

Romans 1_24-25.mp3.mp3

Todd Fletcher [00:00:03] Word of the Lord reads, "Therefore, God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and serve the creation rather than the creator who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason, God gave them up to dishonorable passions for their women exchange natural relations for those that are contrary to nature. And the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another. Men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty of their error. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness, their gossips, slanders, haters of God, insolent, boastful inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless and ruthless. Though they know God's decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them, but give approval to those who practice them." Thus reads the words the Lord, you may be seated.

Todd Fletcher [00:01:30] Did I get your attention? Did Paul get your attention? You know, I've got a picture of a of a boat and a man tying his boat to the dock, and I think of my brother in law who is a fisherman, Andrew, aptly named, and his whole livelihood is attached to his boat. And if he forgot to tie his boat to the dock where do you think his boat would be? It'd be out at sea, that rhymed. It's important that we tie our boats to the dock or else your boat will drift. So I entitled this, Drifting towards Destruction, and I want to ask you the question this morning what is your boat tied to? Or is it tied to anything at all? Is your boat tied to a political party? Is your boat tied to family? To friends, to money, to success, to safety, to career, to long-life? Our boats can be attached to many, many things, can't they? Or perhaps your boat is just adrift on the ocean and you'll go wherever the tide takes you.

Todd Fletcher [00:03:00] The reality is, is that if you've tied your boat to anything that is not God your boat is adrift, and it's drifting towards destruction. The Bible says, Hebrews says that God, that the hope of Christ or the hope of His coming is the anchor for our soul and I like to say that God is the only true and steadfast anchor that we can tie ourselves to. And if we wonder what's going on in this world around us, just read Romans Chapter 1 verses 24 through 32 and you'll realize that's exactly what's happening in the world today. God, where are You, why don't You speak? He has spoken, it's right here, open your word, see that everything is going exactly as God said it would. I think when you look at Romans chapter 1 you should be shaking in your little booties because you should realize we are all the way at verse 32. Meaning that we have already gone through the process of being handed over to our own depravity as a nation, as a world, have we not?

Todd Fletcher [00:04:16] This is why I think, you know, when you read Revelation it doesn't seem that far off does it, because the entire world is here. It's not just one wicked place, one wicked city like Sodom and Gomorrah, which is where we get the word sodomy from, by the way. But it's an entire world that has approved of sexual immorality. You know, there are more slaves today than there have ever been in human history, and most of them are sex slaves and little children. I thought we were past slavery, I thought that was an old thing, no it's a present thing. God has handed this world over to depravity, and sadly our once great country is leading the charge in sexual immorality, in abortion and giving approval to sin. You know I was reading in France, the president of France, is actually sounding an alarm because American extremism is finding its way into France and

we are polluting their morality. France, who had the great secular revolution that cast aside God and cast aside moral ethics, is saying that America is destroying us with their morality. What has happened to us? I could just cry.

Todd Fletcher [00:05:54] Paul says in versus 24, 26, and 28, he says that God has given them up, God has given them up, God has given them up, God has handed them over, God has handed them over, God has handed them over, handed them over to moral corruption, to vile affections and to a reprobate mind. God has handed them over. We might think if we were writing the Bible that this would be God has handed them over to Satan, the great enemy of God. I don't see Satan anywhere in this passage as far as his name, I don't see it saying that he's handed us over to demons. What has He handed us over to? Ourselves, our own lusts, our own hearts, he's handed us over to depravity and he's just unleashed us. What's inside of us has been unleashed on the world and it's destroying the world. It's sad when we see where we are as not only a nation, but as a world, I just pray for our children, don't you? Our grandchildren, what a mess, have we left them?

Todd Fletcher [00:07:17] It's so sad, but today we're just going to be looking at verses 24 and 25, which is on God has handed us over to moral corruption. And it is most clearly seen in one statement, and that is that we worship the creation rather than the Creator. That is the very base of sin, that is the very root of sin, that is the original lie of Satan all the way back in Genesis 3, it's the oldest sin in the book. That I'm god and He is not, that that pig is god and He is not, that all these things in the world, whatever forces you may worship or whatever stars you may get your fortune telling from, that you worship the creation rather than the Creator, that is the very basis of sin. And it's sad that we are here, is it not? But we are here. So what do we do, what do we do? And the answer is we got to get our worship right. We need to stop worshipping the creation and start worshipping the Creator, that is how America comes back, that is how the world comes back as we get our hearts back in tune with God.

Todd Fletcher [00:08:39] Do you know how this nation was founded? It was founded based upon the Judeo-Christian moral ethic that all men are created equal. In that very statement, is the idea of what? A Creator. So, let's get into the text now, verse 24, just the very first part, "therefore," what is therefore there for? Or the King James wherefore, wherefore is therefore pointing for, I don't know. Therefore, therefore what? Well we had a cold Sunday last Sunday, so many of us were stuck at home trying to keep our pipes from bursting and trying to take care of what we could in negative degree weather, right? And I know Monty said at his house, I think you recorded negative 19, that's very cold. But because you missed last week, I'm going to re-preach last week's sermon today, so you did not get off easy because that's where the therefore is pointing to therefore, well what's therefore, there for? The answer is, therefore God gave them up, because you need to understand what just came before that. So I'm just going to give you a brief summary of last week's sermon.

Todd Fletcher [00:10:00] One, we see in verse 18, God's wrath, His orge, is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness, God has wrath. This is the wrath of God. This is His most hated attribute in the world. Well, I love God's love, I love His mercy, I love His grace, but I just can't get behind that wrath stuff. Let me ask you a question, would you want to worship a God that wasn't just, a God that didn't punish sin? Imagine a pedophile standing before the Lord who has not accepted Jesus Christ, and him getting off. God saying, you know, I'll let you go I feel good today. Would that be a very good God? Imagine a murderer getting off before the Lord. Oh, I'm feeling great today, I'm

feeling like loving and gracious and merciful, I'll just let you off. Does God do that with anyone? No. This is why Romans 3, when we eventually get to Romans 3 in three years. What we see in Romans Chapter 3 is this, that He says that He is just because He justified Himself through the crucifixion of His Son, that God would be unjust if He didn't require a penalty for sin.

Todd Fletcher [00:11:26] And so that He sent His son so that He could be justified in His grace and His mercy, He paid for every single aspect of our grace with the death of his son. So no one gets off easy, no one gets off in a way that is unjust, everyone, in one way or another receives the wrath of God, whether it's themselves standing before His throne or in Jesus Christ, who received every ounce of God's wrath on Calvary. And so we see here that there's something broken in this world, so therefore, we see the God's wrath is revealed and we see it presently just look at human history and seeing God's wrath being poured out over the generations in war and in death and in famine and pestilence and all these things. But there's an idea of future wrath as well, which we see in Revelation that one day His full cup will be poured out upon the planet, upon the world, and that before the throne, before the great white throne, everyone will answer for every sin that they have committed, whether in thought, deed or action. And so we see that God is just and His wrath is revealed, and then in the next section we see that God's nature is also revealed. Verse 19 and 20, "for what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them for his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world."

Todd Fletcher [00:12:52] So God has made Himself known to a world, and He's revealed two things about Himself in what we call natural revelation, and it's this, He's very powerful, and He's God, He's very powerful and He's God. And everyone who exists, who has ever existed knows those two things. Well, Pastor, what about atheists? Well, the Bible says, that no one is without excuse because everyone knows it but they suppress the truth in wickedness and unrighteousness, they sear their conscience. I said last week, it's like you can only keep a beach ball underwater for so long until what happens, it comes right back up. That's what people do with their sin, they can only push down the truth for so long until that truth comes up and it pops out. You can be an idealist until your idealism runs out and realism smacks you in the face, right? That's what we're going to see in this world. You can say that a man is not a man and a woman is not a woman for as long as you possibly can until you need surgery and they treat you wrongly because you told them you are a woman, but you have a Y chromosome. Truth will come up, it does come up and people try to push the truth down with wickedness.

Todd Fletcher [00:14:26] That's what we see all around us currently, presently. And then what we see is that finally we see our great sin look at verse 21, "for although they knew God," past tense, they knew God. When I'm talking to an atheist, I'm not arguing for them to believe there's a God because I know they know God, I know they know there's a God, they're just suppressing that. "Although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks to Him. But they become worthless or futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened." Do you want to know why we are where we are? Because of two things, we didn't honor God, worship him, praise him, and we didn't give thanks to God. That doesn't seem like that big of a deal. It's a huge deal. God is worthy of all honor, all praise, all glory, all majesty, all, all, all singing, everything you have. He's worthy, worthy of everything, you know, "hear O Israel, the Lord, our God the Lord is one, love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all of your strength, with all of your might," everything. Everything you have, God deserves. And the reason we are where we are today is because we have not worshiped God as He is deserving.

Todd Fletcher [00:16:01] We have to give thanks to God. You know, important that is worship and thanks? Did you know, this is called a worship service? Not because it's about worshiping the people in the pews, it's about worshiping the God of the pews. You know, the one question that I think we need to reconsider about churches, well, what did I get out of church today? Nothing really that pastors kind of annoying. The singer, you know, the guitar player, you know, he he kind of offended me. Well, you know, the communion cups, that juice tastes like it's like 100 years old. Is that the point of worship? No. We come here for God. I preach for an audience of one, God, and you're the beneficiaries. I stand before the Lord, I give an account and I am held to a stricter judgment as as Duane just talked about, as Ravi Zacharias, who a lot of terrible things have come out about him. He stands before the Lord and gives an account and he will be held to a stricter judgment. I preach to an audience of One because one day I stand before the Lord, I give an account and all I want to hear is, well done good and faithful servant.

Todd Fletcher [00:17:21] And that's what you should want to hear as well. Well done, good and faithful servants, you've been faithful with little and now I will give you more and you will be faithful with much more in the kingdom of heaven. Well done, good and faithful servant. But we come back to our present reality and here is the therefore, because we have not given God His proper worship and because we do not thank Him and because we suppress the truth and unrighteousness, therefore, verse 24, therefore, God gave them up, that is the great judgment. You know, I was looking at this world this week just thinking, asking the question, what would it be like to be a nonbeliever looking at everything around us? And I would ask the question, what's wrong? What's broken? Isn't something wrong? Everyone can feel it. Something's really wrong. I think this pandemic has actually brought it out even more, that something's wrong. It just feels like everything's unraveling and no one knows what to do. No nation knows what to do. No nation has handled this perfectly, everyone's struggling because something's really wrong.

Todd Fletcher [00:18:35] Well, Ernest Hemingway said the world breaks everyone, but those that will not break it kills. It kills the very good and the very great, the very brave impartially. If you are none of these, you can be sure it will kill you. But these will have no, it will do so in no special hurry, the world would either break you or it'll kill you. Well, why what's wrong with the world? It's broken, it's fallen, it's full of broken and sinful people. It's full of people that deserve God's wrath. Why? Because they never worshiped Him, they never give thanks to Him. They accepted a lie that we're going to talk about in a little bit, so there's the 'therefore' but now it gets worse. Therefore, God gave them up, God has handed them over. In the lusts, notice the prepositions here, in the lusts of their heart to impurity, in the lust of their hearts to impurity. God gave them up, this is an active verb. Why does that matter? Why does it matter if it's active or passive? Matters a great deal. If God passively gave them up, it's almost like He just was holding on to a boat at the dock and then just kind of forgot about it and it just drifted away. That's not what God has done here, God has actively given them up.

Todd Fletcher [00:20:21] As I wrestled with this all week, in fact, some weeks are better than others in my studies because some weeks I'm just struggling like just writer's block and you're just trying to work through it and trying to understand what do you have for the people. But this week was just one of those weeks where God just kept connecting dots for me all week, just overall dots. And one of the things that I've wrestled with is Pharaoh, Pharaoh O Pharaoh, I'm just kidding, Pharaoh's heart, have you ever wrestled with Pharaoh's heart? Let's say, like God tells Moses, you're going to go to Egypt and you're going to do all these signs and and I'm going to harden Pharaoh's heart because I'm going

to display My glory in My majesty and all the land. And there was no powerful country, then more powerful country than Egypt during that time. And so God displays His glory over Pharaoh, who claim to be a god so that all the nations could glorify Yahweh, glorify God. So there's a there's a major reason that God hardens Pharaoh's heart. But you'll notice in the story what is Pharaoh do to his own heart? He hardens it and then God responds by hardening it, and then Pharaoh responds by hardening it, and then God responds by hardening it. It's this back and forth Pharaoh hardens, God hardens, Pharaoh hardens and God hardens.

Todd Fletcher [00:21:33] And and I've always asked the question, what does that even mean? I think we have the answer here in Romans, an active letting go, an active unrestricted. That our sin has been restricted, I like word pictures and I like thinking of our sin being behind chains with multiple locks on it, and that all of us have been restrained in our sinfulness and that God has restrained us so that we would not be as evil as we could be. And that God actively unlocks the chains on our sin and it loses one chain after another until our sin is released. We're the ones committing the sin, not God, but God has actively unleashed our sin. That's helpful for me because what we see here is the problem is not with God, the problem is not necessarily with Satan, the problem is right here in our breast, it's our hearts. What we see here is this idea of "in the lusts of our hearts." F. Godet says this, "God ceases to hold the boat as it was dragged by the current of the river. God ceases to restrain the boat's movement, and He actively lets it go." That's what we see in our world today. God is actively unleashed our sins as a judgment. It's not His sin, He's not the active agent we are. He is just unleashing it and this word lust is interesting, it says that therefore God gave them that is the world up in the lusts, what's lust? A desire of that which is forbidden.

Todd Fletcher [00:23:41] You know, we laugh at the dinner table because Olivia, our youngest, sits next to Gloria at the dinner table and they will have the exact same food on their plate but Olivia does not want her food all she wants is Gloria's food, why? Because it's forbidden. So even in a little two year old, you see this lust for what is forbidden, you have the exact same food right there and she'll throw it on the floor and grab Gloria's hot dog, that's what happened last time. Why is it that we we lust for things, we desire things that are forbidden? It's because we're broken. You know, that fruit, the forbidden fruit, you know why it was so attractive? It was forbidden. It says something about us, doesn't it? And he says, therefore, God gave them up, in the lust of their heart. Do you know where the problem lies? Right here, but it's not the physical heart, right? It's not it's not this physical thing that's pumping blood through my body, that's not the problem. In the Jewish and Greek understanding, the heart was much more than just a physical component of our body. It was everything. It was your mind, it was your will, it was your emotions, it was everything.

Todd Fletcher [00:25:09] I heard a commentator once saying, I totally agree, that the best way to translate heart is, "I, me." It's who you are, it's your identity, and he says that the problem lies in your very essence, in your very nature, a fallen nature now. God didn't create us fallen, we did that ourselves, but when we fell, our entire nature was corrupted, tainted by sin, that's the problem. And so he says the problem is in our hearts, it's the lust that's present in our hearts. Well, I've got a good heart, do you, really? You've heard me use this example many times, but it's worth repeating MacArthur with Larry King, Larry King says, I don't think I'm that bad of a person, MacArthur turns to him and says, "What if I were to take your darkest thoughts and project them on your TV show would you still have a TV show?" And Larry King says, I get your meaning.

Todd Fletcher [00:26:13] What if I were to take your darkest thoughts and send them out in a church email? It'd be terrible because we all have those thoughts. The heart is desperately wicked who can even know it? Our hearts are all just, sometimes I look at myself and I'm like, did that come out of me? That was disgusting, what is wrong with me? You know just to bring up Ravi Zacharias, if you're not sure what happened, is he had a huge international ministry and it came out that he was essentially taking part in various sexual acts and massage parlors throughout his time as a minister. And it's just getting worse and worse by the day and people are asking the question, how on earth did no one know? Literally, he owned massage parlors where prostitution was happening and he was sending money back to girls over in Asia the whole time, maybe not the whole time, but much of the time in his ministry. And people are asking, how is that even possible that someone could be so used of God in the kingdom and at the same time be living a double life and being essentially a pimp? How is that even possible? Because Ravi's heart is desperately wicked, as are your and mine. If you had the means to unleash your worst desires, there's a good chance you probably would. Many of us just don't have the means to do what we really desire. This is why money corrupts, doesn't it? Because it unleashes you to be able to do what you really want to do. And a lot of people said, well if I had money I would be incredibly generous until they have money. And then like, well, there's a lot of people that want to steal my money. Well, didn't you say you would be incredibly generous and then you got all this money and now you're not generous at all? Well, it's because they don't deserve it. Wow, you're desperately wicked.

Todd Fletcher [00:28:13] And then notice this, it gets worse, isn't this an encouraging sermon? Therefore, God gave them up in the loss of their hearts to impurity. Well, what is impurity? King James translates as uncleanness, one commentator says this impurity was a general term for uncleanness and was often used of decaying matter. Now, has anyone ever smelled anything that's decaying? Especially the contents of a grave, so the Jews would understand this, as you know, you don't touch a dead body or else you're unclean. You don't touch it, you know, we see with Sampson he wasn't allowed to touch a dead lion, remember, a decaying lion, or else he would be unclean. He would break his Nazarite vow, which he did he got honey out of a lion, a dead lion, interesting. It's a moral term, usually referring to what is closely associated with sexual immorality. Aha, now we get to it, He's handed us over to moral decay that is typified in sexual immorality. That sexual immorality leads to the destruction of the body, this is in your Bible. This is very unpopular and I can get more undignified than this. Because listen to this, not only are they handed over to a decaying morality that is is totally unclean and abominable to the Lord, it says this, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves. What's he talking about here? Sexual immorality, that we lust after what is forbidden, especially in regards to sex, and that that lust is lodged in our bosoms and that in our bosoms we want everything that is forbidden and God gives it to us, because He's let us go, He's unloosed us, He's unleashed us to the dishonoring. That word can also be translated as degrading of their bodies among themselves.

Todd Fletcher [00:30:19] Well, why is it wrong for me to fulfill my sexual appetites, Pastor? Have you ever heard it's just a biological function? There's no greater lie than that one. Well, I'm hungry, I go to McDonald's and I eat well, that's sin too, no I'm just kidding, I love McDonald's. Well, we say this, we say this, I just heard someone say, he's disgusting, they didn't say 'he' they said 'that's disgusting.' But look at this, this is the popular argument today, isn't it? Sex is just a biological function, when I'm hungry, I eat, when I crave sex, I have sex, I do whatever I want because this body is just an animal. I hear it, it's in the songs, isn't it? It's in our culture, you're just animals behave like animals. Sex is just a biological function, go for it. The problem is, is God has not made the body for

sexual immorality. We were made in the image of God, we are God's physical representatives to a physical world. God has sanctified us and set us apart, and when He made us, He said it's not only good, it's very good. Our bodies deserve honor. Our bodies represent God's gracious gifts to us. We don't own our bodies, we're stewards of our bodies. We're stewards of everything God has given us, and if we use our bodies to commit sins against our God, you deserve what you get. This is what Romans 1 says, for your body to degrade, for your body to fall apart, there's an old book I had to read in high school about Dorian Gray, if you're familiar with that book. And the book essentially is that this guy just lives a life of sin, but his sins get projected onto a picture of himself, a self-portrait that's kept up in the attic. So instead of seeing the effects of his sin in his own body, it goes up to the portrait and the effects of his sin is shown on the portrait.

Todd Fletcher [00:32:30] Well, you can imagine Dorian Gray never wants to look at that portrait because he doesn't want to see the effects of his sin. And eventually he goes up at the end of the book, he goes up to the attic and he looks at this hideous figure in a painting that is unrecognizable. And eventually that painting gets stabbed and then that projection becomes himself. And the idea is that sin destroys the body. I don't, I mean what's wrong with that? It's shameful. You know, there's two types, there's two types of shame there's Western shame and then there's Asian shame. In the Western society, we see shame as something that's kind of, you're not meeting your own self expectations. In the western world, we're so individualistic and shame is just, well, you know, I fall I fell short of my own expectations, I feel shameful that I never did what I was intending to do and it's all about me and it's all about my expectations and me not meeting my expectations that's the Western mindset of shame. But a more biblical mindset is the Asian mindset of shame. Which is this, let me just read this is from an article called Asian Shame and Honor by Psychology Today, they compare Western shame with Asian shame. And I found it interesting because they say in the Asian mindset, internal shame arises when one has not lived up to the community expectations and rules, the standards of the community of the whole. An American or Western mentality is shame is just something that I don't meet for myself, but the fact is, is that when we dishonor our bodies, we are not only shaming ourselves, we're shaming the community. God created all humans to worship and glorify Him with the bodies that He's given us. And so the worst thing that we do is we dishonor the very bodies God has given us. Do you understand that? It's not just about you, it's about the collective, it's about the whole, it's about God created humanity to represent Him. And now humanity as a whole is bringing shame to the very bodies that God has given them and it's incredibly dishonoring. It's incredibly shameful and we should feel shame. Some people say, no, no, you don't want to feel shame, that's that's not good. No shame is an appropriate mechanism that God uses to draw us to repentance.

Todd Fletcher [00:35:01] I once talked to someone who says I live by one motto and that's no regrets! And I said, you're going to regret that. We're full of regrets, that's good, when I sin against a brother or sister I regret that, I'm shameful over it. And here's the thing, turned to 1 Corinthians 6, this is, it gets worse, 1 Corinthians says, it will get better, I promise I'll end well. 1 Corinthians 6, starting in verse 12, "all things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be enslaved by anything. Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality," notice the discussion between food and sex, "but the body is not meant for sexual morality, but for the," Who? "Lord and the Lord for the body and God raised the Lord and will also raise up raise us up by his power, do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute, never," underline that, "or do

you not know that he who has joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her for as it is written, the two shall become one flesh?".

Todd Fletcher [00:36:41] Sex is really important, it has a design, and if you want to have sex with multiple prostitutes, guess what, you are dividing your own heart among all these various men and women. "But he who has joined to the Lord and becomes one spirit with Him," here's a command, "flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, you are not your own." Get that through your thick skull. Your body doesn't belong to you it belongs to God. Oh, I wish we could get that, don't you? I wish we could get that. I wish I could get that. "For you were bought with a price, so glorify God in your body." Oh, man doesn't our world need to hear this? Notice this just one more thing, to the dishonoring, the degrading of our bodies among ourselves. Does sex have physical consequences, sex outside of marriage, promiscuous sex, does sex have physical consequences? If you're honest with yourself, you will say, yes it does. As of 2018, this is the most recent survey I could find, 2.5 million Americans have reported to having sexually transmitted diseases. That's just the report. How many people have not reported their sexually transmitted diseases? HIV, AIDS, 1.5 million Americans have reported HIV or AIDS, you are two to three times more likely to have AIDS or HIV if you are a homosexual male. Why is that?

Todd Fletcher [00:38:43] Because we read in here that they are receiving the due penalty for their error in their bodies. I was talking to Aaron downstairs and he said he just saw a commercial for an HIV drug and at the very end it had two men kissing. Isn't that just throwing it right back in God's face, saying we know that You punish this type of sexual promiscuity, we know that it offends You, we know that it is horrid, it is an abomination to the Lord but we're going to end our commercial with lifting our hands to God, saying we will still practice homosexuality. Because we will beat You, God, with drugs, we will beat You with our science. Isn't that always been the way that we handle it? It's so disgraceful. I just, I can't imagine what it's going to be like on the day of judgment. There's a lot of wrath that's being stored up right now for our generation, this generation. There's a lot of grace to I will get to that, I promise, but we need to go even further down this horrible hole. Verse 25, here's the because, "because they exchanged," they traded, "the truth about God for a lie." This is in the Greek, there's a definite article there for "the lie." Because they exchanged the truth about God for the lie, what's the lie, what is this lie that Paul is writing about? What's the lie? If there's one lie? What's the lie?

Todd Fletcher [00:40:24] Genesis Chapter 3, where Adam and Eve are living in perfect harmony with God, they are glorifying God with their bodies, they're doing everything they were created to do and there comes this little serpent, right? This little this little reptile, we don't know if it was a snake or not, but this this reptile comes and he asks one question of Eve, did God really say that you can't eat from that forbidden fruit, did He really say that? Well, yeah, and not to touch it. Did he say that? I don't know. Well, did you know that if you ate from that fruit, you'd be like God? What? The only reason he's keeping you from that fruit, Eve is because if you ate it you could be like God. Well, that sounds nice. You'll know good and evil like God. Well, that sounds really great. Give me some of that fruit. She eats it, we know the story, she gives it to Adam, who is with her, he eats it, plunges the entire human race into fallenness, which we are recipients of an all men die, and here's the lie is that you could be like God. Why worship God when you could be God? Hmm, doesn't that sound good? Well, let's look at Romans 1 again, therefore they gave, or sorry, "because

they exchanged the truth about God for the lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the creator." There it is, here it is.

Todd Fletcher [00:42:14] Where you went wrong and where we've all gone wrong is we stopped worshiping God and we started worshiping ourselves. Or worse yet, because we at least we bear the image of God, we started worshiping animals and critters and creeping things. How low can you go in your worship? It's horrendous to worship ourselves, then you worship animals, they can't even reason. And then you've got the guy in Isaiah, 44, who cuts down a tree, cuts, takes one part, makes furniture of, another part makes an idol of it, and the other part he burns to warm himself. And he worships at the idol while he's sitting on a chair and he's burning the wood for warmth all from the same tree. How stupid can we be? How foolish can we be? This is the whole argument here, it's idolatry, this is idolatry. You shall love the Lord, your God with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength, but instead we love ourselves with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength, that is idolatry. If you go over to Asia, we were over in Thailand, you see idols everywhere, literally, idols everywhere. We don't really see that here in America, but guess what, we have just as many idols. An idol is anything that replaces God's place as supreme in our hearts.

Todd Fletcher [00:43:38] And he says, we traded God for idols, we worshiped the creature rather than the creator. This is, let me just tell you, this is so frustrating, with abortion we take a miracle that God has knit together this child in a mother's womb and we destroy the child and we praise women for doing that because they're independent. How much worse does it get, something God created in the womb as a way to glorify Himself and we destroy the art? And we turn back to God and say, not our God. Oh, my cast down your idols, right? Cast down anything that is offensive to God. They're only killing you, they're only destroying you. And I'm just going to read verse 32, don't you dare go here, "though they know God's decrees," you all know you're all responsible because I've just preached this, "though they know God's decrees that those who practice such things deserve to die. They not only do them, but give approval to those who practice them." If you approve of sexual immorality you are equally responsible, if you approve of abortion, you are equally responsible. If you approve of the destruction and the degrading of the human body, you are equally responsible. Woe to those who call good evil and evil good, then Paul needs a breath, as do I, as do all of us. He says, the creator who is blessed forever, Amen.

Todd Fletcher [00:45:37] He cannot just take a quick shower after writing about all of this. He can't imagine how anyone would reject God and accept such moral depravity. And so when he even uses the word the creator, he just has to stop and give the creator worship and he says the creator who is blessed forever Amen. He's worthy, that's what it means, He's worthy, He's worthy of everything you have, all these things you've given yourself to, they are not worthy, only God is worthy. So, what is your boat tied to? Is it tied to God? Or is it tied to this world? Because if it's not tied to God, God will eventually unleash your sin by just unlocking one chain at a time, and if you think I can get away with this sin and I can get away with this sin and I can get away with this, you harden your heart to God's word, He'll respond by hardening your heart.

Todd Fletcher [00:46:42] And if you're already way down that path and you've already given approval to homosexuality, you've already given approval to abortion, you've already given approval to the destruction of the body. Guess what? You can repent today, right now. And confess before the Lord I cannot believe I did that, please forgive me in Your Son, Jesus Christ. You are the anchor of my soul, I tie my boat to You and I go wherever

You go. And I reject this world and I will not allow myself to drift towards destruction because God, I'm calling out to you. And He says whoever calls out to Me will be saved, saved from your own depravity, your own wickedness. So we see in verse 24, not only our great sickness that lies in our heart, we see our great shame that we do to our own bodies and to the bodies of others and our great sin that we worship the creation rather than the creator.

Todd Fletcher [00:47:43] We have a lot to repent for, don't we, as a nation? And if we don't repent, we'll destroy ourselves, we'll destroy the family. we'll destroy marriages, we already are doing that. We'll destroy the very fabric of our society and America will be a byword among many among the nations, as it already is in France. Oh, man, here's the good news, Jesus, when He was on earth honored His body that God gave Him. He never sinned against His own body, He never sinned against God, He never fell into sexual immorality. He was tempted by Satan three times in the wilderness while He was fasting for 40 days and He never gave in. And He quoted Scripture and He held tight to God. He tied His boat to God and said, I will not stray from My Father, I will do what the Father says. I came to do the Father's will, get behind me Satan, you know to Peter, I will be crucified for your sins. Jesus lived the perfect life, He glorified His Father every day. He praised His eternal greatness and then He died for our wretchedness.

Todd Fletcher [00:49:04] That's the only reason we can be forgiven is because Jesus paid at all. Jesus took on our sins and paid for them. And as John Piper says, "worship is an inward feeling and an outward action that reflects the worth of God." Do you see God as worthy? Worthy enough to stand against the LGBTQ movement? Worthy enough to stand against abortion? Worthy enough to speak truth when you could get canceled? Worthy enough to preach the gospel and lose your job? Worthy enough to go to prison because you want to have church? Do you see God as worthy? Let's pray. So, Father, we come to You in repentance, I know this is convicted all of us. God we come to You in repentance and say that we do not deserve Your grace. We deserve every bit of wrath that You have. But God, we're so thankful for Your Grace, unmerited favor and for Your mercy, not receiving what we deserve, and all we have to do is place our faith in Your Son Jesus Christ, and His righteousness, which is credited to our count by faith. Father, I thank You for Jesus, and I pray that we would live lives worthy of Jesus, live lives worthy of the gospel, and that we would call others to repentance. We pray this for not only our nation, we pray this for our world. We pray this for our families, we pray this for our children. Lord, may we get back in to Your word and live by Your standards, it is the only rule of faith and obedience, and we pray this in Jesus name. Amen.