

Timeless Truth

ROMANS: CHAPTER ONE

WEEK ONE | JUNE DIXON



TIMELESS TEACHING |

I. Paul calls himself a slave sent out to preach the good news (Romans 1:1)

Being a slave for Christ means stepping outside of myself--Keeping my whole concentration on him and praying not to miss one word that He says. Paul lived Christ and never missed an opportunity to tell others about Him. He was an ambassador for Christ. I am too. Does my daily life reflect this?

- a. Do I live the gospel before I share it?
- b. Do I remember to pray that I will hear and be ready to respond when God speaks?
- c. Do I support missions?

II. Paul calls Jesus our Lord. (Romans 1:4)

Jesus as Lord acknowledges that He is God and that He has full authority over all aspects of our lives--thoughts, words, and deeds. Everything! If He is our acknowledged Lord, we have surrendered our will and desires to Him--to follow His teachings and live according to His demands

- a. Jesus is Lord. There is a cost involved.
- b. Jesus as Lord means allegiance.
- c. Jesus as Lord means submission.
- d. Jesus as Lord means joy.

III. Paul says we are called to be God's own holy people. (Romans 1:7)

This means that Christ has invited you into a relationship with Him through Christ. We are His and we are set apart from the world to live like Him and to grow in character to be like Him.

- a. God has called or chosen us for himself.
- b. We are set apart for God's purposes.
- c. Our calling includes identity and responsibility.
- d. Being called as holy connects to God's covenant people.

IV. Paul serves with all his heart. (Romans 1:9)

Do I look for opportunities to share my faith, to tell others what Jesus has done for me? When people look at me do they see what it looks like to have Jesus in my life. How do I share my faith?

- a. Paul isn't merely doing a job.
- b. With all my heart means sincerity and passion.
- c. His service was spreading the gospel.

V. Paul is never ashamed of his faith. (Romans 1:16)

The gospel may be mocked, misunderstood, or rejected—but he will not be silent, apologetic, or embarrassed by it.

- a. The gospel filled Paul with joy and excitement.
- b. The gospel is not just 'good advice', it is good news.

VI. God shows his wrath. (Romans 1:18 ff)

So how did God display His wrath in Romans 1:18? He just let those people (and us) do our thing apart from Him.

- a. It included the abandonment or separation from God.
- b. Jesus felt the weight of God's judgment.
- c. He bore the curse and the death we all deserved.

VII. We can clearly see God's invisible qualities—His eternal power and glory. (Romans 1:20)

Paul says, in effect, that anyone can look at God's creation and see God

- a. Does it move us to worship in pure joy?
- b. Does it deepen your trust?
- c. Does it stir you to speak with excitement?
- d. Does it humble you?
- e. Most importantly, does it lead you to Christ?...

VIII. So God abandoned them. (Romans 1:24)

First, they suppressed the truth about the greatness of God and then they perverted it by worshiping vile, insulting images and doing awful things with each other's bodies! So what do we do?

- a. I humbly examine myself. I ask, "Is there any area in my life where I've pushed God away and chosen my own way?"
- b. Do I show gratitude for God's mercy?
- c. Do I show compassion for the lost?
- d. Do I have a renewed desire for holiness?

Paul says in chapter two, verse one, that This Is us, BUT he will show us how to correct our way.

Timeless Truth

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF FAITH

A STUDY OF ROMANS



WEEK ONE

ROMANS: CHAPTER ONE

THIS GOOD NEWS TELLS US HOW GOD
MAKES US RIGHT IN HIS SIGHT. THIS IS
ACCOMPLISHED FROM START TO FINISH
BY FAITH. AS THE SCRIPTURES SAY, "IT IS
THROUGH FAITH THAT A RIGHTEOUS
PERSON HAS LIFE."

ROMANS 1:17 NLT

DAY ONE

ROMANS 1 | OVERVIEW



TIMELESS TRUTH |

GOD PROMISED THIS GOOD NEWS LONG AGO THROUGH
HIS PROPHETS IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

ROMANS 1:2 NLT

Read Romans 1:1-7

It has been pointed out that although Romans is Paul's most theological book, it was written to a church made up of common people, many of whom were slaves. The Holy Spirit knew that we all need the message of Romans. The smartest theologian couldn't have dug any deeper in this book than we are going to.

1. How does it make you feel knowing that as deep as Romans can be theologically, it is not too deep for us 'regular people' to understand?

In a nutshell, the theme of Romans is the gospel: the good news that God declares sinners to be righteous **ONLY** when they trust in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on their behalf. In other words, it's the good news that God will forgive our sins, deliver us from sin's power, and give us eternal hope. The gospel comes to us from God. Paul did not make it up. God originated the gospel. And the gospel is all about God. It tells us how we can be rightly related to Him through His eternal Son, whom He sent.

2. Romans will help us as we strive daily to be delivered from sin's power. Is this exciting to You? Is this something you struggle with?

3. In verse 1, Paul refers to himself in three ways. What are they? _____,
_____, and _____.

4. Do you consider yourself a slave? How does being called a slave make you feel? Does it make a difference that we are slaves of Christ?

Paul was a called (CSB) or chosen apostle on that road to Damascus and he would be told what he was to do. That mandate primarily was to be an apostle ("sent one") to the Gentiles, whom Paul formerly despised. An apostle had to be a witness of the resurrected Christ (1Cor 9:1); he had to have been chosen by the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:15); and he had to have the ability to perform signs and wonders (Acts 2:43). (GotQuestions.org). Paul was called to preach the gospel. We, too, have to know it to share it.

5. How does Paul describe the gospel? _____

6. The question here is "Do I know the gospel? Am I growing to know God more deeply? Is the good news one that I long to share with others?"

Paul's preaching was an extension of the OT message: The gospel of God was promised beforehand through God's prophets in the holy Scriptures. He didn't make up the gospel. Rather, it comes to us right out of the Old Testament, which he refers to as the "holy Scriptures." We learn who His mom would be (a virgin), Of what house (David), where born (Bethlehem); His name (Emanuel); what His death would be (cross); where (Jerusalem).

The word "Scriptures" means, "the writings." God saw fit to have the prophets write down His revelation for their own and succeeding generations to read. He could have sent angels to every language group in every generation around the world to communicate His truth. Frankly, it would have been a lot easier than sending people who have to struggle to learn those languages and translate the Bible into them. But God chose to reveal Himself through the written Word. Wherever that written Word has gone, cultures have been transformed as people learned to read the Word of God and He opened their minds to its truths.

John McArthur says, "He is **Jesus** because he saves his people from their sin. He is **Christ** because he has been anointed by God as King and priest. He is **Lord** because he is God and is the sovereign ruler of the universe."

7. Read verses 2-4 and then read 2 Timothy 1:9-10 Why is it important that it was promised long ago?

8. What does "He is Lord" mean to you?

God calls us and sets His love on us, but not because of our good deeds. Rather, He calls us and loves us and sets us apart to Himself for good deeds. The result of God's calling us as saints is that we live as saints, set apart for God and His service. If you know Christ as your Savior, you are a saint, set apart unto God by His calling you.

9. Read verses 5-7. What does it mean to be "called to belong to Jesus Christ"?

10. How can understanding our calling shape the way that we live today?

11. How does verse 7 describe believers in Rome, and what encouragement can we draw from that description?
12. Paul writes to all who are in Rome; that's us gentiles too and prays that the Lord Jesus Christ will give us grace and peace. What does that mean to us trying to survive in this turbulent world?

PRAYER MOMENT |

In your prayer time today thank the Lord that He has called you to belong to Him. Ask Him to help you live a life that is totally and completely set apart for His gospel today.

DAILY REMINDER |

As you go through your daily 'to do list', remember that you are not your own—you belong to Christ and are called out for His mission. Reflect today on the fact that God calls ordinary people for His extraordinary message. Give your entire day to Him.

FURTHER READING |

Some Old Testament prophecies about Jesus as the Son of God, descendant of David, and Lord with New Testament Affirmations:

2 Samuel 7:12-16
Isaiah 7:14
Isaiah 9:6-7

Luke 1:31-33
Acts 2:36
Phillipians 2:6-11

"Anything you worship besides God promises much, but delivers worse than nothing."

Timothy J. Keller

DAY TWO

ROMANS 1:8-15 | Paul's Longing to visit Rome



TIMELESS TRUTH |

GOD KNOWS HOW OFTEN I PRAY FOR YOU. DAY AND NIGHT I BRING YOU AND YOUR NEEDS IN PRAYER TO GOD, WHOM I SERVE WITH ALL MY HEART BY SPREADING THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT HIS SON..

ROMANS 1:9 NLT

Read Romans 1:8-15

In verse 8, Paul says ‘First’, but there isn’t any “second.” He probably just means, “to begin with.” “My God” shows that Paul’s relationship with God was personal. Paul knew God as his God. Paul thanks God “through Jesus Christ” because Christ mediates all of God’s blessings to us. It is through Christ that we have access to God in prayer. Paul’s letters often begin with a declaration of his gratitude for those to whom he is writing.

1. What is Paul thanking God for and what does this say about that church? Do we show gratitude?

Read Verses 9-10 again. In verse 9, he calls on God to be his witness about what he is about to say to them. In other words, Paul wants to make it abundantly clear that he isn't lying to them. If God chose to speak about this, Paul says, He would back me up. He again adds that he serves God with all his heart (with his spirit—the deepest part of a person) in proclaiming the gospel. In other words, serving God by preaching Christ is Paul's whole life. Concluding his thought in v. 10, Paul reveals what it is that he prays when he mentions his readers to God. Paul asks God to allow him to visit Rome. Up until now, he has been prevented in some way. Paul again models for us how to pray, in this case for something that he deeply wishes to happen.

2. Notice that Paul says he prays without ceasing—regularly and continually with no time off? How is this even possible in our busy lives?

3. Where does God’s will come into his prayers?

In verses 11 and 12, Paul describes why he is so eager to come and visit the Christians in Rome. He cares about them, and he wants to bring to them a spiritual gift of some kind that will strengthen them. This likely means that Paul wants to come and exercise his spiritual gifts of evangelism and teaching to help them to be stronger in Christ. Or perhaps he means to give them some kind of supernatural blessing that will help to make them stronger. Or maybe he doesn’t know what gift since he hasn’t ever been there.

Trusting God can sometimes feel like a hard and lonely road. It is not meant to be walked alone. Seeing how others trust God encourages and challenges us. It reconfirms what we know to be true and helps to renew our commitment to continue in the "obedience of faith" (Romans 1:5). This is one reason the writer of Hebrews put it this way: "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (Hebrews 10:24–25).

4. According to Paul and the writer of Hebrews, for what reason are we given gifts.

5. How can Paul be encouraged by the Roman church>

Finish up today by reading verses 13-15. Paul wants to make sure his readers believe how serious he is about this. He is not being polite by saying, "Oh, we should get together sometime." His intent to come and visit them has been prevented up to this point. Paul understands these preventions to be God exercising His will to keep Paul from going to Rome until the time is right. He wants to come to Rome to see more people put their faith in Christ to be forgiven for their sins and welcomed into the family of God. But he wants to seek God's will above all else as should we.

6. Why do you suppose he was prevented from coming. (I know we are just theorizing here.) Why had no apostle been sent to Rome?

7. Lest we forget, can you list three reasons Paul wants to badly to come to Rome?

PRAYER MOMENT |

When you pray today, thank God that He has given us such an example like Paul who serves with all his heart. Pray that we can lean into Him with everything we have too. "Lord, help me today to serve You with all my heart. Let me so center on You that you filter all my thoughts, all my words, and all my deeds.

DAILY REMINDER |

In all you do today, remember Proverbs 3:6: "In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your pathways straight." That means go to Him as you plan your day, as you get ready to make each and every decision. Ask Him to guide you through each part of your day. Give Him your big decisions and your small daily tasks.

FURTHER READING |

Paul's thanksgiving for other believers: Philippians 1:3-8; 1 Thess. 1:2-10; Col. 1:3-8

Paul's desire to visit and encourage: Acts 19:21, 23:11; 1 Thess. 2:17-3:10

Paul's sense of obligation to all people: 1 Cor. 9:16-23; Gal. 2:7-9; Matt. 28:18-20

*"Don't ask God to cram His plan into your
sunny little mind because then God would
be limited by your understanding."*

Adrian Rogers

DAY THREE

ROMANS 1:16-17 | The Heart of the Gospel



TIMELESS TRUTH |

FOR I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THIS GOOD NEWS ABOUT CHRIST. IT IS THE POWER OF GOD AT WORK, SAVING EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES..

ROMANS 1:6a NLT

Read Romans 1:16-17

Did Paul perhaps sense that some of the Christians in Rome were tempted to be ashamed or embarrassed about the Gospel? When you think about it, teaching the Messiah crucified and resurrected is a strange message because crucified people came usually from the lower strata of society and who would crucify the Messiah anyway! The great truth about Christ seemed new and absurd to many people. Christians were being persecuted. It's one thing to believe the gospel; it's another thing to take the risk of preaching it to strangers.

The gospel message is nothing less than power from God, for everyone who believes it, to be saved. Anyone, everyone, who puts their faith in Christ and his death for their sin on the cross will be justified—will be made right with God—and welcomed into God's family. If that is all true, and Paul had staked his life on it, then what is there to be ashamed of?

Paul continues that this salvation from God by faith in Christ is for the Jew first and also for the Greek. This explains in part why Paul often began his work in a new city by preaching in the Jewish synagogues before moving on to preach to the Gentiles (Acts 13:5). It's true that Christ sent Paul to preach to all the nations, but He also commissioned Paul to preach about Him to the children of Israel (Acts 9:15). They will also be judged first if they turn away (2:9-10)

1. Why does Paul emphasize the gospel as the “power of God at work?”
2. How is the gospel different from human wisdom or effort in bringing salvation?
3. Have you ever felt ashamed of the gospel—or hesitant to share your faith?
4. Why do you think Paul mentions “the Jew first and also the Gentile”?

Paul describes in verse 17 what the gospel does. In the gospel, the righteousness of God is "revealed (CSB)," in one sense, in that it is given to human beings by their faith in Christ. In other words, God declares human beings to be righteous in His eyes because of their faith.

The words "through faith" or "from faith to faith (CSB)" can mean from the faith of God, who makes the offer of salvation, to the faith of men, who receive it; OR from the faith of one believer to another; OR from a progressive growing faith from one degree to another; OR perhaps Paul meant that from day one of our journey of faith until the last day, we, the righteous, must live by faith.

As Romans will make abundantly clear, people cannot be declared righteous before God by following the law. Good works and ritual obedience do nothing to make us right with God. And if we are not declared righteous in God's eyes—a condition referred to as being "justified"—then we are separated from Him forever because of our sinfulness. However, according to the gospel, Christ died to pay the penalty of death and separation from God for our sins on the cross. When we trust in Christ, God sees us through Christ and declares us to be "righteous" or "justified." Paul put the same idea this way in Philippians 3:8–9: "Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ." This is God's gospel: God's "good news" for humanity. Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4 to show this is not a new idea: "The righteous shall live by his faith."

5. What does it mean to be "made right in God's sight"?
6. How does it affect you to know salvation is "from start to finish by faith"?
7. Do we sometimes try to rely on our own works instead of faith?
8. Why is faith central to salvation instead of works?
9. How does Habakkuk 2: 4 the righteous will live by faith, connect the Old and the new Testaments?

PRAYER MOMENT |

When you pray today, ask God to remind you all day that the gospel is His power to save. Ask him to please give us the courage to never be ashamed of Jesus, but to live boldly in faith. Ask him to help us trust from start to finish, knowing that our righteousness comes from Christ alone. Finally, ask him to strengthen our faith so that we might truly live by it today.

DAILY REMINDER |

In all you do today, remember Ephesians 2:8-10: “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” Live your faith so that all can see it and frankly so that you can too. Then we can grow to be a bit more like Christ each day.

FURTHER READING |

The power of the Gospel: 1 Cor 1:18; Isaiah 55:11

Boldness / Not being ashamed of Christ: 2 Tim 1:7-8; Matthew 10:32-33

Righteousness / Justification by faith: Habakkuk 2:4; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9; Eph. 2:8-9

Salvation for all people: Acts 10:34-35; Gal. 3:28

“Never think that an event is unimportant or not part of God's Grand Plan. He wastes no time in your life.”

Charles Swindoll

DAY FOUR

ROMANS 1:18-23 | God's wrath against sin



TIMELESS TRUTH |

YES, THEY KNEW GOD, BUT THEY WOULDN'T WORSHIP HIM AS GOD OR EVEN GIVE HIM THANKS. AND THEY BEGAN TO THINK UP FOOLISH IDEAS OF WHAT GOD WAS LIKE. AS A RESULT, THEIR MINDS BECAME DARK AND CONFUSED. ...

ROMANS 1:21 NLT

Read Romans 1:18-23

Verses 18-20: Man Suppresses truth. Paul argues that God has revealed Himself to the human race, both through His wrath (1:18) and through His creation (1:19-20). But we have inexcusably rejected God's revelation and instead have resorted to inventing gods of our own (1:21-23).

The concept of God's wrath is out of sync with our modern world. Even many who claim to be evangelicals object to and minimize any mention of God's wrath. They may say that they believe it because it's in the Bible, but. . . . We've even heard of professing Christians who say, "I believe in a God of love, not a God of wrath." We've been told that Jesus was always loving and never judgmental. I always want to ask such people, "When was the last time you actually read the gospels?" Jesus' anger is always righteous anger—never selfish or uncontrolled.

The problem in these verses is not that truth is unavailable; the problem is that truth is being suppressed. Reread verse 19. This suppression of truth is not passive. It carries the idea of holding something down like sticking your dog in a box and sitting on the top. The idea of suppression here is a continual and aggressive striving against the truth. Their disobedience is not a result of ignorance; it's caused by rebellion.

Lastly, Paul seems to be saying in these verses, "What kind of power would it take to make the world and all that is in it?" Such a feat would require "eternal power," or endless and inexhaustible power. Such a Creator must also be divine and not merely human. He must be God in other words. Human beings should look at creation and decide there must be a God who made it, a God we must answer to on some level.

1. What is God's attitude towards those who don't come to Him through faith in Jesus Christ?"
2. How does creation reveal the truth about God according to these verses?

3. What are people suppressing? What is the basic reason they suppress truth?
4. Can you think of another modern example of people exchanging the truth of God for lies?
5. How do these verses challenge our understanding of God's justice?
6. The bottom line: People reject God (suppress truth) not for lack of knowledge, but because they prefer _____.

V21-23 Man perverts the truth. First, man suppresses the truth about the greatness of God (18-20), and then he perverts that truth (21-23). The verse says they knew God—saw His glory but traded it away anyway by worshiping insulting images. In essence, having gotten rid of the true knowledge of God, he worships images with which he is comfortable.

Paul is describing the downward spiral, falling further away from God, through which humanity naturally descends into unrighteousness. It begins with rejecting what we ought to know about God through creation (Romans 1:18–20). Rejecting God as creator leads to a refusal to honor or give thanks to God. After all, why honor a God who did not make the world? And if God is not the creator, why would we assume that He is the provider of all we need? Why give thanks to God for what we believe we have developed and acquired for ourselves?

David wrote that the fool says in his heart, "There is no God" (Psalm 14:1; 53:1). Paul writes here that fools often have something in common: They believe themselves to be wise. This often-cited verse carries profound implications for how we, as human beings, understand our relationship to God. The root word for fools is the same root from which we derive our word 'moron'. This is an ugly term that refers not so much to one's intellect as to his moral condition. Verse 23 portrays the progressive degeneration that the perversion of idolatry brings. First, they worshiped an image of a man, second birds, then quadrupeds, and ultimately, reptiles—crawling things. You cannot go any lower than this.—MORON!

At this point on the downward spiral, or the ladder of unrighteousness, human beings can't even think correctly, and have grown dark in our hearts toward God. It gets worse from there. Because we have rejected the truth that He is creator, provider, and Lord over all, we cannot come to any right conclusions about how the universe works. The result is that our thinking becomes worthless, and our hearts grow dark to even the possibility of the one, true God. Still, we long to worship something and so create images made to look like people and animals. We foolishly worship our images, thinking that we have become quite wise (Romans 1:22–23).

7. How does "knowing God but not glorifying Him" show a perversion of truth?
8. What happens to human life when the heart becomes darkened?

To recap: if a man is not a Christian, it is because he is suppressing the truth about God, pushing down God's own revelation of who he is. Further, he is not a Christian because he is given to idolatry. Martin Luther said, "whatever your heart clings to and relies on is your god." An unbeliever has his own "self created gods" Finally, he is under God's wrath when he fails to acknowledge in his heart the extent of his sin. If he dies without Christ, he will go to hell.

PRAYER MOMENT |

When you pray today, ask God to remind you all day how easy it would be to manufacture your own idols if our minds do not stay centered on Him. Help me today Lord to center on You with everything I have. I see You in nature and I speak to You through the Holy Spirit. Thank You Lord Jesus for Your salvation.

DAILY REMINDER |

Consider two revelations today: 1. the revelation of the wrath of God justly coming upon all mankind, because man suppresses the truth and perverts the truth; and 2. the revelation of the righteousness of God from faith to faith so that we can stand righteous before him. If one does not have the righteousness of God, he or she has the wrath of God. There are two revelations and two choices. Are you under the wrath of God today? Or do you cling to the righteousness of God that has been revealed to you?

FURTHER READING |

God's wrath against Sin: Nahum 1:2-6; John 3:36; Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:5-6

Suppressing the Truth: 2 Thess. 2:9-12; Jere. 6:10; Zech. 7:11-12; 2 Tim. 4:3-4

God revealed in Creation: Ps. 19:1-6; Job 12:7-10; Acts 14:15-17; Acts 17:24-27

Refusing to glorify God: Mal. 2:2; Luke 17:11-18; 2 Tim. 3:1-5

Idolatry—Exchanging God's Glory for Created Things: Ex. 32:1-6; Deut. 4:15-19; Isa. 44:9-20; Jer. 2:11-13

"The fact that man can be made right with God and escape judgment is the best news the world could ever hear."

John F. MacArthur

DAY FIVE

ROMANS 1:24-32 | The Consequences of Rebellion



TIMELESS TRUTH |

SINCE THEY THOUGHT IT FOOLISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE
GOD, HE ABANDONED THEM TO THEIR FOOLISH
THINKING AND LET THEM DO THINGS THAT SHOULD
NEVER BE DONE.

ROMANS 1:28 NLT

Read Romans 1:24-27

Why does God just turn us loose with our sin? Paul writes that it was God's direct response to two things—unrighteousness and idolatry. First, unrighteous,--pagan humanity traded the truth of God for a lie (Romans 1:21–22). It seems Paul is saying we traded the truth that God is the creator for the lie that all of creation arrived in some other way. Worshiping His creation (idolatry)--rejecting the truth that God is creator and worshiping the false gods of creation and not Him as the maker. God takes idol worship personally. The first two of his Ten Commandments to Israel are that they should have no other gods before him and not worship or serve any image of any created thing (Exodus 20:3-6).

To recap: if a man is not a Christian, it is because he is suppressing the truth about God, pushing down God's own revelation of who he is. Further, he is not a Christian because he is given to idolatry. Martin Luther said, "whatever your heart clings to and relies on is your god." An unbeliever has his own "self created gods" Finally, he is under God's wrath when he fails to acknowledge in his heart the extent of his sin. If he dies without Christ, he will go to hell.

1. What might it look like for God to "give me over" or "abandon me" to something I continually refuse to surrender?
2. How is this a form of judgment?

Verses 28-32

Verse 28 moves from sexual sin into relational sin and catches the rest of humanity. Sin begins when we deliberately shut God out of our lives. It becomes entrenched when God gives us over to depraved, spiritually unfit minds. When people reject God, He gives them over to their sins and the horrible

consequences. Is this really an active punishment from God, or has God merely allowed humanity to follow our rejection of Him to its logical conclusion? What's clear is that the limits God has set are shown to be for our good and not for our harm. The best earthly results happen for those who will acknowledge Him in how they live sexually and in relationship to each other. Great harm comes from indulging in the sins about which God has warned us.

In verses 29 and 30 God isn't saying that every sinner is guilty of every one of these sins, but rather that the human race is guilty of sin in thought, word and deed. The list contains representative examples. All of the sins except for "haters of God" are relationally destructive sins. When we practice them, our families and our entire society suffer. The majority of those sins are simply a matter of cause and effect. God steps aside, and allows us to "have it our way," resulting in pain and suffering. Humanity's general attempt to ignore God results in all kinds of sin, which brings all the misery that God warned us about. God, for His part, has responded to our refusal to acknowledge Him as God by giving us up to indulge in all of these sins and to experience the natural, painful consequences of living outside of His direction for us.

It's not that we all do each of the sins listed by Paul in the previous verses. It's that the same root of sin rules in the hearts of each of us, expressing itself in some of these ways, if not others. Paul intends for us to find ourselves in his list of sinful words, actions, and lifestyles. We are all sinful, and we all deserve death.

3. Which of the sins Paul lists (envy, strife, deceit, pride, etc.) do you see most reflected in our culture today
4. Which ones challenge you personally to grow in holiness?
5. Why do people approve of things they know are wrong (v.32)
6. Sin's pull grows stronger when we refuse to confess it. Naming it before God is the first step back. Do you agree or disagree?

PRAYER MOMENT |

When you pray today, ask God to keep you from exchanging Your truth for a lie. When our hearts drift toward idols, ask Him to draw you back by His Spirit. Thank Him that though sin leads downward, God's Grace lifts us up in Christ.

DAILY REMINDER |

When God "gives us over," it is to show us the futility of sin. When Christ takes us in, it is to show us the fullness of His grace.

FURTHER READING |

God “Giving Them Over”: Psalm 81:11-12; Acts 7:41-42; Hosea 4:17

Exchanging Truth for Lies / Idolatry: Jeremiah 2:11-13; Isaiah 44:19-20; 1 Thess. 1:9

Sexual Immorality and Dishonorable Passions: Lev. 18:22; 20:13; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Jude 7

Corruption of Mind and Life: Gen. 6:5; 2 Tim. 3:2-4; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 4:17-19; Psalm 14:1-3

Hope in the Gospel: Titus 3:3-5; John 8:34-36; 2 Cor. 5:17

*“Because we chose to worship the creature
rather than the Creator, God has given us
what we asked for.”*

Peter Wallace