col 3:5-6), *Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.* ⁶ **Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,**

F. Man's Denial (32) – Paul tells us that the Ungodly and the Unrighteous KNEW the righteous judgments of God! – The most corrupt and vile person is not void of the knowledge of God, they just refuse to acknowledge God and His standards.

1. **They KNEW that practicing these things would bring death** – But they **willfully chose to dismiss the consequences!**

2. **They still CONTINUED to do these things anyways** – **WHY...** They love sin more than God!

3. **They approved of others that practice these things.** – They actually encourage other to sin w/them

CLOSING THOUGHTS: This passage of scripture **reveals the charges against the UNGODLY and the UNRIGHTEOUS MAN!**

- **These are not just accusations, but confirmations** of what mankind gravitates to when JESUS CHRIST is not their Lord!
- (tt. 1 Cor 6:9-11) *"Do you not know that **the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.** 11 **And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God."***
- **APART FROM HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS... ALL ARE GUILTY... ALL ARE CONDEMNED!**