

Chapter 1

Introduction

Chapter 1 - Introduction, Part 1

The book of Romans derives its name from the Romans to whom Paul was writing. It is a very theological and practical book in that Paul expounds upon aspects of the gospel, meaning salvation.

Romans 1:18-32 is really a biblical explanation of what is happening right before our eyes and why. It is very important that God's people understand that. These verses illustrate how God and His word are being systematically pushed out of the consciousness of man. In a society, where the emphasis, the aim, and the goal is self, I believe these verses describe why and how the degeneration and godlessness of society has come about. What you read of in Romans 1, is the awful downward spiral of depravity and the process of secularization. These verses reveal the mess that humanity is in, why it is in this mess, and why it is going to get worse. It is a cycle, a process.

Romans 1:17-18, says *"For therein [Referring to the gospel.] is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just [Meaning the justified, that is the saved.] shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;"* Those two verses form the introduction to what follows in verses 19-32. In verses 17-18, you read of God, the righteousness of God, the just or the saved, and of faith. Those are all good things. You also read of the wrath of God, of men in a general way, and that these men are in ungodliness. Ungodliness and unrighteousness are mentioned as well as truth. All of those things exist and all of those things are real right now.

Verses 17-18 mention two revelations; the revelation of the gospel, which reveals the righteousness of God; the revelation of present time, which reveals God's wrath and the sinfulness of man. There is mention of two groups of people with two different lifestyles. You read, *"the just"*, which is one group of people, followed by, *"they shall live by faith"*, which is their lifestyle. Next you read of *"ungodliness and*

unrighteousness of men". "Men" is another group, which refers to humanity in general, not just males. "Men", humanity in general, hold the truth or they restrain the truth in unrighteousness. Regardless of the times, the just are going to live by faith and humanity in general is going to live in ungodliness and unrighteousness.

In verse 18, Paul makes a general statement that because of man's sin, God's wrath is being revealed. It is being revealed right now. We live in a society, a country, a world under the wrath of God. Then in Romans 1:19-32, Paul expounds upon, develops the statement he makes in verse 18. Verse 18, is a general, a universal statement concerning the wrath of God, the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, followed by verses 19-32, which are the particulars of that statement, giving us some details.

As you read through verses 19-32, take notice of such words as "because", which refers to a process.

Romans 1:19 *"Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed [it] unto them."* "Them" refers to man in general. "Which may be known of God" refers to a knowledge of God, not a saving knowledge, that God has shown of Himself to mankind. Paul explains that because of the opening word of the next verse. [20] *"For the invisible things of him ..."* where "him" is referring to God, *"... from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made ..."*. "Things that are made" refers to creation. *"... [even] his eternal power and Godhead;"* This means there is a general revelation of God to humanity. *"... so that they are without excuse."* If someone says they have never heard the truth, they are without excuse. Creation itself makes them without excuse. The general revelation of God makes them without excuse.

Paul goes on in verse 21, *"Because ..."* "Because" introduces an explanation, an effect. *"... that, ..."*, refers to something specific. *"... when they knew God, ..."*, here, Paul is not talking about salvation, but rather, the general

knowledge of God that you get from just observing creation. "... *they* ...", referring to humanity in general since the fall, "... *glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*" It's important to notice here that "they" **didn't do** something **and** "they" **became something**. They **didn't** glorify God as God, **and** they **became** vain in their imaginations.

[22]"*Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.*" We live in the age of academia, when people think they are smarter than any generation that ever lived on the planet. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The Greek word translated as "fools" is morons. They **became** morons. Paul doesn't mean **they** simply did stupid things, but rather they **became** morons, idiots and did stupid things. That is what you have today. You can be below average intelligence today and almost look like a genius within the general population. People have *become* morons. Verse 23 explains what morons do, "*And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.*" Morons change the Godly into the ungodly. That is how you identify them.

The first word of Romans 1:24, "wherefore", shows the connection to the consequence of actions taken, of things done. "*Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:*" God turned these *fools*, these morons over to themselves. God giving people up to themselves is an aspect of God's wrath. Dishonouring their bodies between themselves, means a lot of things. That is where we are today. Then in verse 25, these morons, "*Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.*" These fools, these morons, referred to as "the creature", humanity in general, worship themselves and things in creation rather than God. That is what almost

everyone around does. Verse 26 tells of the consequences of verse 25. **Because** of “men” turning the truth of God into a lie, **because** they worshiped and served the creature more than the creator, *“For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: ...”* In this particular aspect of God’s wrath where God gave them up, God pulled back the restraints and man began to do what he does by his own nature. In the tribulation period, the restraints of the Holy Spirit are removed. We are in the process of that happening. God is pulling back the restraints. It is part of the wrath of God. God pulling back His restraints is worse than the cataclysmic wrath of God. This is worse than an earthquake or some other “natural” disaster, and it is what we are under. God giving up, removing His restraints on a people, on a nation, is the wrath of God. *“... for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: The word for indicates a tone of surprise. This is a result of God giving them up unto their vile affections. [27]”* *And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.”* Again, this verse describes what morons do. This is referring to homosexuality, which is a result of the wrath of God. People will say, God is going to pour his wrath down upon this nation because of homosexuality. True. But it is worse than that. They don’t realize homosexuality **is also** the wrath of God. It is God removing His hand and this is what they do. It is part of the wrath of God.

Continuing in Romans 1 with verse 28, *“And even as they did not like to retain God in [their] knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;”* Here we are in a time of academia, and people are morons, because God has given them up to a reprobate mind. The “pattern”, of people thinking they are so smart, yet doing such stupid things, becoming morons, concerns the thought process. You talk to people and we say

it all the time, “I don't know where they get their thinking.” Paul explains it here. It's the result of God's wrath. Do people recover from that? I don't think so. Look up the word reprobate. God gave them up to a reprobate mind. He just let them go.

Romans 1 29-32 tells more of the consequences of God's wrath, which causes even more of His wrath to be displayed. [29]“*Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity;...*” *Malignity* means infectious, that which is incurable. “... *whisperers, [30]Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, [31]Without understanding, ...*” If you talk to a worldly person today, you will find they have no understanding whatsoever. This is part of God's wrath. “... *covenantbreakers, without natural affection, ...*”, refers to more than just homosexual acts. It is also the natural affection of parents for their children and children for their parents. “... *implacable, ...*”, means they are unrelenting and have no remorse. “... *unmerciful: [32]Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.*”

Those verses expound upon Paul's general statement made in Romans 1:18, “Because of man's sin, God's wrath is displayed.” All through the pages of scripture and the pages of history, it is made crystal clear that man is plagued with sin. You do not even need the word of God to make that clear, history makes it clear. Everywhere we turn it is inescapably evident that something is dreadfully and desperately wrong with humanity, as well as something horrifying, monstrous, and abominable about the human race. You can no longer ignore it. The humanists, of course, tell us differently.

Here is Romans 1:18-32, Paul paints a word picture of the tragedy of humanity, from the Garden of Eden on. In doing so, he reveals, as God does throughout all of His word,

that man is not inherently good but innately sinful. It is very plain in the scriptures and history has proven it out, as well.

Evolutionists and progressives call themselves those things because it sounds like improvement is being made. In their moronic and reprobate mind they think, "Progressive! This is great." They do not have any sense or understanding. It sounds like a good thing and they live under the delusion that man is getting better. It's anything but. History, the word of God, and their own lives deny it. They are progressing, but they are progressing towards hell, towards further display of God's wrath. For someone to make the statement that man is getting better, all you have to do is look around to know it is not so and has not been so since the fall of man. Man is not getting better. Man is getting worse. Their idea is that man starts from simplicity and mutates upward. However, that idea is delusional and contrary to history and the word of God.

There are 3 versions of the Humanist Manifesto. In the most recent version's introduction, which is called the "aspirations of humanism", it is stated that humanism is a progressive philosophy of life without supernaturalism. What does that mean? It means without God. It is a progressive philosophy of life without God. In other words, we are improving without God. Man is improving on his own.

It goes on to say, humanism "... affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good of humanity." Think about that statement. First, their definition of ethical, and the biblical definition of ethical are two completely different things. Second, the greater good of humanity without supernaturalism, doesn't work. Only someone who has a moronic mind and been given over to a reprobate mind, thinks that works.

We have a whole generation that believes the humanist manifesto, because from the time they were little, they have sat under the feet of humanists. God's people have

handed their children over to humanism. I am not saying they intended to do it, that they sat down and discussed, "You know what, our kids need to be indoctrinated in humanism." But they are ignorant of what is being taught everywhere and they sacrifice their children upon the altars of humanism. Then, they expect the church to fix, in an hour, what has been going on for the whole week. Some even go home and undo what was taught at church! And they wonder, "What's the problem?" You have to wonder if God's people are not falling in line with this moronic mind, this reprobate mind.

The Humanist Manifesto III goes on to say, "The life stance of humanism, guided by reason ..." Remember that. There is no reason there. "... inspired by compassion ..." Oh yes, we are compassionate. We kill unborn infants. Only a moron would believe such a thing. "... informed by experience ..." That is telling us experience is better than God. "... encourages us to live life well and fully." I would have different definitions of what "living life well and fully" means. Living your life for God is living it well and fully. If you think your life should be without supernaturalism, you are not living your life well or fully. "It evolved through the ages and continues to develop through the efforts of thoughtful people ..." In the humanist's mind, these "thoughtful people " are not you and I. We are the problem. "... who recognize that values and ideas, however carefully wrought, are subject to change ..." Changing your belief is key to the humanists. "... as our knowledge and understanding advance." That is where we are.

Romans 1:18-32 is a picture of a downward spiral that is not going to be reversed. "Oh, we need to elect better politicians to reverse things." Things might improve to some degree in some areas, but they will not reverse. Just because the economy improves and the military is stronger does not mean spirituality has improved and we are better now. Today, we are "living" in Romans 1 and we will be until Jesus comes.

In Romans 1:17-18, Paul writes an introduction to verses 19-32. He says, *"For therein [referring to the gospel] is the righteous of God revealed from faith to faith as it is written the just shall live by faith for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteous of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness."* Take notice of several words in those two verses; there is God, the righteousness of God, and the just; then Paul mentions faith, the wrath of God, men, ungodliness, unrighteousness and truth.

In verses 17-18, two polar opposite things are revealed; the righteousness of God, which is the way of salvation, and the wrath of God. In verse 18, Paul makes a very general statement, "Because of man's sin, God's wrath is revealed." In verses 19-32, Paul enlarges upon, "The wrath of God is revealed." As you read through these verses, it should give you a very clear understanding of what we are witnessing right before our eyes in this day.

Of course, we have the evolutionists and so called "progressives" in this day. I find the term "progressives" a little amusing, though it is too sad to be amusing, because all progressives want to do is bring us backwards. They call themselves "progressives" because people buy into that. The evolutionists and the progressives live under the delusion that man is getting better. The "idea", that man starts from simplicity and mutates upward, has been preached and taught for decades. But that idea is delusional. If you study history, you will find that "idea" is contrary to what history records and, of course, contrary to the word of God, as well.

In the introduction of the "Aspirations of Humanism" or "Humanist Manifesto 3", the most recent version, it is stated that, "Humanism is a progressive philosophy of life that without supernaturalism", meaning without God, "affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good of humanity." Here in Romans 1, Paul paints a completely different picture than the humanist picture paints. History

and the word of God paint a completely different picture.

The humanist states they believe our greatest need is “self actualization” or reaching our full potential. They see society evolving to better meet the needs of man. To them, it is not God that meets the needs of man; it is man, as he evolves, as he becomes better, that meets the needs of man. What is written in Romans 1, debunks all of that, painting a picture of a society that is marked by decay and decline. You can not read Romans 1:19-32, without seeing a society that is marked by decay and decline.

Paul tells very plainly and exactly what and why all of this is happening by painting a picture in words of the degeneration of society. The *WHAT* in this picture is the degeneration of society. In *HOW* it happens, there are two things; sin, and the wrath of God. As sin progresses, the wrath of God progresses. Therefore the degeneration and the decline of society progresses.

Romans 1 records a society actually plunging toward destruction and ruin because of the progression of sin, which is the very nature of sin, and because of the wrath of God that has been revealed. People talk all the time about, “If America continues the way we are going, we are going to experience the wrath of God.” You will learn, as you go along in this study, that we are already under the wrath of God, the results of which is what we read in Romans 1. The problem is people limit their view of the wrath of God. They picture the wrath of God as God sending fire or earthquakes, things of that nature. But what we read of here is of God pulling Himself away from society, which is even worse. People say, “We’re going to be judged because of homosexuality.” Yes we are, but do you not see, homosexuality *is the result of the wrath of God?* Homosexuality *is* the wrath of God, which is made clear in what Paul writes.

What Paul describes is a picture of a society that is enslaved to corruption because of the progressive nature of sin and the resulting wrath of God. We see a society

submerged in the mire and the muck of sin, sinking further and further into the depths of spiritual and moral bankruptcy. Man is not getting better, he is not ascending, mankind is sinking. Academia thinks man is so much more intelligent than he used to be. I do not agree. I think man may be the stupidest he has ever been. That is also part of the wrath of God. I forget which senator it was that said, "The reason the democratic party is misunderstood by the masses is because we're just too intelligent." That is pitiful. The sad thing is, they believe it.

What Paul described here is the path of degradation, the depth of sin, the degeneration into a godless society and how it all happens. It is a picture of and how a society becomes atheistic, how a society becomes secularized. The more secularized it becomes, the more atheistic it becomes. The more atheistic society becomes, the more the secularization speeds up, the more it progresses. It shows how we become a pluralistic state. These things do not happen overnight. It is a progression. When we, as God children, come to understand Romans 1, we know what is happening and why it is happening. It is all made very clear in these verses.

What Paul tells us that in Romans 1, is the pathway of wallowing in despair and the pathway of the government of Antichrist. The world is being prepared for the tribulation period, the government of the Antichrist, and to receive the Antichrist. When I was first saved, I thought, "How in the world would people believe the Antichrist?" Seeing where we have progressed as a society, I no longer have any difficulty understanding that at all. It is not hard to imagine how the world will not only believe the Antichrist, they will embrace him. Romans 1, basically, tells us how society declines and falls because of the progression and the nature of sin, and the wrath of God being unveiled, being revealed, against a society.

What is manifested in Romans 1, is a very graphic and progressive picture of a people rebellious against God.

The rebellion starts in one area, but it never stays there. This is true individually, it is true collectively. Rebellion never stays still, it grows. We hear all the time, “Be careful where you're going, you might get there. Be careful where you're headed, you might get there. You head that way long enough, you will get there.” That is what Romans 1, is teaching us. We see where we are today after heading down that road of rebellion against God, which began many decades ago, perhaps hundreds of years ago.

This progression of rebellion against God results in a progression of not being mindful of God. We live in a society that very rarely mentions God, that is very unmindful of God. If you are unmindful of God, you are going to be ungrateful. We see all of that in society today.

What is revealed in these verses is how humanity becomes mired in that which is abomination. People today are mired in abomination. They accept it, they applaud it, they celebrate it, they push it, wanting everyone to accept abomination. If you do not accept abomination, society says it is because you are just not smart enough, you are not progressive enough. They really believe that.

Romans 1, is the exposure of a people caught and living their lives in the cycle of sin. You can not read Romans 1:19-32 without seeing there is a very definite cycle presented. You do “this”, and “this” is going to happen. You do “that” and “that” is going to happen. Eventually you are going to reach some point. That is true of a society as well as an individual. You can sit down with individuals that are headed in the wrong direction and say, “The next thing you're going to do is this.” They will look you in the eye and say, “I will not do that.” “Yes you will, if you continue down this path. This is the next thing. The next thing after that is ‘this’.”

What we have in Romans 1:19-32, is a cycle, a succession of destruction, a succession of ruin. As you follow the cycle, things are being destroyed, ruined, and then replaced with that which does not work. The cycle is you

destroy and ruin that which works, replace it with that which does not work, and convince yourself that the replacement does work. That is where we are as a society.

It is the cycle of a people mired in, entangled in, and imprisoned by the ways of their own nature, by their philosophies, attitudes and values. When you remove God, you have no moral compass. If man becomes the standard, you have no moral compass. It is a joke to listen to people who have removed God and, now, have no moral compass as they talk about values and morality. They do not know what values are, or what morality is. It would be humorous, if it was not so sad, when senators and congressmen begin to talk about morals. For the most part, they know nothing about morality. It is a joke for public educators to start talking about morals because they have already dismissed God as the standard. That is how we get to the place where we are.

People become slaves to the pursuits of an Antichrist world. They talk about freedom, about how each individual is to pursue liberty. But, the very things they pursue to "be liberated" enslaves them and they are too ignorant to see it. They are slaves to a system, and they do not even know it. Romans 1 tells us how we get there.

Like a river, this cycle of progressive degeneration has a current away from God. Once you start moving away from God, that current is going to take you further and further, unless God intervenes and stops you. I have had this conversation with hundreds of individuals through the years; "You follow this path the current is going to take you further and further." "Oh no. No it won't. Just this one time, maybe twice, maybe three times, maybe four." Before you know it, they are long gone. They get caught in that current heading away from God.

This cycle of degeneration is the pathway to that which is uncivilized. You read in Romans 1, that people no longer have natural affection. To not have natural affection, is uncivilized. For a mother or a father to choose to abort a baby is uncivilized. To murder the unborn is uncivilized. It

is why it is a joke when people stand up and say, "America is the most civilized country in the world." *Really!?! People buy into that. If we are the most civilized country in the world, that does not say much about the rest of the world. This current leads to that which is uncivilized.*

This cycle described by Paul in Romans 1, tells us how we get to the place where we fall into the traps of humanism. Humanism is everywhere. If you listen and watch carefully, you can detect the message of humanism in just about every commercial you listen to or watch on television. The theme, for quite a while now, is "you deserve". You deserve better coverage, you deserve a break today. Why do you deserve? Because you are so good. That is humanism. People buy into it. "You know I deserve this. I deserve a welfare check. I deserve a higher paying job. I deserve this, this, this, this." Now, here we are in a self entitlement society.

Romans 1, tells us how we fall into the traps of secularism, pluralism, materialism, and, perhaps the worst, intellectualism. Intellectualism, in reality, is people who have no intellect, thinking they are intellectuals. Paul records humanity, society caught in a cycle of absolute insanity and destruction, which leads further and further into the depths of spiritual bankruptcy. You don't have to listen to the radio too long, read the newspaper too much, or simply observe life for a while to come to the conclusion that we live in an absolutely insane world. Sadly, many of God's people, or those who profess to be God's people, have fallen into that current of absolute insanity.

Romans 1, is a record of a people caught in the cycle of sin. Whether as individuals or collectively, once you get caught in the cycle of sin, you better pray that God stops it, because eventually people are going to get to where this cycle, this current, is taking them. It is not going to be good. Society has been going down this pathway of sin, this direction away from God for some time, and now we have arrived at the point we are today. It is going to get even

worse. We see in these verses, people caught in this frightening cycle of sin.

Romans 1, is a biblical explanation of what is happening and more importantly, why it is happening. It is happening because man, in general, has left God. In these verses, you can see a picture of the United States and the world in general. Government can not fix what's wrong with our country. You can not go back and blame it on any one president. You can not put the blame on one individual. It is society, collectively moving down that stream, getting further and further away from God. So far away from God, that you and I are looked upon as absolute nuts. The insane minds of those who have rejected God, dismissing the only solution, have replaced it with solutions that will not work. The only thing that can fix this country and mankind is going back to where you left God. God is the only solution. You have to get back to God.

Sadly, history and the Bible record prove that if a people, a society, goes so far, they do not come back. There is a point of no return. The world is at that point. Only a fool is going to believe that we are going to have some national or world wide revival. The Bible does not teach it, and in fact, it teaches just the opposite. That does not mean that God's churches can not experience reviving. They certainly can and certainly will. But, at a societal level, that is not going to happen. We've gone past the point of no return.

Society has replaced **the** solution with **so-called** solutions that will not work. In the eyes of the world, God's people have no clue and have become the enemy because we do not buy into their solutions that will not work. Secular society says, "They are the enemy and must be removed. God must be removed." The more that happens the further down that stream they get, not wanting God's people to be there. That's where we are today.

Romans 1:18-32 serves as a biblical explanation of what is happening in the world today as well as why it is happening. Accordingly, if the cycle of man's sin and God's wrath explained in Romans 1 plays out, you know pretty much what is going to happen next. There are two main subjects in this passage; sin and God's wrath against sin, both of which are of a progressive nature; these verses show the nature of sin to grow, to progress as it is the nature of God's wrath to progress.

Paul illustrates the evolution of God and His word being systematically pushed out of the national consciousness and the degeneration of a society. He illustrates how a society becomes secular and then becomes secularized. First, society becomes secular in their thinking and next they become secularized. That is what happens when the aim, the emphasis and the goal is self. Paul writes what happens and how it progresses.

Basically, what Paul writes in Romans 1:18-32, is a summary of human history, the spiral of depravity, and how man loses his ability to reason in a sane way, a biblical way. It shows us how man loses biblical discernment, which is the ability to separate error and truth, right and wrong. Man does not seem to have that ability any longer because of the progression of sin. As sin progresses, you have the loss of morality, the loss of decency, the loss of shame. You can read about how this played out in the book of Judges as well. You have the loss of meaning. To most people today, life has very little meaning. There's very little meaning in sexuality, in marriage, and the home, all of which leads to the devaluation of life in general. Then there is the loss of fulfillment and happiness. Romans 1, pretty much tells us how all of this comes about.

What Paul describes is a people in the cycle of dysfunction and how that dysfunction becomes the norm. You think about the dysfunction that is just in families all throughout the world. What makes it even worse is it has become the norm. The norm today is not for a husband and wife to stay married and to honor the marriage bed.

Dysfunction has become the “new” normal. There is something dangerous in man’s flesh, even for those who try to live right, that makes us want to be accepted, want to be liked, want to be *normal*. But, the *new normal* is abnormal.

Romans 1, is an expression of what Paul would later describe in 2nd Timothy 3:1, “... *in the last days perilous times...*” He says in 2nd Timothy 3:1, that we ought to “... *know that in the last days, perilous days shall come.*” We need to know that. We need to be aware of the times in which we live. You do not have to read the newspaper or watch the news to know the times in which we live. All you have to do is read scripture. If you follow the pattern recorded in the scriptures, they tell of the times in which we live and how we got to this point. However, the Lord can and does intervene at times. But, unless He does intervene and breaks the pattern, what Paul writes in Romans 1 is where you are going to end up. That is true of a society, that is true of individuals. You follow this road, you are going to end up here, unless the Lord intervenes. Our only hope is that the Lord intervenes.

What amazes me is how people can follow this road of cycle of sin and dysfunction, they reach the point society is in today, and then they are surprised. They have been following that road for years. What makes you think you are not eventually going to arrive here? Parents are the same way about their children, who are following a pattern and act shocked when they get to where they have been headed for years. There should be no surprise or shock. We just need to pray that God would intervene to break the pattern.

Romans 1, should serve as a source of understanding and comprehending the times in which we live. It describes the perilous times Paul mentions in 2nd Timothy 3:1. When Matthew is describing two of the demoniacs of Gadara, in Matthew 8:28, he uses the phrase “*exceeding fierce*”. *Exceeding fierce* is the very same Greek word translated as *perilous* in 2nd Timothy 3:1 where it says, “... *in the last days **perilous** times shall come.*” In the last days, perilous or exceeding fierce shall be the times. *Exceeding* means

something that goes beyond whatever is being described. In this case it is fierce. The *times* that Paul is referring to go beyond *fierce*. That which is fierce is violent, hostile, aggressive, and unrestrained. The *time* that Paul describes in Romans 1, in which we live, is that which exceeds violence, hostility, aggressiveness and that which is unrestrained. This is where we are in our world and our society. It is a time unrestrained when people just do whatever they please.

It is important to realize that in Matthew 8:28, this Greek word *exceeding fierce* or, *perilous*, has its origin in that which was demonic. I believe the perilous times in which we live has a demonic origin as well. I believe demon possession, demonic activity, is even greater today than it was in the days of Christ. We call it a lot of different things today and have all kinds of names for what you read that demons did in the gospels. There is no getting around it. Demonic activity is everywhere, it plays into what you read in Romans 1. In 2nd Timothy 3, Paul goes on to mention nineteen characteristics of perilous times and in Romans 1 he is describing those perilous times.

You have perilous times when people are so in love with themselves, so self centered, so self involved that they seek to gratify their own sinful lusts no matter what the cost, filling their lives with pleasure, bent on pleasing themselves, no matter what. We live in a society where people are in love with themselves. This is obvious in a lot of ways. In my mind, the "selfie" is one of the biggest things that **screams** "self love". It is one thing to take a picture of yourself every now and then, but people are obsessed with it. They buy the sticks and then they send pictures to everybody they can think of because, "They just have to want to see me. Everybody wants to see me and what I'm doing." I've got news for you. They don't. When somebody sends a selfie, the recipient's reaction is that they are not all that interested. "Why are they sending me this?" And, you know what, the people that send selfies react the same way when they receive one from someone else.

People are so self involved that no one else matters

but themselves. They set themselves up as the "be all" and "end all" of everything; puffed up with a false sense of their own self importance, feeling no need for God. When you believe you are so important and so good, what follows is no need for God. There is no need for anyone else either, beyond how you can use them to get your own way. That is, pretty much, where we are in society today.

People have no sense of gratitude. Why? Because they are so good. They have an entitlement attitude. Advertisers feed that entitlement attitude based upon, "You're so worthy."

There are perilous times when people are aroused and blinded by a greedy desire for material things. They are bent on getting everything they can get and keeping everything they have. When the ideas of personal happiness and fulfillment are apart from God, disaster is sure to follow. That is what we read of in Romans 1. People think that happiness and fulfillment is found apart from God. History, the word of God, and the lives of individuals all around the world prove just the opposite. Yet people are bent on finding happiness apart from God.

Times are perilous when there is a brazen openness about sin. Once you have removed God and His standard from your life, there is no fear of God. Once someone becomes the most important thing, there is a brazen openness about sin and people get offended when others do not accept and applaud their sin. People are trying to force their rebellious lifestyle upon everyone today. They talk about tolerance and they are the most intolerant people on the planet. They will not tolerate anyone who does not applaud their filth and their vileness.

When there is little or no shame associated with evil, it is a perilous time, and people are proud of their rebellion. When I was in high school, things were not Godly. But even then, I can remember if a girl got pregnant out of wedlock, it was a shameful thing. People do not think anything of it anymore. In fact, it is the norm. Even God's people will hold baby showers for an unwed girl. That is not right. You

say, "Well, the baby shouldn't suffer." That baby does not know anything about the baby shower. That baby shower is not for the baby, but rather it is about the pregnancy, about the woman. I understand that the baby gets the gifts, but you can give gifts after the baby is born. I am not going to participate in a baby shower for someone who is not married, or someone who is having a baby with someone other than their spouse. "Well, I don't want to make them mad." Let them get mad. That is not the issue.

There are perilous times when sin and open defiance of God's authority reaches all aspects of society, and Romans 1 explains how this ungodliness reaches all aspects of society, where you have breakdown of the very foundations of society. When the foundations crumble, you have nothing left. That is where we are today. Stability, morality, and discipline are things of the past. When the foundations crumble, people become more heavily mired in sin, more heavily mired in the very things that have brought them to this point. You have this cycle, in which sin brings you to a point; once you are at that point, you become more heavily mired in sin; which brings the next set of consequences, the next set of results. *Consequence* is something people do not understand today. There are consequences to sinful behavior. That has always been so.

There are perilous times when there is no regard for holiness of life, when holiness is ridiculed. I expect the world to ridicule us for trying to live in a Godly way, but it is a shameful thing, when those who profess to be God's people, ridicule saints of God for trying to live a holy life. That is a very shameful thing.

It is a perilous time when people are without self control. Romans 1 is very plain that in these times, there is no ability or desire to discipline one's life. It is almost a driverless car. *A driverless car* describes the lives of many people. That car is going to crash and people are going to be hurt. That is what the progression of sin does.

People lie and think nothing of it. They do not even know what lying is. They cheat and think nothing of it.

They steal and think nothing of it. They will do these things and crush anyone that gets in their way. If you dare stand in their way, they will destroy you or at least try. People possess no loyalty except to themselves and will do whatever they please without any regard for consequences.

It is a very perilous time when stability, morality, decency, and honesty are further in the past than they are in the present. That is where we are today. When we talk about stability, morality, and decency we have to talk in terms of the past. They are further in the past than they are in the present. Wrong is defended. That which is right, decent, and God honoring is mocked, ridiculed, and attacked. The result is you have a society that is drowning in dysfunction.

What is stated in Romans 1 is a very vivid illustration of perilous times and the destructive cycle of such times. I feel sorry for young people today because of the way they think. They are a big part of the overall problem. I feel sorry for them because they are in this destructive cycle and there is no hope other than the Lord does a miracle and breaks this cycle in certain places, in certain people's lives. Other than that, young people, the people coming up today, have no hope of things getting better. If they do hope that, they are delusional, because that is not the pattern. That is not where this road is headed. It is not headed for that which is better. It is headed for that which is worse.

The only answer to the things Paul writes of in Romans 1, is the gospel. That is the point being made by Paul in Romans 1:16, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel ...*" That is the answer, the solution to a world gone wrong. The answer is not in family, society, education, or politics. The foundations of society have been destroyed. The only solution that will work is the Lord. That is the only answer.

In Romans 1:17 says, "*For therein is [Therein refers to the gospel of Christ] is the righteous of God revealed from faith to faith.*" Paul states very clearly throughout the book of Romans that the righteousness of God is what man needs. Continuing with verse 17, "*... as it is written, the just shall live by faith,*" This verse tells of a people who are justified and they have a lifestyle which is to live by faith. Verse 18 says, "*For the wrath of God is revealed [revealed means unveiled, it is displayed] from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, [Here there is the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men] who hold [hold there means to hold back or restrain] the truth in unrighteousness.* Then verse 19 begins with, "*Because.*" What is revealed beginning in verse 19 and through verse 32 is the situation humanity finds itself in right now, and how we got to this point. Romans 1:18-32 makes very, very clear the times in which we live and how we arrived. What Paul writes in these verses is really a summation of the history of the world. God's people need to understand Romans 1:18-32, because they give us a proper worldview. While most everyone has a worldview, the sad thing is the worldview of many of God's people is not that much different than the world's.

The philosophy of evolution, in which man starts in simplicity and mutates upward, just makes sense to mankind. In other words, man is getting better, he's improving. Therefore, they conclude, society is evolving to the better. It then follows that society is now better qualified or better equipped to meet the needs of man. If you do not have a problem with that worldview, then you have an even bigger problem, because the Bible teaches just the opposite. Man did not begin in simplicity. Man did not begin at the bottom, he began at the top. Man began in bliss. It is made clear throughout the Bible that man has not been getting better, he is getting worse. Even if you did not have a Bible, even if you did not know anything about the Bible, it is made clear through human history, for as far back as you can go. It is made very clear that man did not start out at the bottom, and

is now ascending to the top. It is just the opposite. Man started out at the top, he is descending, and he has been in that descent ever since Genesis 3. If you understand that basic truth, it opens your understanding about a lot of other things.

Romans 1:18-32 is a biblical explanation of what is happening right before our eyes and why it is happening. People say, "I can't believe what's happening today." I can and based upon the word of God, I can tell you why it's happening and that it is going to get worse. These verses really depict a society plunging toward ruin. No matter what men think, you can not escape the picture of a society plunging towards ruin.

The world thinks today that man is evolving and therefore we are better fit to meet the needs of mankind. The problem with what the world is thinking is they do not even know what man needs. Man's need is the need of a savior. The world thinks they can fix the problem when they do not even know what the problem is. The problem begins with sin. If you do not begin with sin, you do not even know what the problem is.

Paul exposes a people caught in the cycle of sin. Sin is a cycle, a downward spiral, that is presented all through the word of God.

What we find in Romans 1 is the current, like a river, that flows away from God, which results in a degenerate society becoming its own standard. When man becomes his own standard, he is not only in a cycle of sin, but a cycle of hopelessness as well. There is no answer, no solution to breaking the cycle in man's standard.

Romans 1 explains that humanity and society today is caught in an absolute cycle of insanity, and is sinking further and further into spiritual bankruptcy.

Romans 1 kind of explains what Paul referred to in 2nd Timothy 3:1, "*in the last days perilous times shall come.*" Romans 1 also describes 2nd Timothy 3:13, which follows Paul's description of perilous times. Romans 1 tells us how we got to perilous times; 2nd Timothy 3:1, describes

perilous times; 2nd Timothy 3:13 says, "*But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse*, [We are told by society that man is getting better, but that is not what the Bible says. He is waxing worse and worse.] *deceiving, and being deceived.*"

Let's study deeper into 2nd Timothy 3:13. *Evil men* refers to those who are wicked and vile and corrupt. *Seducers* are those who attract people to that which is inadvisable. They attract people to that which is not biblical. The world is filled with evil men and seducers. Even worse is that *they shall wax*, or increase and grow *worse and worse*. They do not get worse in nature. Man is totally depraved and you can not get worse than that. They get worse in practice.

They wax worse and worse, *deceiving*, which is causing someone to believe something that is not true. They are deceivers, they get worse and worse, and they are *deceived and being deceived*. They believe that which is not true, in their minds they do not know it is not true, then they deceive others and grow worse and worse.

Things grow progressively worse, in an intensifying and prevailing way. This has continued from the fall of man in the garden and will continue until the return of Jesus Christ. This worsening of things will continue through what is known as the "tribulation" period. Why is that? Why do evil men and seducers wax worse and worse? For two reasons. One is because of the progressive nature of sin. That is just the way sin is; it does not make things better; sin makes things worse. The other reason is because of what God said in Genesis 6, just prior to Him destroying the earth with a flood, pouring His judgment down upon the world. He said in Genesis 6:1, that "*when men began to multiply ... daughters were born unto them,*" *them* being the son's of men. "*That the sons of God*", the saved, "*saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.*" The saved and the unsaved became intermingled. You might think, "Well that's no big deal." God thought it was a big enough deal to destroy the world.

"And the Lord said [That means as a result of this.] my spirit shall not always strive with man." That is, "I will not always exert my spirit. I will not always struggle with man." Then He went on to say, *"... for that he also [is] flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."* God was going to pour down judgment.

Before that, God said, He would not always restrain man. God restrains man from doing a lot of things that man would do, were it not for God restraining him. He says, "I'm not always going to do that." When that happens, you have the nature of sin, which grows progressively worse. When God withdraws His restraining hand from mankind, that presents a terrible time. In Genesis 6, just prior to the flood, God removed His restraining hand, God not continuing to struggle against man resulted in a progressive condition leading to the flood. Luke 17:26 says, *"as it was in the days of Noe, [That is what Genesis 6 is about.] so shall it be [As it was, so shall it be. That is something that most people do not understand.] also in the days of the son of man."* Then He says, *"They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until [God has a time limit. God has an 'until'] 'the day Noe entered the ark and, the flood came and destroyed them all."*

He mentions they were eating, drinking, and marrying. What's wrong with that? In and of themselves, nothing at all. But that is not what this means. To eat, to drink, and to marry are common things. The people were so caught up with the common acts they had no room for God. That is what happens because of the progressive nature of sin and when God is removing His restraining hand. They lived as they pleased and developed their own standards. They were self willed, self seeking, and sought self gratification. In Genesis 6, it is obvious that demonic perverseness was everywhere, which resulted in the ruin of social order, decency, and God destroying the earth.

When the sons of God married the daughters of men, the line of distinction between the Godly and the ungodly had been done away with. That is the nature of sin. There

were days of great spiritual indifference and unresponsiveness. Noah preached for 120 years, but not much changed. The problem was the progressive nature of sin, not with Noah and what he preached. As it was, so shall it be. "Oh, but you don't understand. We're more educated today." You only think you are. Paul says a lot about this in Romans 1. As it was, so shall it be.

In 2nd Thessalonians 2:6-7, are very revealing verses of scripture that describe what is going on right before our eyes and what Romans 1 is talking about. Verses 6 and 7 say, *"And now ye know what withholdeth [Restrains.] that he might be revealed in his time."* The *"he being revealed in his time"* is talking about the Antichrist. *"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: [It has been since prior to the fall] only he who now letteth [He who restrains, which is the Holy Spirit] [will let], [will restrain] until [There is a time limit] he be taken out of the way."* Who is *"he being taken out of the way"*? It is the restraining agent. Who is the restraining agent? It is the Holy Spirit. You can not even imagine how bad it is going to get when the tribulation period begins, because the Holy Spirit is completely removed as a restraining agent. God, the Holy Spirit will not work to restrain the passions and lust of men. It will be gone. Without the Spirit of God to restrain him, man will do whatever he pleases.

We do not realize how much the Spirit of God works today to restrain the passions of man. Throughout history we have seen how God has been gradually removing His restraining hand. That results in things getting worse and worse and worse. It is all in preparation for the government of Antichrist. Our whole world system is moving towards, is walking down that path towards the government of Antichrist. 2nd Thessalonians 2 goes on to explain that you and I, who are saved, will be taken out before the Holy Spirit is completely removed as a restraining agent. You do not want to be here when there is no restraining power on the passions of man. I do not want to be here now, when the hand is gradually being removed.

With the restraining hand gradually being removed, evil is on an accelerated pace and Satan's crowd grows in their determination and boldness, their relentlessness in promoting the agenda of Satan. The agenda of Satan is not what disagrees with your opinion or mine. It disagrees with the Bible. Satan's agenda is being more and more promoted as it has been throughout history, because of the loosening of the restraining hand of God. Romans 1 illustrates all of this.

Right now, we are living in the time and witnessing the world being prepared for the establishment of the reign of the Antichrist. I remember in the late 1970's, thinking, "How foolish do people have to be when this Antichrist just comes on and everybody believes him?" I do not have any trouble believing that anymore, because I realize the preparation for it has been going on for a long, long time; and longer than you and I have been around. 2nd Thessalonians 2 tells of the world being prepared for the reign of Antichrist, who will be revealed following the rapture of the saints. If you read 2nd Thessalonians 2:6-10, you see it is even more plainly. Our purpose is to state that Romans 1 is a picture, and illustration of this time of preparation.

You should realize these things are happening because they are the result of the progressive nature of sin. When you follow the progression of sin, what makes you think that it has changed or that it is different today? The progression of sin has always been the same and we are not exempt. That is why we are seeing what we are in the world today. Furthermore, we have the restraining agent, which is the Holy Spirit, being gradually removed.

Romans 1 is a picture of 2nd Peter 3:3-4, where it says, "... *there shall come in the last days scoffers,*" There have always been scoffers. They were there in Genesis. Scoffers are those who mock, ridicule, taunt, dismiss and belittle truth, and they become more and more bold as the restraining agent is removed. Continuing on, it says, "*walking [living] after their own lusts, [desires]*" "You can't tell me what to do. I don't have to obey so and so, I don't

have to obey such and such." In Jude 18-19, you find a similar passage, "*... there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.*"

Another truth that people do not seem to understand, that is very clear in Romans 1, is *cause and effect*. It is a very basic truth that you do something and something is going to happen as a result. That is *cause and effect*, and you read of it Romans 1. Both verses 19 and 21 begin with the word "because" and verse 24 begins with "wherefore". *Those very words mean cause and effect.*

Cause and effect goes along with another truth, *sowing and reaping*. It is common sense that, "You reap what you sow". What deceives people is, "I sowed this today," and tomorrow comes and they think, "I haven't reaped what I had sown yesterday, so reaping and sowing doesn't apply." Do not be a fool, because you do not reap immediately what you sow. You do not plant corn on Monday and see it grown on Tuesday. Sowing and reaping can take a long time, years in fact. I have had people tell me, "Well if it was wrong, God would have punished me right away." Where do you come up with these things? Where do you get that? The basic law of sowing and reaping goes against that. It may be down the road, but you will reap. Galatians 6:7-8 make very plain the law of sowing and reaping.

Romans 1 is an analysis of what happens to any society that rejects God, and unless God intervenes the outcome is not good. The only hope to reversing the course is God's intervention. I want to stress if you follow the road of sin long enough, eventually you are going to get where that road heads.

We have to understand what is being presented in Romans 1 in order to understand the reason why those things are happening and in order to understand what the solution is. Paul states what he does in Romans 1:18-32 to state in verse 16 that the solution is the gospel. He said in Romans 1:16, "*... for I'm not ashamed of the gospel ...*" The solution is not politics, or the economy. You can elect the greatest

man that has ever been as president of the United States. The economy can explode and be the best economy that you and I have ever seen. That will not change the progression of sin. There is only one solution to the problem of the progression of sin, but mankind is not even aware there is a problem. So, how could he know what the solution is?

Romans 1:18-32 is a biblical summary of the history of mankind, and explains why things are as they are, what is happening, and pretty much what will happen next. To fully understand what Paul writes Romans 1:18-32, it is necessary to understand the problem and the plague of sin. There is no real understanding of these verses without understanding sin.

Any understanding and grasp of this portion of scripture gives us some clarity as to why things are as they are. Why is that important? Without understanding why, you will not have the solution, the remedy to the problem. So, it is very important to have some clarity of why things are the way they are and why they are getting progressively worse. The world, of course, has no idea why things are getting progressively worse, and sadly, it appears that most who profess to be saved do not either.

In Romans 1, Paul reveals the *problem of sin*, which is the root. Nothing is going to be fixed until you get to that root problem and God is the only answer for the problem of sin, there is no other. Sin is a plague, and you have to understand the nature of this plague, of sin, which is illustrated all through the scriptures beginning in chapter 3 of Genesis.

In studying the problem and plague of sin, note that if there is sin, if there is wrong, there has to be a standard, an *established* standard of right. That means there must be an established guideline, an established rule of measure. There has to be a principle, a criteria, a pattern, that determines what is right and what is wrong. Wrong means you have deviated from what is right. Who determines what is right and what is wrong? God already has. We need to understand God's standard of right, that He has established a standard, and that standard has never changed. The very word sin, the very mention of evil and good implies an established rule or standard.

Isaiah 5:20 says, "*Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil.*" There are the two words there, *evil* and *good*, each used twice. What is the standard that determines evil and good? Is it just left to man's opinion or is there an

established standard that determines this is evil and this is good? These very words, *evil* and *good*, necessitate an established standard.

I keep using the word *established*, because if you keep moving the standard, then evil and good change all the time. That is what the world loves to do. In the eyes of the world, man is a standard to himself, and that standard is always changing, therefore, evil and good are always changing. But God has an **established** standard of measure that determines what is evil and what is good. It does not matter what the time period is, what the circumstances are, or where the place is. God's standard is established and declares what is evil and what is good.

There is the mention of the words *wicked* and *unrighteous* in Isaiah 55:7; "*Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts;*" What is the standard? Who determines what is wicked and unrighteous? Somebody must. There has to be some standard that determines this is wicked and this is unrighteous. The very mention of these words imply a standard.

The word unrighteousness is mentioned twenty-one times in the word of God. Righteous occurs three hundred six times. Those two words, unrighteous and righteous, imply there is a standard of measure. Something that says this is unrighteous, this is righteous. There has to be a guiding principle that declares this is right, this is wrong. That principle is established by God.

In Micah 6:8 it says, "*He hath shewed thee, O man, what [is] good;*" What is good? There has to be a standard that determines that. There has to be something by which we measure good. "... *and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly,*" Who determines what is just? There has to be a standard, a guideline, a pattern. We are "*to do justly*", we are to do good.

People do what is wrong because they do not see it as wrong. Our whole society is like that. They do that which is wicked but they do not see it as wicked. Why? Because they are their own standard of measure. They have no moral

compass. They have no standard of measure other than their own mind. But God has *established* a standard.

1st Thessalonians 5:14, “*Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly,*” This is something we are to do toward the unruly. You have to know when they are acting unruly in order to warn them. Therefore, there has to be something that determines, “Okay, this is unruly.” The word unruly implies there is a standard of rule. To be unruly is to break that standard. Titus 1:6, giving the qualifications of a pastor, says, “... *be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.*” Notice the phrase, “... *not accused of riot or unruly.*” In order to even make the accusation, “That is unruly,” you have to have a standard to base the accusation on. That standard can not keep changing because then, that which is unruly keeps changing. That is part of the problem today.

James 3:8 says, “... *the tongue ... is an unruly evil.*” There you have two words that imply a standard, unruly and evil. The tongue is an unruly or undisciplined evil.

In Romans 1:29-31, everyone of those words necessitates a standard. *Backbiters*. What determines if someone is a backbiter? There has to be a standard. *Haters of God*. What determines that? *Despiteful*. What determines that? *Proud*. There has to be a standard of what constitutes pride and humility. *Boasters, inventors of evil things*. Who determines what is an evil thing? *Disobedient to parents*. What determines disobedience? *Without understanding covenantbreakers, without natural affection*. There has to be a standard that determines what is natural, and what is not, what natural affection is and what it is not. “Well the polls say...” That is not the standard. *Implacable, unmerciful*. All of those things imply that there is a standard.

What is the standard? God’s *established* standard is himself. “Well, God’s standard is His word.” That is very true. You can not separate God and His word. But, I believe the Bible very clearly declares that God’s *established* standard is Himself. That is who He is. If you do not

believe God, you have done away with an established standard. Therein lies the problem.

The logo of the American Humanist Association says, “Good without a God.” There is no such thing as “Good without a God.” Good without a God, pretty much sums up the humanist viewpoint on everything. They are also saying, “If there is a God, that’s not good.”

There are three humanist manifestos. In Humanist Manifesto II, from 1973, states under the article of ethics, “*We affirm moral values derive their source from human experience.*” They are saying human experience determines moral values. But since everyone’s experience is different, you have done away with an **established standard**. “*Ethics are autonomous.*” That means they are independent of everything, so there is no standard. You can see they thrive on doing away with the standard. “*Ethics are autonomous and situational.*” Situations become our standard. “*Needing no theological or ideological sanction.*” That means, there are no rules whether they be theological or ideological that determine ethics, which further means everyone determines their own ethics. “*Ethics stem from human need and interest.*” In other words, “If it feels good, do it.” The humanists are saying man does not need sanction, a rule outside of himself. We see that illustrated in Romans 1.

The Humanist Manifesto II is saying that man is his own standard and that standard depends upon situations, the need, and interest, at the hour. Humanists believe that as does most of the world. Whether they admit it or not, almost one hundred percent of the last two generations believe that. You talk to them about any moral or social subject and before very long their humanistic viewpoint is everywhere. You do not have to bring up the Bible. All you have to do is bring up social issues, and humanism just comes out everywhere. But, here is the truth. As God’s people, our view on social issues must be in line with the word of God. If they are not, that is humanism. You call it whatever you want, but it is humanism.

God Himself is the established standard and that

standard has never ever changed, because God is immutable. That standard never will change, regardless of what year we live in. The standard is God Himself and the standard remains the same. Humanism declares that man is the standard, that man sets his own standard. Common sense tells you that it opens up all kinds of problems. If you have even a single brain cell firing, you know having two thousand different standards for the same thing will cause a lot of problems, and the end result will not be good.

The Bible plainly declares that man does not set the standard, nor is man ever the standard. Proverbs 14:12, *"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man,"* How many times have you heard someone say, "I don't see anything wrong with it." No you don't, because you don't have a proper standard. People commit fornication and I have had them tell me, "Brother Dan, I don't see anything wrong with it. God hasn't convicted me that it's wrong." Do you realize what they just said? First of all, they admitted they are lost. If you are saved, in your heart you know fornication is wrong. So, be honest. I would much rather hear someone say, "I know it's wrong, but I'm going to do it anyway", rather than say that God did not tell them it was wrong. That means that God does not speak to them at all. *"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man."*

If someone has no standard or they themselves are their standard, you might as well talk to a wall. You can show them in God's word, "This is wrong!" But God's word does not mean a thing to them. They say, "I know what it says, but I don't feel that way. I don't feel guilty." What seems right unto a man? If what they are doing makes them happy. Many times people, who are living in sin, have told me, "I'm the happiest I've ever been." That is quite a statement.. They are saying, "I sin because it makes me happy."

Again, from Proverbs 14:12 it says, *"There is a way which seemeth right..., but the end thereof are the ways of death."* It does not say, *"... the end thereof is death,"* The end thereof are the WAYS of death. What is death? Death is a

separation. When Adam and Eve “died” in the garden, they died spiritually. They were separated, estranged from God. The “end” of what man thinks is right, but is actually wrong, is estrangement, alienation from God. That leads to another whole set of problems.

In Jeremiah 10:23, it says, “*O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself:*” Man is not the standard and will never be the standard. “... *[it is] not in man that walketh to direct his steps.*” The standard of what is right is ultimately and inseparably rooted in the unchanging nature of God. God ordained a standard to be Himself. That is why man would like the evolutionists, the atheists, the agnostics, which are all related to some degree, to do away with God. It is very important that they do that, because in their mind that does away with the standard and then they become the standard. However, God has revealed to man how he ought to live based upon God’s own character, based upon God’s own nature.

In understanding sin, you understand there is an *established* standard, which is God and not Home Baptist Church or any church, for that matter. Oftentimes I’ve heard, “I’m just tired of the rules.” It is not that they are tired of the church, they are tired of God and tired of His word. It is much easier for people to say, “I’m just tired of the rules of the church.” If the rules of the church align with the rules of God, what they are really saying is, “I’m just tired of God. I’m tired of God’s word.” Don’t let anybody off the hook when they say, “I’ve been under the rules of the church for X amount of years and I’m tired of it.” We should tell them, “Let’s get something established right away. It’s not the rules of the church that you have a problem with. You have a problem with God. You have a problem with the Bible.” You tell people that and one of two things is going to happen. People are either going to get right, or they are going to get mad. Most of the time they get mad. Do not let them go away thinking their problem is the church’s rules. “Oh no it’s not!” The church’s rules are to be in line with the scriptures, but people want to be a rule to themselves. **God’s**

people need to understand that there is an established standard and God is that standard. That standard covers everything, every aspect of our lives, leaving nothing out.