

TIME OF REFLECTION

“The greatest enemy of knowledge is not ignorance; it is the illusion of knowledge.”

~Stephen Hawking (1942-2018), theoretical astrophysicist and cosmologist

“It is an ironic habit of human beings to run faster when they have lost their way.”

~Rollo May (1909-1994), psychologist and author

“When man subverted order he did a great deal more than merely fall away from the rationality of his nature...; he brought disorder into the divine order, and presents the unhappy spectacle of a being in revolt against Being. [...] Every time a man sins he renews this act of revolt and prefers himself to God; in thus preferring himself, he separates himself from God; and in separating himself, he deprives himself of the sole end in which he can find beatitude and by that very fact condemns himself to misery.”

~Étienne Gilson (1884-1978), French philosopher and scholar

“Human beings are not self-referential. You don’t make yourself feel loved by telling yourself ‘I love you.’ We are relational beings, and so we need something outside of ourselves to tell us we have value and worth.”

“What the heart loves, the will chooses, and the mind justifies.”

~Dr. John Ashley Null, theologian and Anglican Bishop of North Africa

“If you want your own way, God will let you have it. Hell is the enjoyment of one’s own way forever.”

~Dorothy L. Sayers (1893-1957), English novelist, playwright, and critic

“The concept of substitution may be said, then, to lie at the heart of both sin and salvation. For the essence of sin is man substituting himself for God, while the essence of salvation is God substituting himself for man. Man asserts himself against God and puts himself where only God deserves to be. God sacrifices himself for man and puts himself where only man deserves to be. Man claims prerogatives which belong to God alone. God accepts penalties which belong to man alone.”

~ John R. W. Stott (1921-2011) in *The Cross of Christ*

“This is perfect and pure boasting in God, when one is not proud on account of his own righteousness but knows that he is indeed unworthy of the true righteousness and is justified solely by faith in Christ.”

~Basil of Caesarea, *Homilies on Humility*, 20.3

SERMON – “God’s Righteous Judgment 101” – *Pastor Don Willemann*

SERMON PASSAGE – *Romans 1:16-32 (ESV)*

Romans 1

¹⁶For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

¹⁸For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

¹⁹For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²²Claiming to be wise, they became fools, ²³and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

²⁴Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, ²⁵because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

²⁶For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; ²⁷and 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 for their error.

²⁸And 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. ²⁹They were filled with

all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, ³⁰slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, ³¹foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. ³²Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

Romans 2

¹Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things.

Proverbs 1

⁷The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Psalms 19

¹The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

²Day to day pours out speech,
and night to night reveals knowledge.

Psalms 106

¹⁹They made a calf in Horeb
and worshiped a metal image.

²⁰They exchanged the glory of God
for the image of an ox that eats grass.

²¹They forgot God, their Savior,
who had done great things in Egypt,

²²wondrous works in the land of Ham,
and awesome deeds by the Red Sea.

²³Therefore he said he would destroy them—
had not Moses, his chosen one,
stood in the breach before him,
to turn away his wrath from destroying them.