

# No More Excuses

## Part 5

October 29, 2017

### I **SLIDE** Therefore....

- A) Paul tells us that our actions have consequences that are based upon God's unchanging nature
- B) **Proverbs 5:22 (NIV)** His own iniquities will capture the wicked, And he will be held with the cords of his sin.
  - 1) Harvey Weinstein
  - 2) Russian Probe

### II **SLIDE** Therefore.... Consequences

- A) **Romans 1:24 (NIV)** <sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. <sup>25</sup> They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator--who is forever praised. Amen.
  - 1) Christmas
    - a) Buy a gift and you get an exchange receipt
    - b) Why do we exchange a gift?
      - i) Because it does not fir
      - ii) Because we do no really like the one we received
      - iii) Because it does not fit our lifestyle
      - iv) Because it does not fit in
  - 2) People exchange the truth of God for the same reasons
  - 3) When people exchange the truth of God for a lie, then they are exchanging God for a lie
  - 4) There is no difference between God and His word
  - 5) Jesus is the Word made flesh
- B) So, we see people exchanging Jesus for a lie

### III Now, for the controversial part

#### A) The controversy

- 1) These next few verses lie at the center of much discussion, disagreement, and interpretation
- 2) They may seem straight-forward, but not everyone thinks so

B) **SLIDE** <sup>26</sup> Because of this [Because they exchanged the truth of God for a lie and because they turned away from Him to idols], God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. <sup>27</sup> In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

- 1) Is Paul speaking for himself or for God?
- 2) Is Paul repeating the prejudice of self-righteousness?
- 3) To whom is Paul referring when he says "they" and "them"?  
Jews, Gentiles, believers, unbelievers
- 4) Are these passages referring to homosexual acts or to cultural interpretations?
- 5) Does "natural relations" refer to same-sex relationships or to heterosexual relationships?
- 6) Is Paul describing the results of hardened hearts or of religious judgmentalism (Jews toward Gentiles)
- 7) Is Paul speaking of homosexual relationships or of infidelity?
- 8) Some see these verses as clearly stating that homosexuality is a sin
- 9) Others see these verses as proof of self-righteous, religious judgment, which is a sin
- 10) More about this later
- 11) Because we cannot take these two verses in isolation

C) **SLIDE** <sup>28</sup> Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.

- 1) They did not think it was worthwhile, valuable, useful to retain the knowledge of God
- 2) Retain
  - a) To have and hold
  - b) Implies **continuing** possession
  - c) We have and hold the word in our hearts, minds and spirits
  - d) We are to think of God, to serve Him, to adore, praise and thank Him continually
- 3) **SLIDE Romans 12:2 (NIV)** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.
  - a) Renewing our minds is continual process
  - b) Every day we are bombarded with junk - from advertisements, news stories, protests, television, videos, music, celebrities, government,
  - c) All of these can cause us to doubt, to become angry, to become numb, or to disassociate ourselves from events
  - d) Thus, we need to renew our minds continually with God's word and knowledge
- 4) **SLIDE** Again, we see the consequences of our actions
  - a) God gave them over to depraved mind
  - b) Spoken of persons delivered over to the power or authority of others, i.e. sinful nature
  - c) So that people do what they ought not to do
  - d) "Paul adds here that they were more and more reduced to idiocy and became ever readier to tolerate all kinds of evils, to the point that they imagined that God would never avenge things which no one doubted were offensive to humanity as well." **Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture - New Testament VI: Romans.**

D) **SLIDE** Return to verses 27-28

- 1) This is not about us vs. them
- 2) This is not about identifying sin and pointing a finger
- 3) This is not about separating ourselves from "them"
- 4) This is not about winning an argument or a debate; it is about winning souls for Jesus
- 5) This is about one very simple truth: everyone needs Jesus
- 6) If we are not careful, the world can creep into our lives
- 7) **SLIDE** If I am not careful, I can become jaded so I talk more about people than about Jesus
- 8) If I am not careful, I can become hardened so that I talk more about the problems than about Jesus
- 9) We are not to judge; we are to shine a light
- 10) This is not about condemning others; it is about our need for salvation
- 11) And we do all of this without compromising our faith or even the smallest part of God's word
- 12) This is all about Jesus
  - a) **SLIDE John 3:16-17 (NIV)** <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.
  - b) **SLIDE Matthew 9:10-12 (NIV)** <sup>10</sup> While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. <sup>11</sup> When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" <sup>12</sup> On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. <sup>13</sup> But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Jeremiah 11:14 - do not pray for this people  
Jesus did not dialogue with the Pharisees  
Moses did not ask for a sit-down with Pharaoh  
We stand our ground and speak the truth in love for all of those who are  
searching, who stand in the middle, who believe but do not know who  
We are to avoid arguments but not confrontations - again, we follow Jesus'  
example.

For the rest of the story  
How do Christians act? Like Jesus  
How do Christians act? We should be able to say, "Like me."  
Look at the list of sins that described  
The church has focused on homosexuality and made it THE issue to the  
point of ignoring other issues  
Homosexuality, like gossip, envy, lying, separate us from Jesus  
The true issue, the most important issue, is our need for Jesus - all of us  
And not just to be saved but also to live a life of salvation