

INTO THE VACUUM

“They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator – who is forever praised. Amen.” —ROMANS 1:25

We all have a reason to get up in the morning. Whether it is extremely tedious and unproductive or whether it is going to work, school, training, social engagements, we all have something we are going to do. The question is: What motivates us?

The truth is no one exists in a vacuum. The issue Paul is talking about in the opening verse is not intellectual, but volitional – a question of the will. If God is not at the center of our lives, we will fill that vacuum with created things and not the Creator. Paul speaks specifically of three areas: sexual impurity, arrogance and idolatry. If we persist in going our own way without regard for God, He will hand us over to what we want, and we will inevitably reap the consequences, which are usually painful and often devastating.

Of sexual immorality, Paul says, “Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another” (Romans 1:24). Sexual impurity can take many forms and is an inevitable consequence of spiritual breakdown. As we were created to be in God’s moral image, sexual impurity exchanges the truth about God for a lie. God is entirely faithful, entirely pure and entirely right.

Of arrogance, Paul says, “For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became

futile and their foolish hearts were darkened” (1:21). Suppressing the truth about God, opting instead for our own knowledge and reasoning will lead to spiritual and moral decay. In fact, we are becoming fools, Paul says, exchanging the glory of an immortal God for created things, which ultimately leads to idolatry.

When the accumulation of wealth and material possessions for self gain become our motivation, we will be left spiritually bankrupt, because into that vacuum we are nurturing goals that are a violation of the truth about God. What we worship we serve and what we serve we worship. This is difficult for us because it is the norm of the culture we live in today. We are too sophisticated to call this ‘idol worship’, but idolatry is replacing the Creator with the created. History shows that when nations and peoples are materially prosperous, they usually become spiritually indifferent and then become morally bankrupt. And the moral bankruptcy then destroys the material prosperity.

From the beginning, God is the fuel we were meant to run on. It is as we allow Him to come into that vacuum and fill us with Himself that we are divinely motivated to begin each day, knowing God is at work in our lives.

PRAYER: Dear Heavenly Father, keep me divinely motivated. Fill me with Yourself and rule my day. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I motivated to begin each day by the presence of God in me?