

The Results of Exchanging the Truth for the Lie: 1
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Original: 12-13-98; Revised: 9-5-21

Text: Romans 1:24-27

Romans: [Bibliography](#) or [Manuscripts and Greek Exegesis](#)

UBS 4th Edition Paragraph Topic: The Guilt of Mankind

Central Idea of Message: Men and women are free to receive or to reject God's self-disclosure, but men and women are unable to alter the consequences which necessarily accompany their choice.

Introduction: After elaborating upon the reason for Gentile guilt, which is rebellion toward God's self-disclosure, Paul continues his discourse by exploring the results of this guilt.

Mankind does have freedom. The freedom of which I speak is a freedom of choice, of will, of volition. But there are consequences bound to these choices, and insofar as these results are concerned, mankind has virtually no say-so whatsoever. Thus, mankind is free to make choices but bound to experience the consequences which his choices bring. Sin always lies and promises to make us happy, but fails miserably, making matters, and life itself, worse; yet, sin never explains its consequences; its sound on the aftermath is only crickets.

Our power is limited. Not in our freedom to choose, but in our ability to alter the consequences of our choices. There is no separating choice from result. The two always go together. We choose the roadway. This is within our power; however, we cannot alter the destination of the roadway, for this is already decided. We must be careful what we choose.

I. God Gave Them Over to the Lusts of Their Hearts (vv. 24-25)

A. Gave them over (v. 24)

1. God left mankind to his own self-determination and self-destruction (cf. Robertson 4:330)
2. Part of the price of moral freedom (cf. Robertson 4:330)
3. Handed over to the power of sin (cf. Vincent 3:18)
4. **Sin is man's way of saying he neither needs nor wants God; hell is God's way of saying "have it your way"**
5. Rejection of God after his self-disclosure has

dire consequences, and one outcome is having been given over to the import of our choices

6. **One cannot be delivered over to a greater slavery than to be given over to one's own lusts (cf. Henry 6:372)**

B. To impurity

1. **People sank into a self-degrading spiral of sensualism likely associated here with cultic prostitution (cf. Harrison 24), a.k.a. "sacramental fornication" (MacGorman, *Everyman's*, 30)**
2. Paul was well aware of the Temple of Aphrodite in Corinth and its hundreds of temple prostitutes

C. To dishonoring their bodies (v. 24)

1. **Dishonoring of God leads to dishonoring the body (cf. Moody 171) and dishonoring our body dishonors God**
2. Defilement of heart is indicated by defilement of body (cf. Moody 171)
3. "One aspect of mankind's corruption (to which God actively let people go) was sexual profligacy. The frequency of live-in lovers, wife-swapping, and group sex parties today only confirms this result of God's abandonment" (Witmer 2:443), and to this list I would add the following observations:
 - a) Rampant sexual promiscuity, with legalized abortion paid for with American tax dollars in the U.S. and abroad as the remedy
 - b) Unsuppressed adultery
 - c) Unrestrained, even celebrated, homosexuality
 - d) A pandemic level of pornography, including child porn, raking in \$6-15 billion annually (<https://fightthenewdrug.org/how-free-porn-in-dustry-growing-in-fast-paced-digitized/>)
 - e) Extensive prostitution and human trafficking
 - f) Rising interest in polyamorous relationships
4. **If you've ever wondered about the validity and accuracy of God's word, you need look no further than at the perversion and its escalation seen in modern-day human sexual practices to conclude that God has, indeed, given many over to their lusts - and it's not a pretty sight**
5. But why are humans given over to their lusts?

D. Because they exchanged the truth of God for a lie (v. 25)

1. Exchanged the truth of God
 - a) Most people prefer something other than God
 - (1) Prefer worshiping what is created
 - (2) Prefer serving what is created
 - b) In sensuality, men and women worship and serve themselves (cf. Mickelsen 1187)
 - c) **Claiming to worship the Creator by means of the creature (idolatry) and creation (planets and stars), people soon lose sight of the Creator in his creation**
2. **"The" lie is, "The contention that something or someone is to be venerated in place of the true God" (Harrison 25)**
 - a) Recall cultic prostitution in honor of mythological gods and goddesses
 - b) Recall the "self-deification" claims of Satan
 - (1) That humans can "exist independent of God, self-sufficient, self-directing, and self-fulfilling" (cf. Gen. 3:4-5; Witmer 2:443)
 - (2) **We prefer making ourselves our god and our passions our master so we can do as we please without fear of judgment**
 - (3) "The result of this self-deification was self-indulgence" (cf. Wiersbe, *Exposition*, 1:519)
 - c) We need to be reminded that God did not create us for our good pleasure but for his (cf. Runge 25)
3. "In place of the Creator" means completely leaving God out
4. **"Man's religion in its various cultic forms is a species of punishment for spurning the revelation God has given of himself in nature" (Harrison 24)**

II. God Gave Them Over to Perversion in Sexual Relations (vv. 26-27)

- A. **Women exchanging the natural function for what is unnatural means lesbianism (v. 26)**
 1. **The consequences listed here for rejecting God's self-disclosure are exchanging the religious truth for the lie [religious perversion] and exchanging the sexually/morally natural and normal for the unnatural and abnormal [sexual perversion]**

2. **The Bible says a woman shall not even wear a man's clothing, nor shall a man wear a woman's clothing, let alone a woman have sex with another woman or a man have sex with another man (cf. Deut. 22:5): so much for cross-dressing "Drag Queens"**
 3. **The point was maintaining gender differences, celebrating and respecting these differences, not neutralizing or trying to reverse-engineer them**
- B. **Men abandoning the natural function of the woman for what is unnatural means homosexuality (v. 27)**
1. Aflame with passion toward one another
 2. Committing indecent acts with each other
 3. Receiving in themselves the due penalty of their error
 - a) Rebuke? Disrespect? Disease? Execution?
 - b) What people do grows directly out of what people love (cf. McBeth 59)
 - (1) Those who love sin indulge in sin
 - (2) Those who love God indulge in God
 4. The words used for woman and man in this passage
 - a) Are not the ordinary gender-identifying words γυνή and ἀνήρ (cf. Harrison 25)
 - b) Are special sexual-identifying words
 - (1) Female - θήλυς "a breast"
 - (2) Male - ἄρσεν
- C. **Homosexuality (vv. 26-27)**
1. **Homosexuality of any sort is unnatural and is a sexual inversion, that is to say a reversal of God's natural order**
 2. **The most distinguishing symptoms of moral depravity are seen in one's sexual preference and practice**
 3. Abandonment to dishonorable passions; notice the degenerate reversal (v. 26; cf. MacGorman, *Layman's*, 29)
 - a) People worship animals as gods
 - b) Women lust after women as men (it is shocking when a male church member calls and tells you his wife has left him for another woman)
 - c) Men lust after men as women
 4. Unnatural (v. 26)
 - a) **No person is born a homosexual**
 - b) **If homosexuality were practiced universally by all people, it would lead to the**

extinction of the human race (cf. MacGorman, *Layman's*, 29)

- c) Male and female are God's complimentary sexual beings, each one essential to the other in the reproduction of mankind (cf. MacGorman, *Layman's*, 29)
 - d) **Heterosexuality is the only conduct fitting God's created order (cf. MacGorman, *Layman's*, 29)**
 - e) **The homosexual who charges that God made him or her that way is attributing a confusion to God that simply does not exist (cf. MacGorman, *Layman's*, 29)**
 - f) Not an alternate lifestyle but an unnatural, atrocious, perversion of creation and life as God intended
5. Involves shameless acts (v. 27)
- a) Burned: "to be hot in the genitals"
 - b) **Our capacity for shame is an index of our moral sensitivity (cf. MacGorman, *Layman's*, 30)**
 - c) **Through repeated violations our capacity for shame eventually disappears; some call this "liberation" but the Bible calls it depravity**
6. Results in serious breakdown for those involved (v. 27)
- a) Reaping what is sown (cf. Gal. 6:7-8)
 - (1) Personal retribution in accord with the wrong which is done
 - (2) God has made it such that all vice is self-avenging: consequences are built in
 - b) But the innocent also end up suffering the consequences produced by the guilty
 - (1) Sin cannot be committed in a vacuum
 - (2) All sin makes waves in the ocean of humanity
 - (a) Alcohol and drug use can cause your children to be born with a genetic predisposition toward alcoholism or other addictions
 - (b) Sexual promiscuity may result in acquiring a sexually transmitted disease which will likely be given to your loyal spouse

- (c) **Whatever we allow in our life and in our house tells our children, grandchildren, family, and friends that it is okay, it's not sinful, evil, or even bad**
- (d) **What parents do in moderation their children are likely to do in excess, for generations, and they will also reap the consequences of their parents' iniquity and their own (cf. Exod. 20:3-6; 34:6-7; Jer. 32:18)!**
- (e) Stop being wishy-washy!
- (3) Homosexuality
 - (a) "The 'gay' facade is a thin veil for deep-seated frustration" (Harrison 25)
 - (b) "The folly of homosexuality is proclaimed in its inability to reproduce the human species in keeping with the divine commandment (Gen. 1:28)" (Harrison 25)
- 7. Related Scripture
 - a) **The men of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:4-5)**
 - b) **Sexual relations with a member of the same sex is forbidden (Lev. 18:22)**
 - c) **Sexual activity with a member of the same sex was punishable by death (Lev. 20:13)**
 - d) **The New Testament condemns homosexuality (1 Cor. 6:9-11; Tim. 1:10)**
 - e) **Homosexuality results in the punishment of eternal fire (Jude 7)**
- 8. As an additional deterrent you might want to know that of the first fifteen emperors of Rome, fourteen were homosexuals (cf. Halverson 50), which is not exactly a desirable model for individuals to follow either for personal morality or for governmental leadership; in other words, if godless Roman emperors thought homosexuality was acceptable, that helps me make up my mind that it isn't
- 9. The gospel offers magnificent deliverance for homosexuals while also refusing to sanction the homosexual's condition and leaving him or her as found (cf. MacGorman, *Everyman's*, 32)

- a) We are vile creatures when left to ourselves
(cf. Henry 6:372)
- b) **God's grace encourages, even demands,
restraint, especially in the area of human
sexuality (cf. Gal. 5:22-23)**

Conclusion: Did you notice that throughout this entire passage neither man nor woman is presented as being a victim? On the contrary, people are portrayed as knowing what is true and choosing not to accept it, and, in fact, knowingly, and often angrily, rejecting God's truth, thus making them fully culpable. Further, this rejection led to the steady deterioration of the quality of their lives spiritually and morally, and, undoubtedly, mentally, physically, and emotionally as well.

Rome needed the gospel, as did the rest of the world. Paul was eager to preach his gospel in this religiously and sexually perverted, morally depraved city.

We are free to receive or to reject God's self-disclosure of himself and truth, but we are unable to alter the consequences which necessarily accompany our choice.

Choose wisely. Choose truth. Choose Jesus.