

A World Gone Wrong

**Romans 1:14-32
Lesson Series**

by

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A World Gone Wrong

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About this book

This book is adapted from a series of Sunday School lessons taught at Home Missionary Baptist Church (H.M.B.C.) by Brother Dan Gordon during his tenure as pastor there. This lesson series began December 2nd, 2018 and concluded September 20th, 2020, resulting in 72 lesson recordings. The thirteen chapters of the book are broken into parts, with each part representing one Sunday School lesson.

The intention in keeping the parts separated is to maintain each individual lesson, should anyone wish to teach this series or any part of it. You may find a few paragraphs in each lesson/part that gives a short review of the previous lesson/part. This allows each lesson to be a “complete” lesson on it’s own.

The audio recordings that this book was adapted from are available from the H.M.B.C. website. You can listen to them from the website or download them as desired. Visit;

<http://www.homebaptistchurch.org/Pages/awgw.html>

where you will find the audio recordings and the book’s chapters side-by-side.

You may also find additional material on the subjects covered in these lessons at the H.M.B.C. website by clicking on the “We Believe” tab and/or the “Archives” tab and then “more” in the Sermons list of the page.

It is the hope of Brother Gordon and H.M.B.C. that the reader is blessed by God by reading this book and listening to the recordings from which it was adapted. God bless and help us all in “A World Gone Wrong”.

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Preface

Romans 1:14-32 teaches us why people, society in general, and the world finds itself in the condition it is in. It also tells us how to fix the problems described in Romans 1:18-32. More education, more laws, electing the “right” politicians will not fix the problems individuals and society at large have.

It began in the Garden of Eden, when Satan told Eve the lie he's still telling people today. "Reject what God tells you and you will be like Him." All through the BIBLE we see event after event where people reject God and then God pours out His wrath upon them. They continue in their sin, getting worse, more bold, and God pours out more of His wrath upon them. The cycle continues century after century.

In Romans 1:18-32, the Apostle Paul paints a word picture of this cycle, describing sin and it's result on society and the world. Brother Gordon connects this word picture from 2,000 years ago to the events we see and read about in our society today, answering the questions many are asking; "What is happening to our country, our society, and people in general? Why is this happening?"

What the Apostle Paul writes in Romans 1:14-17 is the remedy, the cure for the plague of sin that is spreading through the United States and the world. Jesus Christ is the solution. Christ entering our heart, saving our soul is the ONLY thing that can turn mankind around and reverse the downward cycle he finds himself in.

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*

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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

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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,

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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.

Chapter 1 - Introduction, Part 2

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

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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.

Chapter 1 - Introduction, Part 3

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

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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.

Chapter 2

The Nature of Sin

Chapter 2 - The Nature of Sin, Part 1

It is of great importance that God's people understand Romans 1:18-32 to understand the days in which we are living. In order to understand this passage, you have to understand the nature of sin. You begin, of course, with "God has a standard". The very thought of sin implies there is a standard. You can not have sin if there is not a standard. If there is no law, there can be no transgression of the law.

The humanists states that man does not need sanction outside of himself, that man is his own standard, his standard is very flexible, and that one can change the standard depending on the situation, the need, and the interest. God, of course, is the standard and He ordained the standard to be Himself. Whatever falls short of God is not living up to the standard.

God is immutable, He does not change, therefore, the standard does not change. On the American Humanist Association's logo, you read, "Good without a God". But there can be no such thing, because God IS good. Good without God means you have removed the standard of good. What happens is man removes the standard through the process of time, and now man has a different definition of love, righteousness, and good. Regardless of man's attempts to remove it, the standard remains the same. When you are considering sin, you have to understand God has a standard. Romans 1 is a very clear illustration of what happens when man disregards that standard.

Next, there is the nature of sin. *To understand the nature of sin, you have to begin with **the fact that man began in a state of bliss.*** The humanists begin with man starting out in simplicity, at the bottom, and then mutating upward. That is the whole teaching, the whole thinking of evolution. Evolution is not just about creation, it becomes how you view life. However, man did not start at the bottom and is not getting better. The Bible is very, very clear on the fact that man started in a state of bliss.

While the humanist believes that man is getting better, you are going to have an awful hard time proving that by society. That really does not pose a problem for the

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humanist because they have removed the standard and have a different definition of better. In the mind of humanists, humanity in general is getting better, they are ascending, improving. However, when you look at society, you would be hard pressed to point to any one area and say man has gotten better. That is because he has not gotten better, he has gotten worse, because the standard has been disregarded.

The Bible declares just the opposite of the humanist's view of man evolving upwards, getting better. Genesis 1:26-27 declares that man began in a state of bliss. Man is created in the image of God. *"And God said, Let us make man in our image, let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."* Three times we are told in these two verses man is created in the image of God.

(This is off subject, but I want to ask, who would have thought you would see the day when the declaration that God created males and females would be offensive to individuals? You are what you were created. You are either male or female. You can not change that.)

Man was created in the image and likeness of God. In Ecclesiastes 7:29, you find, *"... God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."* The word *but* indicates a problem. Who is the problem? *They*, man. God is not the problem. Man was created in uprightness.

In Genesis you have the general account of the creation of all things. Six times in that account, you will read, *"It was good."* It was good in the eyes of God and that means it was beneficial, very favorable, and pleasant. Genesis 1:31 says, *"Behold it was very good."* Six times it was good and then the chapter ends with, *"It was very good,"* meaning it was remarkably, exceedingly, abundantly good.

In Genesis 1:28, concerning the male Adam and the female Eve, it says, *"And God blessed them."* In Genesis 2

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we have a more detailed account of the creation of this male and female, Adam and Eve. In Genesis 2:8 it says that the Lord God planted a garden, "*And there He put the man whom He had formed.*" Keep in mind that this man was formed in God's own image. Genesis 1:29-30 says that in that garden, man had abundance and all of his needs were met. From Genesis 2:9, we learn that the garden was pleasant to the sight and everything was good or useful for food. We see that Adam and Eve had dominion, authority, command, and control over the animal kingdom.

In Genesis 2:15, it says, "*And the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.*" They had something worthwhile to do, to occupy them and they enjoyed doing it. There was harmony, peace, and joy. Life was lived in a state of complete enjoyment. There was no unhappiness, sorrow, grief, or pain. Man began in a state of bliss, a state of perfection, and innocence.

In Genesis 2:25, "*... and they were both naked the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*" For all the people who use that verse to defend the display of the human body, you have forgotten that this was before sin. In that time before sin, there was perfection and innocence. The human body was not an object of lust, but that is no longer the case. Sin is serious and it changed everything.

Adam and Eve's supreme enjoyment was fellowship and communion with God. I believe that Adam and Eve enjoyed each other and each other's company. They enjoyed being in that garden. They enjoyed the animals and the plants. Everything was very good. But the highest part of their enjoyment was their fellowship and communion with God. They walked with God in that garden. They had everything they needed. It was a state of bliss, yet even then, there was a standard established by God.

Genesis, 2:16-17 says, "*And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:*" He put the emphasis on all the trees in the garden that they could eat of. Then He goes on, "*But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not*

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eat of it:” That is a standard. They could eat of all these trees, but there is one tree that God did not want them to eat from. “... *for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*” God knew what they would do. He did not say IF you eat, He said *for*, meaning ‘when’. He knew what they would do because it was part of God’s plan. God was not taken by surprise.

Those ignorant of scriptures will say that right there you have a problem because they did not die. They did not die physically, but rather they died spiritually, which is even worse. The day that they would partake of that tree, they would die spiritually, which would bring physical death and worse than that, eternal death. God had a standard and even in this state of bliss, God's standard was departed from.

God made man upright, but man's uprightness was not absolute. To put it another way, Adam's original holiness was *not immutable*. It *could* change. Being mutable, he could only remain steadfast in his original state by the power of God. God could and did permit Adam to fall from his righteous state. God chose to permit the fall and He did so simply by withholding His sustaining power from Adam. Adam's nature became disordered, just as the whole universe would fall to pieces if God were to withdraw His sustaining preserving power for one instant. So it was with Adam and Eve. Life was good, but it has never been the same since.

In Genesis 3, Eve enters into a conversation with Satan where he sowed the seed of doubt. If you look at Satan and Eve’s conversation in Genesis 3, you will find a lot of parallels between Satan’s methods and humanism because they work the same way. Satan begins by planting the seed of doubt. That is what the humanist does today by saying, “We are challenging you to think.” More than just *challenging* you, they are saying that to get you to doubt, to get you to question. What was it that Satan wanted Eve to doubt? The manner of God's way. “*Hath God said ...?*” Satan was casting that seed of doubt concerning God’s way of living and what He had said.

Then Satan went on to simply make a suggestion.

People will say, "I'm just making a suggestion." Oh no, you are doing more than that. Satan was suggesting that God was too restrictive, too confining. He suggested that Adam and Eve were missing out on the enjoyments of life. They were being robbed of their potential and they could improve. How can you improve on bliss? Satan suggested Adam and Eve could improve their life if they only cast aside the restrictions and the bounds that God had set. ***That is the teaching of humanism; 'If you believe in God, you can not possibly reach your human potential.'*** That is the lie of humanism. It is the very message of humanism and it coincides with Satan's lie. Humanists tell people "You can improve your life without God." Their motto is, "Good without a God."

Of the three Humanist Manifestos, notice how Humanist Manifesto II, which was written in the 70's, lines up with Satan's lie in the garden. Under the heading of "religion", Humanist Manifesto II states, *"We believe, however, that traditional dogmatic or authoritarian religions that place revelation, God, ritual, or creed above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species."* That is what Satan was suggesting to Eve. "God is doing you a disservice by not letting, by not allowing, by telling you you can't partake of that tree." It goes on to say, *"Traditional religions often offer solace to humans, but, as often, they inhibit humans from helping themselves or experiencing their full potentialities."* That is exactly what Satan was telling Eve. It continues, *"... we reject those features of traditional religious morality that deny humans a full appreciation of their own potentialities ..."* Again, that is exactly what Satan was telling Eve in the garden. Following that, God's standard would be departed from.

In those statements of humanism and in Satan's suggestion to Eve, self takes priority over God. That was the message then, and it has not changed. People word it a little differently, but the message goes back to the original lie. The entire educational system of the United States does not deny that their curriculum is based upon humanism, which is

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based upon this lie of Satan. If you are a teacher and the “knowledge” you are imparting is based on a lie, that does not say much about your own knowledge. People say, "Knowledge is power". But what you must realize and keep in mind is not all knowledge is true. Only a fool would believe that whatever the educational system today tells you is true. Nevertheless, the world is full of them.

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Humanists believe that man began at the bottom, and is working his way up the evolutionary chain towards getting better. Of course, the Bible, history, what you see in society, everything refutes that.

Adam and Eve were created in a perfect state of bliss. Satan came on the scene and *suggested* to Eve that God was too restrictive, too confining, which was resulting in her and Adam missing out on the enjoyments of life. He suggested that they were being robbed of their real potential and that they could improve their life by simply casting aside the restrictions and the boundaries that God has set. That same lie of Satan is the teaching of humanism. The humanist says, *"We believe, however, that traditional dogmatic or authoritarian religions that place revelation, God, ritual, or creed above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species."* That is exactly what Satan said in the garden. *"Traditional religions often offer solace to humans, but, as often, they inhibit humans from helping themselves or experiencing their full potentialities."* *"... we reject those features of traditional religious morality that deny humans a full appreciation of their own potentialities ..."* Those statements are fully in line with what Satan said. You need to realize anything fully in line with what Satan says is a lie.

What is it that takes priority over God in those statements? Self. Self as it relates to human potential, human need, human experience takes presidents over God. Eve entered into this conversation with Satan. Somewhere in that conversation, her thinking shifted from God being first to her and Adam becoming the priority. Her thinking shifted from God being the subject of life, to self becoming the subject. Anytime there is a shift away from God, disaster is going to follow. Humanism has its roots in evolution and if you follow through with humanism, the only thing that can follow is disaster. That is what you read in Romans 1. There is a shift from God's authority to man becoming their own authority. You see that pattern in the book of Judges and throughout scriptures, as well.

Eve now has a perverted view about the will of God.

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If you have a perverted view of the will of God, you also have a perverted view of God. The result is in Genesis 3:6, where it says, *"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her; and he did eat."* God never said to Adam and Eve the tree wasn't good for food. That it would make you wise is what Satan put in her mind. In taking the fruit and eating it, they now have disobeyed God. They have departed from God's standard.

In the garden there was one rule and they broke it. People today will say, "Well, the Bible is so full of rules, we don't need that many rules." All you need is one and Adam and Eve broke that one rule. In breaking that one rule did they improve their lives? Is there a single area where you can point to and say, "That is better than it was before?" No. Nothing improved. Instead, their life of bliss comes crashing down. That life of tranquility immediately becomes a life of fear. For the first time, they are afraid of God. Tranquility has been replaced with fear. So it is today. Their life of fulfillment becomes a life of frustration and failure. You hear the frustration when Adam said, *"The woman whom thou gavest to be with me,"* You can hear frustration in that statement.

Adam and Eve sought to hide from God in Genesis 3:8, and ever since they partook of the fruit of that tree, man has been trying to hide from God. Man has been in the business of sowing fig leaves to try and hide their shame from God. The fact that Adam and Eve fled meant that they were now outside of fellowship with God. They have broken God's standard, the one thing He told them not to do and now they are out of fellowship with God. That familiarity they had with God is not the same. Their friendship with God is not the same. They are no longer in agreement with God. Being in disagreement with God, what are they trying to do? Get far away from him. Almost everything man comes up with today is in disagreement with God. That just leads

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them further and further and further away from the Lord. Here Adam and Eve are, not living in the enjoyment of God. All that is gone.

Adam and Eve's relationship with God has drastically changed, which results in a negative impact upon their relationship with one another, as well. Go to the biggest section in a bookstore like Barnes and Noble, which by the way is the self-help section, and look at all the books on relationships, pick one up and read about the author. You will find that somewhere along the line, the author has struggled with relationships, and because they have, they are now "expert" to tell you how not to struggle with them. There is a direct connection between a relationship with God and relationships with people. That is proven in Genesis. Their relationship with God fell apart, and their relationship with one another was drastically changed.

In a life lived making self the priority, the source, the subject, and the authority, a life of rebellion against God, will always, without fail, make living that life far more difficult. Genesis 3:16-19, makes that very, very plain. We live in a time where we have more conveniences than man has ever had in the entire history of the world. Yet, life is more difficult. There is no one that can deny that. For you and I who have been around long enough, life is more difficult today than it was 25 years ago. There are more problems in spite of all the conveniences. Convenience is not what makes life less difficult. What makes life less difficult is being in agreement with God. What makes life SO difficult is fighting against God. That is what you find in Romans 1. Life is difficult, and man in his broken relationship with God, comes up with solutions to make life easier. But, every solution just adds to the difficulty of life. I am not saying it is harder to travel today than it used to be. I am saying living, in general the problems, the troubles of life are more difficult. Life is far, far more difficult than it has ever been. People go against, go aside from the standard of God, which is exactly what sin is.

You should know by now God has a standard, a rule

to measure by, that the very word *sin* implies there has to be a standard, and that God's established standard is Himself. Some say His word is the standard, which is true, but you can not separate His word from Himself. God's standard is Himself, "be ye holy for I am holy". Anything that goes aside from that standard, from God Himself, from what God has said, is sin. In spite of the promises of Satan and humanism, that turning aside from God will make your life better, it is going to make your life more difficult. I believe people are bent on convincing themselves and everyone else that everything is so much better today. All you have to do is look around. I am not buying what they are selling. It is just not so.

Sin goes aside from God's standard. In 1st John 3:4 it says, "*... sin is the transgression of the law.*" A transgression simply means that you go aside from what has been prescribed. Sin is a transgression, a going aside from what God has prescribed in Himself and in His word. It is a going aside from God's standard, which means that sin is an infraction, a violation of the law and the standard of God.

The word translated "trespass" in Matthew 6:14, is the same word that is translated as "sins" in Ephesians 1:7, 2:1, and 2:5; "offense" in Romans 5; "fault" in Galatians and James; and "fall" in Romans 11:11. From all of that, you learn that sin is unlawful, which of course, implies a law. You can not be unlawful if you do not have a law. Sin is unlawful.

Sin is a wrongdoing, an infringement, a defect, translated fault. When somebody says "I have this certain fault," what they are saying is they have a defect. Anything that does not line up with God is defective. Sin is a defect, a failure.

All of that necessitates a standard of measure which is God Himself. You have to understand that. God is the standard of measure. Neither the church nor man is the standard of measure. God is the standard of measure and sin is a deviation, a digression, a departure from that standard of measure. How great does the departure have to be in order

to be sin? The slightest outward or inward departure from God, is sin. The question is not how far does one have to depart in order to sin. All you have to do is depart and it is sin.

People today do not understand that sin is of a progressive nature and as such that departure keeps on growing because of the progressive nature of sin. The nature of sin is always progressive and unless God does something in our lives to stop it, sin will progress. People will go against God and they will make statements like, "I can't believe where I am." What is so difficult about believing that? "I don't understand." Sin is progressive and it is going to take you further and further from God, from God's standard.

Sin is always contrary to the nature of God, and anything that is in disagreement with God is sin. The statements from the Humanist Manifesto disagree with God, implying man begins at the bottom and is getting better, are contrary to God. If someone says, "Well, I can see their point," they are in trouble if they can even begin to see the point the humanist tries to make today. They are in serious, serious trouble. People will want to argue and say, "Well, I just want you to understand." Guess what? I do not want to understand humanism, I totally disagree with it, and as long as God protects me there is nothing that another person can say that is going to convince me along the lines of humanism. Everything about it is sinful, there is no truth in it, and it lines up completely with the methods of Satan back in the garden.

We have to understand that sin is a transgression of God's law. Sin is not determined by how far you have departed from God's law. The slightest departure is sin. That is why it is so important, when we detect the slightest departure in our own lives, to get on our knees before God. If we do not, sin will progress. People say all the time, "It's as bad as it can get." No it is not even close. It will get a lot worse as sin continues in its progression if God does not intervene. That is just the nature of sin and of man.

Chapter 2 - The Nature of Sin, Part 3

In order to understand Romans 1:18-32, you have to understand the two main subjects of these verses, sin and the wrath of God. God's wrath is the result of sin, they are like a cycle, and they progress. You have to understand the nature of sin, that it is a transgression and it is opposed to God and everything about God. Whether you talk about His love, mercy, or grace, sin is opposed to every aspect of the Lord.

1st John 5:17, tells us that all unrighteousness is sin, and therefore, unrighteousness describes the nature of sin. Unrighteousness is against, opposed to what is right. Unrighteousness is what is wrong. God's standard, not man's, determines what is unrighteousness; that which is right, that which is wrong. God's standard is Himself.

Sin is referred to as wickedness and evil in Genesis 6:5. Wickedness deals more with what is morally wrong. Evil is just kind of a summary of all that would be disagreeable to God, that which is unwholesome. That which is evil is harmful. So, it is, of course, with sin. Whatever does not conform to God's standard, which is Himself, is sin. The degree of nonconformity is not the issue.

Sin is iniquity. The Hebrew word translated as iniquity conveys the idea of twisting and perverting, so sin is a twisting and perversion of God's standard. Iniquity is a misrepresentation, a falsification, a subversion, a misuse of God's standard.

Sin is referred to as rebellion against God. Rebellion, of course, is a willful, deliberate act of resistance, an act of opposition to an established government or order. The very word rebellion implies that there is a standard, that there is a rule, a government, or a ruler. In this case, the ruler would be God. Every time we sin, we rebel against God. God often accused Israel of rebelling against Him. Rebellion against God is; you know what is right, yet you deliberately go against it. This is not a sin of ignorance, this is willful rebellion against God and His standard.

Sin is an act of ignorance and shows we are ignorant.

It is an act of obstinacy, an act of foolishness. In Isaiah 1:3, God is speaking to Israel, speaking to His people. "*The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: [but] Israel doth not know, [Does not understand, does not acknowledge.] my people doth not consider.*" Isaiah writes of an ox and a donkey, two animals which are not known for their intelligence, but are famous for their obstinacy and how difficult they are to handle. Nevertheless, these two animals have an instinct that makes them recognize their master. As stupid and ignorant as they are, they recognize their master. When they see their master coming with a bucket of food, they move towards him immediately. The sinner, on the other hand, reacts against the offers of God, refusing and speaking against it, thinking they are clever in doing so. The ox and the mule know they are dependent upon their master and if the master does not come with food, they will go hungry. The sinner does not know that. God comes with his blessings and the sinner refuses it and turns away from God. The sinner thinks that they are intelligent in doing so and that it makes them intelligent.

Sin perverts man. That is so abundantly clear in Romans 1. Sin makes fools of man.

Sin blinds the mind. You see that cycle in Romans 1. Man does not become more intelligent living in sin. He becomes more and more ignorant as sin progresses, but thinks that he is evolving in intelligence, progressing. Man never progresses going away from God. Never. It is only the stupidity of man, the insanity of sin that would cause someone to think that they are better off going against God than obeying God. Yet, that was Satan's pitch to man. "You would be better off to ignore God's command, ignore God's boundary that He has established. You would be as gods. You'd be better off." That has been Satan's pitch and the way of man ever since. Sin blinds the mind, leads to a failure to think logically, and renders man incapable of sound thinking. Sin is a mental problem. It really is. It is a mental illness.

Sin is a heavy weight. Isaiah 1:4 says, "... a people

laden with iniquity, ..." which means a people weighted down, encumbered, overloaded. The "pitch" of Satan is that sin gives liberty and freedom, but it does just the opposite. Sin weights down, encumbers, and overloads. People with sin are overloaded with iniquity, with that which is twisted, perverted, illogical, and senseless. Romans 1 is a good picture of that. Sin does not make sense. The more one progresses in that cycle of sin, the less logical that individual becomes. The picture in Isaiah is one of a people weighted down and obstructed, hindered with that which is twisted, perverted and illogical.

Sin is evil and corrupting. Isaiah 1:4, it says, "*... a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters:*" Here we have a picture of doers, participants in that which is wrong, immoral, vile, dishonorable, devilish, all described by the word evildoers, and as such, they **become** corrupters. That means evildoers are more than just corrupt. *Corrupt* speaks of that which is rotten and putrid. Evildoers are corrupt, and in addition to being corrupt, they corrupt others. Bring corrupters, they corrupt others, which means they bring damage, ruin, and destruction to others. In Isaiah 1:4, you also see the progression of sin. "*A people laden with sin, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters.*" Sin is passed on from one generation to another. Their children become corrupters. With each generation, sin progresses that much more.

Sin is a forsaking of God. In Isaiah 1:4, it says, "*... they have forsaken the Lord ...*" They left God and when you leave God, disaster follows EVERY, SINGLE, TIME. Nothing good comes out of leaving God. "*... a people laden with iniquity ...*", they have forsaken God, turned their back upon Him, and have done so willfully and deliberately. Romans 1 describes a nation, a people that has turned their back upon God, casting Him aside.

One who sins against God forsakes God. They then plan their own lives without God, without consideration of God, living their lives in disregard of God. These

individuals are not just those who announce, "I want nothing to do with God." Certainly that individual has forsaken God. But, anyone who plans their own life without considering the will of God, who lives their life in disregard of God has forsaken the Lord. That describes the world. Unfortunately, it describes many of God's people also. They live their lives without any consideration of God, planning their own lives, where they will work, live, what they will do, and how long they will do it. It is all about their plans and they live their lives with no consideration or regard of the will of God. On Sunday, as you drive to the house of God, you see people out, mostly in the summer months, doing all kinds of things. What have they done? They have forsaken the Lord. They are living their lives with disregard of God. That is what sinful man does.

Sin is a provoking of God. Isaiah 1:4 says, "... *they have provoked the Holy One of Israel ...*" To provoke is to irritate, to arouse, to anger. It is not a very smart thing to irritate, to arouse, to anger omnipotence. We know God is long suffering, not easily aroused to anger, and for that, we ought to be thankful.

In all of this, you can see a progression. This people, this sinful nation, is worse than the ox and the ass, they are weighted down with sin, the seed of evildoers, their children are corrupters, they have forsaken the Lord, and in all this, God is being provoked. Every sin is a further provocation of God. The further you get along in the cycle of sin, the more God is provoked. That's what you read of in Romans 1.

Not only does sin progress, the wrath of God progresses. As you read Romans 1 you see part of the wrath of God is more sin, which brings more destruction. As you look at society today and see more and more sin, that is part of the wrath of God, which brings more sin, which brings more of the wrath of God. It is a cycle that man, in and of himself, can not get out of. The only way to get out of it is if God intervenes. Romans 1 describes the cycle of our nation, the cycle of people. They provoke, they irritate God. Even

though God is long suffering, there is a point when that long suffering is no more and God is provoked. That "point" may be different with individuals.

Sin is going backward. Isaiah 1:4, "... *they are gone away backward.*" If you go away from God, which they did when they forsook God, you will always go backwards. The pitch of Satan is that you will go forward. You talk to someone who professes to be saved, but they have been and are away from God. They try their best to convince you how great their life is. Well, in my opinion, if their life is great away from God, I think they are lost. I do not know if they are trying to convince you and I or if they are trying to convince themselves. It is probably both. Sin is going backward, a departure from God, and it puts one at a distance from God.

To go backward speaks of going in the wrong direction. Sin is always going in the wrong direction. It's to be in a state of decline. All sin is to move away from God. That is always the wrong direction and will always result in decline of some kind. You may not be able to see the decline immediately, but every single sin results in decline, whether we can notice it or not.

Sin is to go away from spiritual substance, resources, treasures, that which is beautiful, meaningful, of great help and encouragement to us. It is to go away from that which strengthens, comforts, sustains, and blesses us. Only someone who is ignorant would go away from these things, go away from that which will give courage, peace, and victory, and go in the direction of bankruptcy. "I'm going to leave all the blessings of God and go in the direction of bankruptcy. I'm going to leave the liberty I have in God and I'm going to go in the way that is going to lead to imprisonment, misery, and waste." Not too smart. Sin puts us lower than the ox and the ass.

Sin is absolute insanity. Isaiah 1:5 says, "*Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more:*" The question is asked, "Why would you do that?" If you have

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raised children, you have asked, "Why did you do that? What were you thinking?" That is basically what God is asking here. The word *why* is stressing the fact that to continue in sin is beyond reason. It is irrational. Many times, the one who professes to be saved will say, "Well, I've just realized some things." Really? They are being irrational, yet they think they have come to a realization. "I've realized I don't have to be in church to be spiritual," or whatever things they come up with. In spite of the fact that sin brings suffering, trouble, pain, agony, and sorrow, the sinner just keeps on sinning and blaming all their sorrow and misery on everything but the real cause. Sin is insanity. It's absolutely insane.

All of these things are very clearly illustrated in Romans 1. There is the nature of sin, which you have to understand. The individual who sins and says, "I'm only going to do it this one time," does not understand the nature of sin. That statement is a statement of ignorance. God help us to have some understanding of sin.

Chapter 2 - The Nature of Sin, Part 4

When you study about what sin is, you learn it is a transgression, a trespass, an unrighteousness, iniquity, rebellion, a state of ignorance, a heavy weight, corruption, a forsaking and provoking of God, and going backwards. Isaiah poses the question in Isaiah 1:5, "*Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more:*" This question is stressing the fact that to continue in sin is beyond reason, it does not make sense, it is irrational, considering sin brings suffering, trouble, pain, agony, and sorrow. In light of all that, why would the sinner go on sinning? The answer; because it is a form of insanity, and the greatest insanity that there is. Furthermore, sin has a destructive power. You learn that from Isaiah 1:7, where you find the words *desolate*, meaning it's dismal, grim, deserted; *burned*, which is consumed, devoured, laid waste; *overthrown*, referring to conquered, mastered by an enemy power. All of that is sin.

Next is the *nature of sin*. It is both a state of being and a state of doing. It is a state of being before it is a state of doing. Put another way, sin is not only an outward act, it is what we are, our state of being. Every sin we commit, all sin for that matter, involves a wrong view of God, a wrong feeling toward the Lord, a wrong position with God.

Sin is an act and an attitude of defiance, contempt and disregard for God. Often, people concentrate on just the act, but sin goes much deeper than the act. It is a state of being, an act and attitude of opposition, hostility, resistance, striving, uprising against God, of treason against the majesty of God, of disagreement with the Lord, of a reaction against God. It does not matter what the sin is, all sin is against God. Sin can be against another person, but more importantly, it is against God. All sin is an act and attitude of ingratitude.

Sin is an act that proceeds from an attitude. First there is a state of being, and then an act. Romans 1:18, refers to both. Paul says, "*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.*" You have ungodliness and unrighteousness, which are not the same thing. If you look up the word ungodliness and

follow it throughout the scriptures, you will find that ungodliness is the inward aspect of sin. One can perform an ungodly act where *ungodly* is used as an adverb to describe the act. Ungodliness is a state of being, the nature of man. The very word *ungodliness* shows that it is the antithesis of God and His character, meaning it is *unlike God*. That is the nature of sin. The most complete summary of the nature of sin would be, it is ungodly.

Ungodliness is the attitude of irreverence, an unconsciousness of God, displeasure with God. Man by nature is displeased with God. Displeasure with God comes out all the time as people murmur and complain. They get angry with God, and say so. Where is that going to get you? You have no understanding of who God is. Being angry with God is not going to get you anywhere. Ungodliness is a spirit of independence in relation to God, hardness, ingratitude, and disobedience.

You have *ungodliness* and *unrighteousness*. The word, unrighteousness, is the external aspect of sin. Most people today have no concern about sin, but those who do are very prone to have their emphasis in the wrong place. They put the emphasis upon the outward act. They confess and repent of the outward act, which they should do, but that is not where the emphasis needs to be. *Why* did you do what you did? Because of who you are inwardly, which is a sinner. The emphasis needs to be upon the inward. If we could get the inward straightened out, the outward would take care of itself.

The word unrighteousness is the habitual course of sin. Adam's sin was the sin of the entire race. Even before Adam and Eve sinned outwardly, they were already sinning inwardly. In Romans 5:12, it says, "*Wherefore, as by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, [Then, the result of sin entering the world.] and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, [Why?] for that all have sinned:*" [Referring to the external, we have sinned.] Then in Romans 5:16, it says, "*And not as [it was] by one that sinned, [so is] the gift: for the judgment [was] by one [By Adam] to*

condemnation, but the free gift [The free gift refers to salvation.] [is] of many offences unto justification." Then in 1st Corinthians 15:22, it says, *"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."* There was death in Adam, there is life in Christ. While Adam's sin brought physical death, more importantly, it brought spiritual death, and eternal death upon all the race. If someone of the world has any religious training at all, they will say that Adam's sin brought physical death, which it did. However, it is more important that Adam's sin brought spiritual death and that is what needs to be addressed. Adam's sin brought eternal death, as well. As a result, Romans 5:12 says Adam's sin brought condemnation upon all, *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"*

God warned Adam and Eve, concerning the tree, in Genesis 2:17, where He said, *"... for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* He did not just say, "Thou shall die," He said, Thou shall SURELY die. Obviously, God was not putting the emphasis on physical death, because they did not physically die that day, nor did they die eternally, referring to condemnation in hell. But, they did die spiritually, that day, which was evidenced by the fact that they fled and tried to hide from God.

Mankind, all of us are born in sin, we all know that, and the scriptures are very clear concerning that. People today find that very offensive. However, if they would give it some thought, they would see that it explains so many things. It explains all about a little baby's behavior. Psalms 51:5 says, *"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."* In the very womb we are shapen in iniquity. Psalms 58:3 says, *"The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, [Children do not hit a certain age and become sinners. As soon as they are born, they go astray.] speaking lies."*

Man born in sin, is born spiritually dead. What does it mean to be dead? Death means several things. Keep in mind we are referring to spiritual death and not physical

death, but they share some of the same characteristics. In physical death, you are unconscious. In spiritual death, there is an unconsciousness of God. Death is a separation. The very second your spirit and soul departs from your body, you are dead. Your spirit and soul have left, separated from the body. Spiritual death is a separation from God. Everyone begins in the womb in a state of separation from God, and certainly so when we come out of the womb. We are born in a state of separation from God. That is spiritual death. We are born in a state of spiritual alienation, estranged from God. The result is, we are in a spiritual state of darkness.

Being spiritually dead, we are in a spiritual state of inability. When you die physically, you are rendered unable to do anything in the physical realm, because you are dead. If you are dead spiritually, you are unable in the spiritual realm. There is no spark of goodness in every man. That is an invention of man and is taught nowhere in the Bible. In spiritual death there is a spiritual inability and helplessness. If you were to go to the funeral home where there is a dead body, sit there all day long, pleading with that body, going through all kinds of steps, and that body would never rise from the casket. It is not going to happen because it is unable, helpless. However, IF that body were to rise from the casket, a miracle has taken place. The impartation of life has taken place. Impartation of life, of course, is what happens in salvation.

As a result of Adam's sin, by nature man is totally depraved, and man will act out that depravity. Man is a sinner, and because he is a sinner, he sins. To put it another way, you do not become a sinner because you sin, you are already a sinner and therefore you sin. That is what sinners do. Sinners sin.

What does, "Man is totally depraved," mean? We know what the word *total* means. In physical death, man is *totally* dead, not part way dead. You are either alive or you are dead. Therefore, "Man is totally depraved" means he is depraved or he is not. It does not mean that man will do everything he is capable of through his depravity. He would

if not for the Holy Spirit being a restrainer. But the restrainer is being removed, which is why men grow worse and worse. Men do not GROW worse and worse in their NATURE, because we are all born totally depraved. But the spirit no longer strives with man, so he begins to act out his depravity even more. Romans 1 shows the acting out of depravity.

Man being totally depraved means he is *thoroughly* crooked, *thoroughly* wicked, and *sinful by nature*. He does not have to be trained to lie. That infant baby, that young child will tell its first lie without you giving any instruction whatsoever, because by nature they are liars. That is what we are. You say, "Well, a baby can't lie before it talks." Oh, yes it can. That baby learns to cry and along with that, "If I do that, mom and dad will do this." They can lie through their crying. Do they know they are lying? I do not know, but they are lying.

Totally depraved means we are sinful by nature. We are sinful by position before God. That is stated in Jeremiah in 17:9, where it says, "*The heart [is] deceitful.*" Some of the worst advice you can get is, "Follow your heart." You better not because you can get yourself into a lot of trouble. "*The heart is deceitful.*" That means it is crooked, perverted, and polluted. How deceitful is it? "*The heart is deceitful above all [things].*" What does that mean? It means there is nothing more deceitful than the human heart. "... *and desperately [incurably] wicked:*" Man can not cure his heart because he is unable. The word wicked means sore, sick, wounded. The sinful heart is incurable in and of itself. Man can not cure his own sinful heart. Man can not undo his nature. That is why we still sin, because by nature, we are still sinners. The sinful heart of man is incurable.

Jeremiah 13:23 asks, can the leopard change his spots? No. You can talk to that leopard all day, asking it to change its spots, but it is not going to, because it does not have that ability. Can the Ethiopian change his skin? He goes on to make the application. Then can ye which are evil do good? You learn that man can not cure himself.

Man sins because he is a sinner by nature. This

affects every realm of man's being. He is totally depraved. There is nothing in us that is not affected by that depravity that is in us by birth. There is nothing in us *from birth* that has not been affected by sin. That is no longer true once the Holy Spirit enters us through salvation.

Romans 1 is a picture of the acting out of depravity. People will say all the time, "I don't understand why someone would do that." Because they are a sinner. You would do it, too, if it weren't for the Holy Spirit restraining you. None of us would be trying to serve the Lord today if we would have freedom to act out our depravity. God the Holy Spirit has restrained us and lost people, as well, today. People would be doing horrible, horrible things were it not for the Spirit of God restraining the natural inclinations of man.

As we move closer to the end, the Holy Spirit is withdrawing His restraining power. The result is man, born totally depraved, does things that are worse and worse, not becoming worse and worse in his nature, but acting out that nature more and more. In these last days, we need to pray that the Lord would restrain the passions of man.

Chapter 2 - The Nature of Sin, Part 5

As you get into the study of Romans 1:18-32, you need to understand sin and the nature of sin. If someone willfully goes down the road of temptation, they can not understand their own nature nor the nature of sin. Man is totally depraved. Jeremiah 17:9 says, "*The heart [is] deceitful above all [things], and desperately wicked.*" and as you study Romans 1:18-32, need to understand what Jeremiah is saying in that verse; you must realize what you are dealing with, which is the total depravity of man.

In looking at the effects of this depravity, there are things most of us know, but need to be reminded of. The *arminian persuasion* teaches there are two parties in salvation, God and man. You can not be wrong in either and be right on salvation. The *arminians* are wrong on both, which has skewed their salvation message very, very much. The Bible very plainly teaches sin has an effect on man's understanding. Man's understanding is corrupt by and enslaved to man's own sinful nature. As you study Romans 1:18-32, you learn that the understanding of the people those verses are speaking of, is corrupt. You may ask, "Why do they keep doing those things?" Because their understanding is corrupt and enslaved to their sinful nature. In Romans 3:11, Paul is giving a summary of the condition of man, "*There is none that understandeth.*" I shutter every time when someone says, "Well, they're not of an age where they can understand." I tell myself, "That's not what they mean, because neither is somebody that's 50, 60, or 70, if they don't have the Lord." No man, "*there is none that understandeth.*" You do not understand until the Spirit of God give you birth, gives you life.

Romans 2 teaches us that man does possess a knowledge of God, which we are born with. One can have a knowledge of what the Bible says about salvation. Anybody, who comes to church on a regular basis, has some form of a knowledge of God and of salvation. That does not mean they are saved. Romans 2:20 says, "*An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge.*" There is knowledge and there is a form of

knowledge. When you read, *"there's none that understandeth,"* it is not saying *they have no knowledge of God or of salvation.* But, they can not, in and of themselves, possess a knowledge unto salvation. In 2nd Timothy 3:15, Paul used those words, unto salvation, *"... the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation ..."* There is a form of knowledge that does not lead "unto" salvation, and when the Spirit of God works, there is a knowledge that leads "unto" salvation. To put it another way, people have a general, factual knowledge about God, about salvation, but that knowledge is not able to bring them into a personal relationship with God, it does not bring them to the salvation of God. When God saves them, He imparts understanding of that factual knowledge of salvation to them. Without God's saving work, as Romans 3:11 says, there will be no one that understands. Having knowledge and having an understanding of knowledge are two different things.

Paul wrote in Romans 8:7, *"The carnal mind [The fleshly mind that we are born with.] [is] enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."* Lost man can not bring his mind into subjection to God. The nature of the fleshly mind is enmity against God. That is always so until God intervenes and gives the new birth. The conclusion of what he states in verse 7 is stated in verse 8, *"So then they that are in the flesh [The condition in which we enter into life.] cannot please God."* They are enslaved to the flesh.

1st Corinthians 2:14, declares, *"But the natural man [That is our condition by birth. It does not matter what your age is.] receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: [Here is why] for they [The things of God.] are foolishness unto him: [Unto the natural man, the things of God are foolishness, because their minds are enmity against God.] neither can he [The natural man] know [them], [The things of God. He can not know the things of God in a saving way. Here is why.] because they are spiritually discerned [By nature, man is spiritually unable]."*

Because the mind of natural man is corrupted and

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enslaved to his sinful nature, their minds are blinded. People who ought to know better, will say all the time concerning someone who is lost, "Well, they've been in church, they ought to know better." Well, they do not because the things of God are spiritually discerned and their minds are enslaved to sin. In 2nd Corinthians 4:3, Paul is talking about "*them that are lost.*" Then in verse 4, he goes on, "*In whom [referring to the lost] the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them ...*" Their minds are blinded by their own sinful nature. Even if Satan did not exist, their minds are blinded by their own sinful nature. But, Satan does exist, so you can add on top of being blinded by their sinful nature, "*In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, [Here is why Satan does that.] lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*"

The whole time you talk to a lost sinner about the salvation of their soul, you have to be praying that God does a work within them. People say, "You just need to make it as simple as you can." You can not make it simple enough because "... *the things of God ... are spiritually discerned.*" Outside of the Holy Spirit doing the work of regeneration, a lost sinner will not grasp salvation. Their understanding is enslaved.

In Ephesians 4:18, you will read, "*Having the understanding darkened,*" *Understanding* is darkened both by our sinful nature and Satan. When I say man's understanding is darkened, and salvation is spiritually discerned, I am not saying man does not possess intelligence, but rather, left to itself, man's intelligence invariably works error. Man's intelligence is enmity against God and will eventually lead away from God. Romans 1:25 says that, because of man's understanding, "*Who changed the truth of God into a lie, [That is what man does.] and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator.*" Why would someone worship the creature more than the creator? Because they do not understand, because their understanding is darkened.

Chapter 2 - The Nature of Sin, Part 5

As you read Romans 1, and you look at society today, you have to realize you are dealing with people who do not understand, and their understanding is enslaved. The only way they are going to understand is if the Spirit of God does the work of regeneration. It is like what Jesus said to the woman at the well, "... if ye knew, ye would." That is true. People will say, "Well, I know that." Well then why do they not *do* what they *know*? Because they really do not know. They may know it intellectually, but they do not know it spiritually, because man's understanding is affected by his sinful nature.

Man's heart and affections are corrupted and enslaved to his sinful nature and he can not change his heart, or the heart of anyone else. This is a very important point when dealing with the subject of salvation. To avoid going into error when you are talking to someone about the Lord, you have to realize God is sovereign and unless He does a work, nothing is happening. If you do not realize that, you end up trying to do God's work and end up on the path of salvation by works. In Genesis 6:5, it says, "*And GOD saw that the wickedness of man [was] great in the earth, and [that] every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] only evil continually.*" That is true. If you break down every single thought of a lost sinner, somewhere there is sin. Their minds, hearts, and affections are corrupt.

People do not like to hear these things. They want to believe they have some spark of good, which is a main line of arminian theology. It makes man happy to think he has just a spark of good. However, the Bible does not teach any such thing. Ecclesiastes 9:3 tells us, "*This [is] an evil among all [things] that are done under the sun, that [there is] one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness [is] in their heart while they live, and after that [they go] to the dead.*" In Matthew 15:19-20 the Pharisees were saying that if a man does not wash his hands he is polluted. The Lord said the hands are not the problem, the heart is the problem. He goes on to mention several sins that proceed from the heart. Man's heart and affections are

corrupt and enslaved to his nature.

In John 3:19-20, it says, "*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, [Light refers to Jesus] and men loved darkness rather than light, [Loving darkness is the nature of man, spiritually speaking. Here is why.] because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, [The light is Jesus.] neither cometh to the light, [Man is not coming to Jesus unless the Lord does a work.] lest his deeds should be reprov'd.*" Man's understanding and heart are corrupt and enslaved.

This next scripture is one that enrages people the most. Remember, man's will is corrupt and enslaved to his sinful nature. Romans 3:11 says, "*There is none that understandeth, [The result of none that understandeth is,] there is none that seeketh after God.*" **Man's natural understanding will not cause or lead anyone to seek the Lord.** People talk all the time, "Well, so and so was seeking." What were they seeking? "They were seeking God." NO! They are seeking peace, but doing so in all the wrong places. The only way anyone will seek the God of the Bible is if the Spirit of God has done a work upon your heart. What did Adam and Eve do as a result of their sin? They fled and tried to hide from God. That is what the unsaved sinner will *willfully* do. No one made Adam and Eve flee and hide from God, but rather, they chose to do that, because their will is enslaved to their nature. Man has been fleeing and trying to hide from God ever since. That is what man does by nature. Jesus said in John 5:40, "... *ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*" You will not come on your own. The arminian says all one has to do is come. While that is very true, people have a sinful nature, that sinful nature controls their will, and left to themselves, they will not come. Left to yourself, you will not come to God. In John 6:44, Jesus says, "*No man can come ...*", unto God.

While it is true, all you have to do is come, and we can invite sinners to come to Jesus, but you have to realize they are not coming unless the Spirit of God does a work. If you do not realize that, what do you do next? **You** try to get

them to come and *your* whole plan of salvation is perverted. No man can come.

You read of all of these things in Romans 1, that people are not going to come to God unless God does a work, because they can not come unless God does a work. Why is that? Because man's will is enslaved to his sinful nature and man's sinful nature is to flee from God. People argue that I am doing away with the will of man. No, I am not. I do not deny that man does have a will, but his will is enslaved to his sinful nature; when you talk about freedom of will, man's will is free within its nature; and man's will is enmity with God; and because man's nature is to flee from God. Since Adam's fall, the will of every person is naturally inclined away from God. The enslaved will of man is controlled by his affections, meaning his heart, which is evil, earthly, and sensual, according to James 3:15. Every sinner's will is free according to its nature. It does not act outside of its nature.

You look at a dog, a cat, an elephant, whatever, they all act within their nature. A fish is not going to swing from a tree; it is not in its nature to do that; but a monkey will, because it is in its nature to do so. Everything acts within the bounds of its nature. That is true of man, as well. That is why, when you read Romans 1:18-32, you are reading of the progression of the sinful nature of man. It is imperative that we have an understanding of the sinful nature of man. If you are dealing with people, whatever realm it is in, you are going to understand a lot more if you understand the sinful nature of man explains why people do what they do, whatever that might be. The *action* of a person's *will* is determined by the *nature* of the person making the choice. Man's nature is away from God.

If a person is not corrupt, if they have good in them, and they believe these things, why do they even need to be saved? Why then, when the Lord deals with a sinner and gives him new life, that sinner can not even describe the sinfulness that they feel? If a person is saved, there was a time, *the* moment the Lord was dealing with them, they had

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some understanding of their sinfulness, and they knew, "There's nothing that I have that I can offer unto God. Nothing!" The Lord does the work.

You tell people that man's nature is thoroughly corrupt and they say, "You mean to say that man is capable of doing anything that is evil?" Yes, man can do anything that is evil. The only reason he does not is because the Spirit of God is a restraining agent. But as we move further and further towards the coming of Christ, that restraining power is being lifted. Man today is acting more and more according to his nature and he *will* get worse as the restraining agent is removed. Even without the Bible, one need only to observe what is going on in society, in the world, and it should be clear that man has a problem with his sinful nature.

Chapter 2 - The Nature of Sin, Part 6

When studying Romans 1:18-32, it is important to lay the groundwork for studying this passage verse by verse. The subject of these verses is the progression of sin and the progression of God's wrath. The two go hand in hand. Therefore, you need to have an understanding of sin, see the effect of sin upon man, and that man is totally depraved. If anyone is going to have any chance of solving what ails society, they have to understand the nature of what they are dealing with. That eliminates almost everyone from solving what ails society.

A good picture of depravity is found in Judges 2:17-19, where it says, *"And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, [That pretty much describes man.] and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way [This is very descriptive of man by nature.] which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; [but] they did not so. And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them. And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, [that] they returned, and corrupted [themselves] more than their fathers, [Here you see that there is a progression.] in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; [This next bit is very descriptive of man.] they ceased not from their own doings, [That is man's doings.] nor from their stubborn way."* These verses pretty much sum up the depravity of man. Because of sin, man is totally depraved and this is by nature. He is born that way.

Man's understanding, his heart and affections, and his will are corrupt and enslaved to sin. For whatever the reason, the corruptness and enslavement of man's will is the one thing that is most offensive to the religious world. People will accuse those of us who believe that salvation is by grace of not believing in the will of man. I have been told many times that I believe man does not have a will. That is

not true. Man does have a will, and like everything else concerning man, it is corrupt and enslaved. I will even say that, yes, man has a free will, but it's only free within the bounds of his enslavement. He is not free to go outside of that enslavement. Do not let anyone accuse you of not believing that man does not have a will. The arminian will hold onto free will to the death. But the Bible very plainly teaches that man's will is enslaved to sin. Apart from an intervention from God, that will can not act outside of its enslavement. That makes God, of course, the author, the agent of salvation.

In John 5:40, Jesus said that man will not come to Him that he might have life, followed by John 6:44, where it says, no man can come unto Jesus. Those two statements are pretty clear. In Psalms 10:4, you read, "*The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek [after God]:*" They **will not**. As it says in Romans 3, there is none that seek after God. Man left to himself, will not seek God. Psalms 58:3-5, says, "*The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Their poison [is] like the poison of a serpent: [they are] like the deaf adder [that] stoppeth her ear; Which will not hearken [This is what man is like; he will not hearken.] to the voice of charmers, [That refers to snake charmers. This is the comparison that is being drawn.] charming never so wisely.*" Man will not hearken.

Isaiah 65:12, says, "*Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose [that] wherein I delighted not.*" People like to talk about man having a choice, that man has a choice. Let's say that he does. The problem is man's choice will always be within the bounds of his enslavement to sin. Isaiah 66:3 declares, "*He that killeth an ox [is as if] he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, [as if] he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, [as if he offered] swine's blood; he that burneth incense, [as if] he blessed an idol. [Notice what it says,*

next.] *Yea, they have chosen their own ways,* [Left to himself man will not choose God. He will chose his own ways.] *and their soul delighteth in their abominations...*" The reason that they choose their own ways is because of the inward problem that their soul delights in abominations. That is pretty descriptive of man. The will, the choice, is in bondage.

We are told throughout the new testament things that man can not do. In John 3:3, Jesus says mankind "... *cannot see the kingdom of God.*" Left to yourself, you can not because you are enslaved. Then in John 3:5, He says, mankind "... *cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*" You need to keep all of these things in mind as you look into Romans 1; the progression of sin and realizing that left to himself, man can not change his course.

In John 8:43, Jesus asks, "*Why do ye not understand my speech? [even] because ye cannot hear my word.*" Obviously, He is not talking about the physical ear, physical hearing, because they were hearing. He was talking about effectual hearing. He said, "*Ye can not hear my word.*"

In John 12:39-40, Jesus, quoting Isaiah, "*Therefore they could not believe ...*" All you have to do is believe, but the problem is you can not unless God works on you. We are to tell the sinner that they must believe, but we know they can not unless God does a work. It is true that the sinner must believe and we tell them that, praying that God would intervene. In verse 40, "*He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart that they should not see with their eyes nor understand with their heart* [This is referring to spiritually.] *and be converted and I should heal them.*"

Romans 8:7-8, you read, "*Because the carnal mind [is] enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*" There is the problem; in and of itself, man's mind is not and **can not** be in subjection to God, which is an even greater problem. "*So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*" Twice, you are told that man "can not"; man can not be subject and man can not please God. I would not discourage anyone from doing the best

they can, but the sinner who says, "I'm doing the best I can," you must understand they can not please God.

1st Corinthians 2:14, you read, "*But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: [The reason he does not receive them, is because his understanding is enslaved. Man is not going to choose spiritual things.] neither can he know [them], because they are spiritually discerned.*" They can not know spiritual things to the point of saving their soul.

John 1:12-13, says, "*But as many as received him [Him refers to Jesus Christ.], to them [them refers to those who have received Christ.] gave he power to become the sons of God, [He gave them ability. God has intervened.] [even] to them that believe on his name: [How do they believe? He gave them power to believe. If that is not clear enough, the following verse says...] Which were born, [Referring to born spiritually, the new birth.] not of blood, [Meaning it is not of heredity.] nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, [That is referring to the will of the individual or anyone else.] but of God.*" That is very plain. Man is totally depraved, therefore his will is corrupt, his will is enslaved.

In Romans 9:15 you find, "*I [Referring to God.] will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. [Notice, "I will" is stated four times. God's will is emphasized.] So then [Or, because of the will of God.] [it is] not of him [Referring to man.] that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*" When we study Romans 1, you need to understand that man's will is enslaved.

I believe the plan of salvation, as God presents it, is simple. But man, in his endeavor to simplify it has corrupted it greatly and has made it a plan of works. You need to understand along with man's will being enslaved, that evil progresses.

In Romans 8, you also read that man is enmity against, in opposition to God by nature. That is why many pulpits bring God down, to basically a puppet, so God will

not be in opposition to man. Man is not opposed to a God that he can control, but man is opposed to a God who controls all things and is so by nature.

To be at enmity means to be at hostility. What you have to understand is there is an open hostility against God, that it is man's nature, and it progresses. It is an animosity against God, a friction with God, a bitterness toward God. If you listen to many lost sinners when you present to them the God of the Bible, they are very bitter at that God. To the contrary, if you were to bring God down to a level below or, at best, to their equal, they can handle that. But, you present to them a God that is sovereign and they are bitter toward such a God. They have resentment and malice. That is what it means to be at enmity.

In Ephesians 2:14-15, Paul is talking about Jews and gentiles in the church, where it says, "[The Lord] ... *hath broken down the middle wall of partition [between us];*" He then goes on to speak of reconciliation. ***It is God who reconciles*** and man needs to ***be*** reconciled with God because he is at enmity with God. The very word reconcile *insists* that there has to be an enmity, there has to be a problem between man and God. The arminian should take the word "reconcile" out of their vocabulary. They say one thing, but they use that word to suggest something entirely opposite of what they believe.

Man is enslaved by sin and by Satan. In John 8:34, you find, "*Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.*" Man is enslaved to sin and the devil. In John 8:44, you read, "*Ye are of [your] father the devil, [He is talking to lost man.] and the lusts of your father ye will do....*" In other words, because you are of him, referring to the devil, you will by nature do his desire. However, God is merciful and God restrains. People would say that if man is enslaved to Satan, everybody would kill everyone. No, because God is merciful and restrained. Nonetheless, man is still enslaved to his nature and Satan.

In 2nd Timothy 2:26, Paul speaks of those who are

Chapter 2 - The Nature of Sin, Part 6

ensnared, trapped by the devil. There are many other verses as well showing the enslavement of man to sin. You need to understand that about sin.

You also need to understand the nature of sin is ALWAYS, without exception, against, contrary to, in opposition to the well being of man, against his comfort, his joy. Any time man goes the opposite direction of God, the result is not good.

It is my personal opinion there is less joy in the world today than there has ever been. Just go and sit on a bench somewhere and watch people walk by. There are not very many of them happy and most are very unhappy. As you go through Romans 1, unhappiness progresses. That is the nature of sin. The nature of sin works against man's joy.

The nature of sin works against man's health. There are certain lifestyles that are not going to be good for man's health. Sin works against the peace, the tranquility of man's mind. All of that is illustrated very clearly in Genesis 3, where you read of sin entering into the human race. It did not turn out well for Adam and Eve. In all sin, to some degree, damage is done, there is destruction, ruin, loss, havoc and misery. You see that progress through Romans 1 and throughout the history of the world. You learn in Jeremiah 2 and Jeremiah 5 that sin is a great thief. Therefore, man is not happy. Nothing has caused more heartache in the world than sin. Nothing has broken up more homes than sin.

There is no greater plague. In congress, politicians will address all kinds of plagues. Let's use AIDS as an example. They want to heal AIDS. There is nothing wrong with that, but you need to realize that the root problem, the root cause of AIDS is sin. Even if you find a cure, sin still exists. You can find all the cures you want, but another disease is coming because the root cause of the problem is sin. People do not want to address the real problem. I believe the power of sin is seen through all the healing miracles of Jesus Christ. They illustrate the disabling, enslaving power of sin.

Hebrews 3:13, says sin is deceitful and now you have

a two fold problem. Man's heart is deceitful above all things. There is nothing more deceitful than man's heart. The devil is a liar, so he is a deceiver, and we see sin is a deceiver as well. Man, by nature, falls for the deceit; therefore, man pursues the wrong things because he has been deceived.

No matter how it is portrayed, sin is always in opposition to man, always in conflict to the well being of man. Government can not fix society. They can pass laws that are good laws, but the truth is, the ten commandments are really all the laws you need. All laws are summed up in the ten commandments.

Sin is contrary and set against the good of man, everything that is profitable to man. Romans 1, tells how it has made man a fool. If you listen to the "left" and many on the "right", you will soon see that man is a fool, not because of lack of education, but because of sin. The Psalmist in Psalms 73:22, comes to realize his sin and he says, "*So foolish [was] I, and ignorant: I was [as] a beast before thee.*" Proverbs 23:5 talks about the foolishness of sin, which is seen in idolatry. Only a fool would bow to an image. Man's foolishness is seen in his earthly pursuits and, more than anything, in religion. Sin makes man a fool and it progresses.

The nature of sin is progressive. It's why you know individuals and some who are even God's people, have been deceived and say, "Well, I know it's wrong, but I'm only going to go so far." Your heart, Satan, and sin have deceived you. The nature of sin is progressive as well as the nature of God's wrath. You will see that in Romans 1.

There is only one cure for the sin problem and that is Jesus Christ. Nothing else will solve the problem, there is no other cure.

Chapter 2 - The Nature of Sin, Part 7

The main topics of Romans 1, is sin and the wrath of God upon that sin. In studying Romans 1:18-32, you have to understand the nature of sin and sin's effects on every part of man. There is nothing in the natural man that is unaffected by sin.

In this lesson, I want to look at and understand the progressive nature of sin. In Romans 1 as well as all through the word of God, you learn that sin by its very nature progresses. I could give hundreds and hundreds of illustrations from the word of God concerning the progressive, spreading nature of sin. It is illustrated by the use of leaven and leprosy, which shows that it is progressive and spreading in its nature.

In Genesis 1:31, you see that after God had created all that He did, it was not *just* good, but it was **very** good. There was no disorder whatsoever. There was no chaos, conflict, struggle, pain, disease, decline, or death. By the time you get to the end of Genesis 3, you read that Adam and Eve were ashamed and feeling guilt, something they never felt before, as well as trying to flee and hide from God. Man still tries to hide and flee from God, doing so out of a feeling of guilt.

In Genesis 3, everything changes. There you have the record of man's sin. Adam and Eve took of the forbidden tree. That is where sin entered into the human race. But, it did not stop there. As you follow through the book of Genesis, it just keeps getting worse and worse. In Genesis 4, there is anger, jealousy, murder, and polygamy. What began in the garden has now progressed. We read that Cain killed his brother out of jealousy and by the time you get to the end of Genesis 4, there is polygamy. Sin has progressed since the garden of Eden.

In Genesis 5, there is a genealogy, where you find the words, "and he died", eight times. "He died" is there because of sin.

Then, you come to Genesis 6:2, just prior to the flood, it says, "*.... the sons of God [Referring to the saved.] saw the daughters of men [Referring to the unsaved.] that*

they [were] fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." You have saved people marrying unsaved people based upon lust. They "saw the daughters of men that they were fair", that they were beautiful. It was all by sight. In Genesis 6:5, you read that it progresses. *"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man [was] great in the earth,"* Where did it begin? With Adam and Eve partaking of the forbidden fruit; that brought murder and polygamy; that led to an intermingling between God's people and the world's people; which led to the wickedness of man being great in the earth. *"... and [that] every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] only evil continually."* Sin is progressing.

In Genesis 6:11, you learn that even the earth was corrupt also. *"The earth also was corrupt before God"* All of creation was affected by sin. *"... and the earth was filled with violence."* In Genesis 6:12-13, it says, *"And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; [In other words, sin just keeps on progressing.] and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth."* The result was, of course, God in His wrath sent a universal flood that killed everybody, except for Noah and his family. That is quite a change from, *"And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, [it was] very good."* It is a *drastic* change and what changed it was sin.

If you continue to follow the story, going into Genesis 9, the water subsides and Noah and his family are given another chance. Genesis 9:1, has God telling them, *"... Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."* God has given man another chance, but by the time you get to the end of Genesis 9, Noah is drunk and sexually exposed. The progression of sin.

In Genesis 10, you read more genealogy, followed by Genesis 11, where there is strife and confusion. In Chapter 12, there is lying because of a lack of trust in God with Abraham and Sarah. In Genesis 13, there is strife between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot, resulting in a family

separation. Lot pitched his tent towards Sodom, which was a wicked place. Lot knew that, but all he had his mind on was how green the grass was, how that his herds would benefit. So he pitched his tent toward Sodom. Then in Genesis 13:13, you read, *"But the men of Sodom [were] wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly."* (By the way, that word "exceedingly" tells you there are degrees of sin. All sin is sin and all sin is evil, still there are degrees of sin. The scriptures tell that in Sodom the main sin was homosexuality. Homosexuals should be called Sodomites, not gays.)

In Genesis 14, there is war. There have been many wars since.

In Genesis 16:1, you read of Sarah, the wife of Abraham, telling Abraham to have sexual relations with Hagar. *"Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name [was] Hagar. [Sarai had a servant.] And Sarai said unto Abram, [Sarai is speaking to her husband.] Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: [I can read into that a little bit of blame being cast upon the Lord, using the Lord for justification for what she is about to do.] I pray thee, [Sarai is pleading with her husband.] go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. [That is wicked. Then ...] And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife."* Oh, the progression of sin. Genesis 16:4, *"And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived;"* That brought out hatred between Hagar and Sarah. Sin caused all kinds of problems and strife within that family. It still does today. You look at families today and it is almost beyond belief. It all goes back to sin and the progressive nature of sin. You have this act of adultery and it produced a son, which brought great chaos into the family. That led to cruelty to Hagar.

In Genesis 19:4-10, there is homosexuality. In verse 4, some men come to the house of Lot, *"But before they lay down, the men of the city, [even] the men of Sodom,*

compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter: And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where [are] the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them. [Speaking sexually.]. And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as [is] good in your eyes: [How wicked is that? It is a progression of sin.] only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof. And they said, Stand back. And they said [again], This one [fellow] came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, [even] Lot, and came near to break the door. [They were ready to break the door down for homosexual activity.] But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door."

At the end of the chapter, Genesis 19:34, you read that Lot committed incest with his daughters. *"And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger; Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, [and] lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father."* Sin is disgusting and of a progressive nature. Who would have thought that Adam and Eve's disobedience in partaking of that forbidden tree would have come to Genesis 19? The earth has been destroyed once, and you have homosexuality and incest.

In Genesis 26, there is famine, and more lying. In chapter 27, there is deception. In chapter 29, there is betrayal and deception. In chapter 30, there is rage, adultery, more polygamy. In chapter 31, there is deception, theft, idolatry, anger, ruthlessness, hatred within a family, In

chapter 34, there is rape, mass murder, looting. In chapter 35, idolatry. In chapter 37, you have family jealousy, hatred, and betrayal, as well as selling a sibling into slavery, and you have harlotry. On and on it goes throughout the old testament, such things as sexual defilement, genocide upon genocide, child sacrifice, cannibalism. All of this we find in the book of Genesis. It simply tells us how sin progresses.

All through the book of Genesis and the old testament, you read of horrific crimes and cruelties, much disease, death, plague upon plague, all as a consequence of sin. That is quite a change from, *"And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, [it was] very good."*

If you go on from the end of the first two chapters of Genesis, the old testament is an illustration of good gone bad. In Romans 8:22, Paul writes, *"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."* Everything you read of in the book of Genesis, has been continuing up to this present time. Sin continues to progress. The world is anything but good, and it has been anything but good throughout its history. Throughout the history of civilization, you see the cycle of sin, of rise and fall.

Evolutionists, the so-called "progressives" of our day, live under the delusion that man is getting better. The Bible refutes that over and over. Even if the progressives do not believe the Bible, history and our present day, refutes over and over that man is getting better. He is not. The idea of evolution is that man starts from simplicity and mutates upward. That is totally false. Man began at the top and has been falling ever since. The first 3 chapters of Genesis make that very plain and it is illustrated throughout the word of God and world history.

The world is filled with evil and creation and mankind are in a downward plunge. Romans 8:22, says, *"... the whole creation groaneth and travaileth [That means it is intense and it is continual.] in pain together until now."* The entire creation, in every aspect, is collectively suffering due to sin. Everybody groans under the decay that sin causes. It

is a massive change, a complete reversal from where we began. Romans 5:12 says, "*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, [In other words, sin invaded the world. The result...] and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:*"

While society continues to get worse and worse, continues in their downward plunge, becoming more and more ensnared in the abyss of darkness, the physiological and sociological evolutionists continue on in their delusion and continue to propagate the lie that man is getting better. "Man is so much smarter today than he used to be." I highly doubt it and would argue that point, but let's say it is so, that man is more intelligent than in the past. What has man's intelligence brought other than more destruction and decay. We are in that cycle.

Man has a sin problem, and no one wants to address the problem man has. The only answer to a sin problem is Jesus Christ. Neither politics or laws can fix the sin problem. Jesus Christ fixes the sin problem. Today, man does not like to hear about sin, nor does man want to believe in a God that has wrath, a God that displays His wrath.

Chapter 3

The Wrath of God

Chapter 3 - The Wrath of God, Part 1

In understanding Romans 1:18-32, you need to understand the nature of sin and the wrath of God. I want to focus on the wrath of God. Romans 1:18, says, "*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven [In other words, unveiled, displayed.] against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*" There is a general, two fold statement in this verse, one regarding sin, the other regarding God's anger, God's wrath toward sin. From verse 18 on, Paul is developing this thought of sin and the wrath of God through the first eleven chapters of the book of Romans, and you read a biblical explanation of the history of humanity. Romans 1:18-32, is also a biblical explanation of the history of humanity, as well as an explanation of why things are the way they are.

Paul's development of verse 18 also reveals the futility of man to resolve the problem of sin. Man can deal with the symptoms of a sinful nature, but man can not fix the sinful nature of man. In verse 16, Paul makes a general statement about the gospel of Christ. He says, "*.... it is the power of God unto salvation*" Then in verse 17 and 18, he reveals two matters in the gospel that relate to God. The gospel reveals the standard, which is the righteousness of God and the righteousness we need, and the wrath of God. So, you have the righteousness of God and the wrath of God, neither of which are very popular subjects, certainly not in the secular world, and not much more in the overall religious world. Those are not subjects that are well received. When you get right down to it, in general, the secular and the religious world resolutely hate and object to those two aspects of God, His righteousness and His wrath.

Why does man hate, why does man reject God's righteousness and God's wrath? The righteousness manifests that man falls short of God. Man hates that and generally hates to hear that he has fallen short of God's standards. What do they try to do? They try to remove that standard and in place of it create their own standard by which they view themselves as acceptable.

Chapter 3 - The Wrath of God, Part 1

The subject of the wrath of God manifests that God is displeased with man. Man does not like that either. Overall, even the religious world does not like the fact that God is displeased with man. That is how you get this, "God loves everybody. God accepts everybody." No, He doesn't.

The righteousness of God and the wrath of God, reveal that God is superior to and over man. Man is opposed to such a notion and wants a god that they can mold into their lifestyle. They do not have any problem with a god that they can mold. That is one of the reasons why you have the "megachurch" today.

The revelation of the righteousness and wrath of God, reveal the facts that God has set boundaries and there are consequences for going against God. Man does not like that God has boundaries and you are to walk within those boundaries. Man likes to set his own boundaries, but really does not want boundaries. Man does not like that fact there are consequences for going against God. People will make statements that, "My god isn't your God." That is very true, because they have created their own god in their minds. Because God has set boundaries and there are consequences for going against God. The wrath and the righteousness of God reveal that man is accountable to God. Man does not like that and does not want to be held accountable to God.

The righteousness of God and the wrath of God are both part of and involved in the gospel. God has a standard and there are consequences of going against that standard. That is a brief summary of the righteousness and the wrath of God.

The gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, is the good news of God's provision of righteousness for those who have none and have no means of achieving God's righteousness. Man does not have God's righteousness and man can not achieve it. That is where the gospel comes in.

In focusing upon the wrath of God you will learn that it is a very dominant theme throughout the word of God. The wrath of God implies that something is wrong,

something is contrary, and something is opposed to the nature of God and that God is not pleased. Man does not like that implication. You can not deal with the subject of God's wrath without dealing with the subject of God's anger. Man does not want to think of God's anger, nor wants a God who is capable of anger. You also have to consider God's hatred when dealing with His wrath. These things are brought out in the word of God. "*The wrath of God*", those four words, contain a lot.

The wrath of God shows something is wrong, something is contrary, something is opposed to the nature of God and before there can be a remedy, there has to be a diagnosis, you have to know what is wrong. What is wrong is man has sinned. The remedy is the gospel, the power of God unto salvation.

The subject of the wrath of God is really a very fitting introduction to God's grace. The reason we need God's grace is because there is sin, because there is such a thing as the wrath of God. Sin and the wrath of God is what makes God's grace so amazing. You can not preach grace without implying or preaching sin. That is why grace is needed.

If you're going to rightly consider the subject of the wrath of God, you must consider the nature of God, the attributes of God. What we mean by the attributes of God is the characteristics that belong to God, characteristics that you can attribute to God, and therefore, are attributes of God. Of the things that can be attributed to God, wrath is one of them. How do we know wrath can be attributed to God? Because of that statement, "*.... the wrath of God.*"

Attributes are very distinguishable characteristics of God's nature. They are not only characteristics of His nature, they are inseparable from Him. God can not deny Himself. You remove the attributes, you do not have a God. These attributes are inseparable from God and include His wrath. They are qualities of His being. It is who God is. They are peculiarities that constitute the very nature, the very character of God.

What are these attributes? You have His eternity. You can not put God in "time". If you do, you do not have a God. Infinity is an attribute of God. He is unsearchable. Immutability is an attribute of God and simply means God does not change. We have said many times, in all change there is either a change to the worse or a change to the better. But, if you say that God changes, and changes to the worse, that is a problem. If God changes to the better, then He is not perfect now. It is just common sense. Immutability belongs to God. Sovereignty is an attribute of God which basically sums up all of His attributes. You remove the sovereignty of God, you have no God. People hate the doctrine of the sovereignty of God, they can't hardly stand it, and hate the very mention of the word. In their ignorance they will make all kinds of false accusations concerning those who teach the sovereignty of God. They have no understanding of God's sovereignty.

Omnipresence is an attribute of God and it means more than God is everywhere; He is everywhere at the same time, without multiplication, without division. That is amazing! Omnipotence is an attribute of God, which describes His power. It means He is all powerful, almighty. You have His attribute of omniscience. He is all knowing, all wise. If something takes God by surprise, the very word *surprise*, implies He did not know. To use the word surprise in reference to God is blasphemy. It is a denial of the omniscience of God. God knows everything you and I will do and He knows what we would have done had He not restrained us from doing it. He knows all.

The Bible reveals what God wants us to know. Deuteronomy 29:29, says, "*The secret [things belong] unto the LORD*" The lesson that we must learn, that we need to realize is there are things we can not explain. God knows why those things belong to Him and He does not reveal them to us for our benefit. What is revealed is a very, very small portion of God's total knowledge.

We have to have some understanding of God's attributes if we are going to understand the wrath of God.

Chapter 3 - The Wrath of God, Part 2

In Romans 1:17-18, mention is made of the righteousness of God and the wrath of God. The righteousness of God shows that there is a standard and that most people do not meet God's standard, which is offensive to them. The wrath of God also shows that we are accountable to the Lord.

Wrath is one of several attributes of God. You do not hear a lot about some important truths you must remember when we consider the wrath of God. I believe that in all the attributes and characteristics of God, we have to consider these two with all the other attributes of God; God is sovereign and God is Holy. He is sovereign and He is holy in everything He does. No one attribute does away with God's sovereignty or His holiness. No matter what attribute you are considering, including God's wrath, you must consider it within the realm of that fact that God is sovereign. Being sovereign means He is above and overall, He possesses all dominion, He is superior. In all of His attributes, He is sovereign, which means that God is God and has a right to display His wrath. It is the right of God.

Sovereignty means that none can defeat His councils, thwart His purposes, or overthrow His will. Sovereignty characterizes the whole being of God. It shows us that God is sovereign in the exercise of all His attributes. Most do not have any problem with "God is love". That is an attribute of God and people do not have any problem with that. But, when you speak of God's anger, God's wrath, now, they have a problem. God is sovereign in whom He loves and He is sovereign when He displays His wrath upon whomever He displays His wrath. The truth is we all deserve the wrath of God and it is His right to pour out His wrath wherever, on whomever, and whenever He pleases. He governs all, therefore He can do just as He pleases.

You take whatever other attribute you want to consider, then consider it in the light of sovereignty and holiness. Whatever diminishes or undermines the sovereignty of God, by any degree, it can not be true and there is error. If you get to thinking about an attribute and it

begins to undermine the sovereignty of God, you are thinking erroneously. When you are studying the characteristics of God, it is a good measurement to keep in mind that God is sovereign and any attribute that undermines that, you are looking at it incorrectly. Any doctrine that undermines the sovereignty of God, you are looking at it incorrectly.

No matter what attribute is under consideration, God is holy, which means God is perfect. Wrath is not a flaw in God, because God is perfect and has no flaws. You and I can display wrath and be in sin in doing so. That is not so with God, because God is holy. Every time, God displays His wrath, He does so in holiness. I would go as far as to say He does so because He is holy. He is perfectly pure, even when He displays His wrath. People will ask, "You mean when God sent the flood and killed all those people, that He was pure in doing so?" Absolutely! You have a real problem if you think He wasn't, because then you have denied God. He was sinless, He was righteous. People will say all the time, "I don't understand how God could." You need to get that thought out of your mind completely. Whatever God does, He does so out of purity and righteousness. When God destroyed the world with the flood, He was just in doing so. When God sent fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah, killing all those people, He was just in doing so.

When you think about God's attributes of anger and hatred, a lot of people would like to think that He is not capable of such. They need to read their Bibles. Anger and hatred are attributes of God. The Bible teaches that God possesses hatred. "How could a loving God be hateful?" Because He is sovereign, He is holy. Whatever He does is sovereign and holy. There is a fine line between love and hatred. I do not think you can possess love without possessing hatred. If you love God, then you hate sin. If you love a child, you hate what is going to destroy that child. Where there is love, there is also hate. It is no different with God. In the attributes of His anger and hatred there is His wrath. To me, His wrath is the outward display of His anger.

Chapter 3 - The Wrath of God, Part 2

The religious world surely struggles with these things, but you should not. The anger and the hatred of God are exercised in sovereignty and in holiness. They are not blots in the character of God.

When you study this wrath of God, you learn the Bible has more to say about God's wrath than most people realize. The fact of the wrath of God is stated in Romans 1:18, "*For the wrath of God*" A very important word in that statement is "of". The wrath OF God. That little word speaks of the fact that this wrath is a characteristic of God. It is the wrath OF God. That means it is a distinctive quality of God. The little word OF means that it is something that belongs to God. The wrath OF God. Wrath belongs to God.

That little preposition "of" expresses that there is a relationship between wrath and God. The religious world would like to think that those are two completely separate things. There are a bunch of verses you can read, all of which will have the word wrath referring to God in them. What those verses do is remind you that God is a God of wrath. It can not be denied.

They also show you some truths concerning this wrath of God. First of all, take that statement, "the wrath of God." It occurs throughout the word of God. Psalms 78:31, begins, "*The wrath of God*" People say, "Well, perhaps God has wrath, but He keeps that to Himself." That is not what the Bible teaches. I believe the very word wrath shows that He does not keep it to Himself. It is a display of His anger. "*The wrath of God came upon them*" He sent it by His sovereignty. It came upon them, "*.... and slew*" It killed. The wrath of God can kill.

In John 3:36, you read, "*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son [meaning the unsaved.] shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. [Him refers to the one who believes not.]*" He or she is under the wrath of God. That wrath is displayed in various ways. Ephesians 5:6, says, "*Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things [Meaning because of vain words ...] cometh the wrath of God*

upon the children of disobedience." If there is disobedience there has to be a standard. The righteousness of God is the standard. The wrath is revealed against disobedience. Colossians 3:6, declares, *"For which things' [Referring back to verse 5.] sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:"* Revelations 14:10, *"The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, [Again, the wrath of God.] which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; [Or, His anger.] and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angles, and the presence of the Lamb."* You see that phrase, the wrath of God several times in the book of Revelations.

You also read of the wrath of the LORD, where "LORD" means "Jehovah". All of these verses show that sometimes this wrath is displayed against His own people and sometimes it is displayed against lost man. God, because He is God, has the right to pour His wrath on whomever He pleases and He is correct in doing so.

In Numbers 11:33, you read the phrase, "the wrath of the LORD", *"And while the flesh [was] yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people,"* Wrath is something that can be kindled. As a result, *"... the LORD smote the people with a very great plague."* God still does this same thing. Not every disease or bad thing comes as the result of the wrath of God, but many do. Job, of course, would be the example of that. But many bad things do happen because of the wrath of God, the wrath of the LORD.

In 2nd Kings 22:13, reading the phrase, "the wrath of the LORD", *"... for great [is] the wrath of the LORD [Notice again, that it is kindled] that is kindled against us, because our fathers ..."* You can experience the wrath of God because of a sin of your father's, past generations. You say, 'That's not fair.' Be careful. God is sovereign and holy. As I have said before, you had better be thankful God is not fair. Because if God was fair, none of us would have a chance. To continue, *"...because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto*

all that which is written concerning us." In other words, the wrath of God, that results from the sin of past generations, can be delayed.

2nd Chronicles 12:12 says, *"And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him, [God in His sovereignty has the right to send His wrath or to pull it back.] that he would not destroy [him] altogether: and also in Judah things went well."*

In 2nd Chronicles 29:8 you will read, *"Wherefore the wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to trouble,"* Trouble can be because of the wrath of the LORD. Not necessarily every time you get into trouble, is it the wrath of the LORD. It could simply be a trial to test or teach. But, it could be the wrath of the Lord.

Then in 2nd Chronicles 32:26 it says, *"... so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah."* Even when the wrath of the LORD does not come, we deserve it. How thankful we ought to be when the wrath of the LORD does not come. You think of a nation, the United States, under the wrath of God. There is no doubt in my mind, none at all, that this nation is under the wrath of God. Romans 1 will prove that. It has taken a long time to get to where we are. God could have poured His wrath down at the beginning. We were deserving of such at the very beginning. Wherever you see the wrath of God, long suffering precedes it. A lot has gone on before you get to the wrath of the LORD being poured down upon us.

2nd Chronicles 36:16 goes on to say, *"But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people"* It goes without saying that God's wrath is against whoever the object of that wrath is. Notice what it says, *"... the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till [there was] no remedy."* You get to a point where there is no remedy for God's wrath.

I believe there is a line for every individual, for every nation, at which point, when you cross that line, there is no remedy. Simply put, it means you are not coming back to

God. God has a right to do that. This is where I believe we are as a nation. It is why I think people have seriously miscalculated, when they say, "All we have to do is vote different people into office." You do not understand the wrath of the LORD. I believe we have come to the point where there is no remedy. It is not going to get better. It is only going to get worse. I know that upsets people, but you would have a hard time convincing me otherwise.

In Psalms 106:40, we find, "*Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.*" That is quite a statement. It is talking about His own people. God abhorred his own people.

There are other verses where you read that phrase, "the wrath of the LORD". I believe they prove the point that all through the scriptures you read of the wrath of God and are reminded that God is a God of wrath. While He is a God of love, He is also a God of wrath. He is sovereign and holy in His love and likewise in His wrath.

Chapter 3 - The Wrath of God, Part 3

We see in Romans 1:17-18, two realities. One is in verse 17, the righteousness of God that is revealed. Then in verse 18, there is the wrath of God, also revealed, displayed, manifested. Those two facts; the righteousness of God, the wrath of God; are offensive to lost man. The righteousness of God declares God has a standard and lost man does not like that. The wrath of God declares that man is accountable, because he comes short of God's righteousness and man does not like to think about the wrath of God.

When you look at all the things that make up God's "person", there are two attributes, His sovereignty and holiness, that you must always remember when considering the particular attributes of His wrath, His anger and His hatred. His anger and hatred are closely related and centered upon His sovereignty and His holiness. When we think of wrath or anger, we tend to give it a bad connotation. That can not be so with God. God is holy, God is perfect. When God is angry, it is perfect anger. When God pours out His wrath, which is the display of His anger, it is a perfect anger. When God hates, it is a perfect hatred. It is sovereign. That means that God has the right to be angry, He has the right to hate, He has the right to pour out His wrath, just as much as He has the right to love and choose whom He loves.

Looking at the phrase, "*the wrath of God*", that little preposition "*of*" expresses a relationship between wrath and God. Wrath belongs to God. You can find many, many verses containing the phrase, "*the wrath of God*", "*the wrath of the LORD*", "*Thy wrath*," "*His wrath*," "*My wrath*". I want to look at some of those verses, and in doing so, establish the fact of the wrath of God. Romans 1 is the display of the wrath of the LORD.

Having already studied the phrases, "*the wrath of God*" and "*the wrath of the LORD*", you begin to learn some things about God's wrath, some characteristics of it, and that God's wrath is a fact.

A lot of God's people have the notion that if God pours out His wrath upon you, all you have to do is repent and He will then withdraw that wrath. You can not prove

that from scripture, in fact we could prove otherwise. However, people use this notion as a “fire escape”. You can read where there are times when man repents and God withholds His wrath. But there are also times when man repents and God's wrath is still there. God is sovereign, God is holy, and He can display His wrath however He pleases.

Midway through Numbers 11:33, you read that phrase, *“the wrath of the LORD”*. *“.... the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people,”* His wrath was kindled, not just sudden. It was kindled over a period of time. In 2nd Kings 22:13, again, about halfway through the verse you find, *“.... for great [is] the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book,”* Because of the sin of those who went before us, our “fathers”, God's wrath can be experienced. People will say that it is not right, but God is holy and sovereign. You can not complain about God's display of His wrath.

In 2nd Chronicles 12:12, there is an example of someone repenting and God's wrath being withdrawn. *“And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him, that he would not destroy [him] altogether: [Meaning completely.] and also in Judah things went well.”* Then in chapter 29:8, *“Wherefore the wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to trouble,”* Trouble is associated with wrath, which does not mean that every time there is trouble, it is an evidence of God's wrath. Nevertheless, when God does display His wrath, there is trouble. In 2nd Chronicles 32:26, you will read again of God withdrawing His wrath, restraining His wrath in the latter part of the verse. *“.... the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah.”* In chapter 34:21, midway through it says, *“.... for great [is] the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, [Notice, again, why.] because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD,”* You and I can sin and perhaps God's wrath is not poured down upon us. However, because of our sin, God's wrath might be poured down upon the next generation,

which some will say is not fair. But God is holy, God is perfect.

In 2nd Chronicles 36:16, in the latter part of the verse it says, *".... until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till [there was] no remedy."* Obviously there are varying degrees of God's wrath. He does not pour it out the same way every single time, nor to the same degree every single time. However, there is a degree of God's wrath for which there is no remedy, no turning back, no way to escape it, and it is going to continue on.

In Psalms 106:40, it says, *"Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people,"* Again, the word kindled is used. The wrath of God didn't just happen at once, but over a period of time. God is long suffering.

Along with the two phrases "the wrath of God" and "the wrath of the LORD", throughout the scriptures, you also find people speaking of *"Thy wrath"*, referring to God's wrath. In Exodus 15:7, it talks about the greatness of His excellency in overthrowing the Egyptians. Then you read, *".... thou sentest forth thy wrath, [which] consumed them."* There are various degrees of God's wrath, there are various displays of God's wrath. Not all the time does God's wrath consume but sometimes it does. It is "Thy wrath".

In Job 40:11, you read of *".... the rage of thy wrath:"* God's rage, which would be His anger, is connected with His Wrath. In Psalm 38:1, David is praying, *"O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath:"* We are rebuked of the LORD many times with His wrath. It ought to be our prayer that He not rebuke us in His wrath. There is a big difference in the LORD rebuking us in His wrath and rebuking us in His love. *".... neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure."* The Lord's chastening has the idea of correction. While we need rebuke and correction, we ought to pray that it not be in wrath or hot displeasure, which shows a greater degree of displeasure.

In Psalms 88:7 *"Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted [me] with all thy waves. Selah."* This is again, "Thy Wrath" and also indicated is a degree of God's wrath. *"Thy wrath lieth hard upon me and thou has afflicted*

me." Affliction can be a result of God's wrath, but not all affliction, as the book of Job plainly teaches, can be attributed to the wrath of God.

Psalms 89:46, *"How long, LORD? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?"* Here you read that His wrath is manifest in that it seems God has withdrawn. This is what we have in Romans 1, this aspect of God's wrath, where there is a withdrawing of the Lord.

In Psalm 90:7, *"For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled."* Again, the use of the phrase, *"Thy wrath"*. We have *"the wrath of God"*, *"the wrath of the LORD"*, and *"thy wrath"*. What you are finding by looking at all of these verses is that wrath is a fact, it is real, and it is prevalent throughout the word of God.

You also read of *"His wrath."* In Deuteronomy 29:23, in the last part of the verse says, *"... the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath:"* There is a connection between His anger and His wrath. Wherever there is God's wrath, there is God's anger as well.

In Job 16, Job says, *"He teareth [me] in his wrath,"* His wrath is sovereign, holy, and absolutely perfect. In chapter 19:11, you read, *"He hath also kindled his wrath against me, and he counteth me unto him as [one of] his enemies."* This speaks of the degree of the wrath. Job felt that he had become an enemy of the Lord, or that the Lord had become his enemy. That is part of His wrath. Then in Job 20:23, *"[When] he is about to fill his belly, [God] shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him,"* Again, it says *"His wrath"* and the fury of His wrath. In verse 28, *"The increase of his house shall depart, [and his goods] shall flow away in the day of his wrath."*

Throughout the old testament, where you read of *"the day of God's wrath."* There is a special time of the wrath of God.

In Job 32:2, again, you read, *"Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu"* Elihu is giving his opinion as to why God's wrath was upon Job. His wrath was kindled because he justified himself rather than his God. In verse 3, *"....*

against his three friends was his wrath kindled," Verse 5, "When Elihu saw that [there was] no answer in the mouth of [these] three men, then his wrath was kindled." Not God's wrath, but Elihu's wrath.

Psalm 2:5 we read, *"Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath,"* God speaks in His wrath. *".... and vex them in his sore displeasure."* There is a connection between displeasure and wrath. In verse 12, we are exhorted, *"Kiss the Son, [That is Jesus Christ.] lest he be angry, and ye perish [from] the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little."* Even the words "a little", tells us that there are degrees of God's wrath. Even a little of God's wrath is a very, very serious situation.

Psalms 21:9, declares, *".... the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them."* His wrath. Psalms 78:38, says, *"But he, [being] full of compassion, forgave [their] iniquity, [People do not have any problem with that.] and destroyed [them] not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, [Many times God does turn His anger away, not only from His people, but those who are not His people.] and did not stir up all his wrath."* That is the mercy of God, which is another thing to consider when you think about His wrath. Unless God completely destroys, like the world with the flood or as He did with Sodom and Gomorrah, there is always a degree of mercy in His wrath. No matter what the degree of the wrath of God that is poured out upon an individual, it is less than they deserve. There is mercy.

The Bible also has verses where God speaks of *"My Wrath"*. In all these other cases, man is speaking about God's wrath. But, many times throughout the old testament, God says, *"My wrath"*. The LORD acknowledges that wrath is a part of His character. The world does not want a God that displays wrath, but rather a god that is all loving, all approving. If that were the case, God would not be holy. But God is holy and therefore, He hates sin and He displays His wrath. In the following verses, we will see the wrath of God is real, it is a biblical fact.

Chapter 3 - The Wrath of God, Part 3

In Exodus 22:24, *"And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; [This is God speaking.] and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless."* God's wrath is very serious. In chapter 32:10, God is speaking to Moses. Moses is praying for the people that God would have mercy upon them and He gives Moses this answer, *"Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation."* That is God's right. He has a right to give life, take life, to create, and to consume. That is entirely God's right, because He is sovereign. When He does consume, He never does so outside of His holiness. He never does anything outside of His holiness, because if He did, that would be a blemish on the character of God. If you have a blemish, then you do not have a God. God must be holy.

In Psalms 95:11, *"Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest."* God is talking about a generation of the children of Israel that He swore in His wrath He would not allow them to do something.

You see that phrase "my wrath" in Isaiah and many many times throughout the book of Ezekiel as well. All of those verses that we have looked at here, declare this fact; wrath belongs to God. Wrath is an attribute of God.

In Romans 1:18 Paul speaks of the wrath of God. Then after he mentioned it there in verse 18, he goes on to mention it ten more times in the book of Romans. In Romans 2:5, *"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath [What a scary thing, to treasure up unto yourself, wrath.] against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;"* God's judgment, which also can be a display of His wrath, an aspect of His wrath, is always righteous. In verse 8, *"But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,"* You can go on throughout the book of Romans, and you see this wrath of God.

Wrath is an attribute of God, just as much as any

other attribute. In fact, if wrath did not belong to God, that would be a blemish upon His person. If God was void of wrath, void of anger, void of hatred, it would mean that He would be indifferent towards sin. That would be a blemish upon His holiness. God can not be indifferent toward sin, even the sin of you and I that are saved, which is sin that has been forgiven, God has not been indifferent toward that sin. He displayed His wrath upon His son for that sin. Wrath is an absolute necessity to God. If He did not possess wrath, then He would be indifferent towards sin.

There is such a thing as the severity of God. He is infinitely holy and therefore possesses severity. Romans 11:22 says, "*Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: [The goodness and the severity of God are two different things entirely.] on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness,*" Here you read of severity and goodness being applied to different groups. Note also that goodness is grace, or to use a different word, mercy.

Hebrews 12:29 declares, "*For our God [is] a consuming fire.*" The Bible teaches God is love, but also teaches that God is a consuming fire, which means that God is a God of anger and displeasure, a God of wrath. We read in the latter part of Hebrews 10, that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, speaking of God's wrath, of God's severity.

We have a great God and should never deny a single one of His attributes. God's wrath is real, it is a fact, and it belongs to Him. Whenever we see His wrath displayed, it is absolutely free from sin because God is holy, and He has the right to pour down His wrath wherever and upon whomever He pleases.

When studying the subject of the wrath of God mentioned in Romans 1:18, you will learn throughout the scriptures that wrath is attributed to God. You can read the phrases, "*the wrath of God*" and "*the wrath of the LORD*". There are verses with God's people referring to "*Thy wrath*", "*His wrath*", and then verses where God is saying, "*My wrath*".

Paul writes in Romans 1:16-17 of the Gospel, which is the solution or the remedy for what follows in verses 18-32. After Paul mentions the wrath of God in Romans 1:18, he goes on to mention it about ten more times throughout the book of Romans. Without a doubt, wrath is an attribute, a characteristic of God, as much as any other attribute. People have a tendency to select certain attributes and dwell on those. We ought to dwell on all the attributes of God.

When you consider His wrath, you need to realize it is not like the wrath of man. Because God is holy, everything He does in all of His attributes is holy and perfect. The truth is if wrath did not belong to God, it would be a blemish upon His person, a blemish on His holiness. God's wrath tells us that He can not be indifferent towards sin. When He forgives us of our sin, He is not indifferent towards sin. Jesus Christ had to pay the price of those sins because God is *not* indifferent towards sin.

There is the goodness and the severity of God. He is infinitely holy and therefore He possesses a severity towards sin. Romans 11:22, says, "*Behold therefore the goodness [A lot of people would like to stop right here, but it goes on ...] and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness,*" The only reason severity does not fall upon us is because God is gracious and merciful. Instead of severity falling upon us, goodness is bestowed upon us. That's grace.

It is stated in Hebrews 12:29, "*For our God is a consuming fire.*" God as a consuming power speaks of His wrath, His sovereignty. He can consume whomever, whenever He wants to. Our God is a consuming fire and He

hates sin, but He is also long suffering. He does not strike with His severity the very moment a person sins. He is long suffering. That is part of His goodness.

What is the wrath of God? In studying the scriptures you can establish that wrath belongs to God. You would have to deny a lot of scripture to deny the wrath of God. Romans 1:18, says God's wrath is revealed from heaven. It is not something that God keeps within Himself, but rather He reveals, or unveils it, and it is made known.

People fail to see, or to recognize, when God pours down His wrath. There are times when you and I have seen His wrath is very obvious. There are things that happen all over the world, which to me are very obviously the wrath of God. However, news casters as well as religious people will immediately dismiss it, saying that God had nothing to do with it. God has everything to do with something like that.

The wrath of God is displayed. The fact that God possesses wrath and He manifests it, that it is exhibited, was first revealed when He cast Lucifer and a third of the angels out of heaven. That was the wrath of God. The religious world does not have too much problem with accepting God's wrath upon Lucifer and the fallen angels. The next display would be in the garden of Eden.

God displays His wrath, but what is this wrath? It has a lot to do with His holiness. It is His holiness that causes Him to hate sin, and the wrath of God is the holiness of God stirred against sin.

When you consider God's wrath, there are some other attributes that must be included in it. Though these attributes are mentioned with and are part of the wrath of God, I believe they are also separate. One such attribute that is part of God's wrath is anger. When you think of anger, you might think of someone losing their temper. That is not how you view anger when it comes to God. God is holy, God is perfect, and God never, ever loses control of Himself. Could you imagine if God were to lose control of His anger? Nothing would be left. Yet, anger is part of God's wrath.

Throughout scripture, you read of anger and wrath

being attributed to God, and sometimes they signify the same thing. However, most of the time anger and wrath are distinguished from each other. It seems to me when you study the subjects of God's anger and wrath, wrath is the display of His anger. To humans like you and I, anger is a feeling and our wrath is the display of that feeling. But, because God is holy, He hates sin, He is angry at sin, and His wrath is the display of His anger, His hatred of sin. The religious world does not want to think of anger and God, but they would have to deny a lot of scripture to deny that God possesses anger. It is a part of His character and centers around His holiness and His sovereignty.

The word of God attributes anger to God, which is anger toward the wicked, as well as His own people. You read in Job 9:13, "*[If] God will not withdraw his anger,*" This verse plainly says it is His anger, God's anger. God is in control of it and can withdraw His anger. That's His prerogative. He is sovereign.

In Psalm 7:11, "*God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry [with the wicked] every day.*" Here you read that God is angry with the wicked everyday. God is eternal, yet everyday, God is angry. You had better rejoice that He is long suffering, because everyday God is angry with the wicked. Nevertheless, that same God sends rain on the crops of the wicked and supplies the needs of the wicked. Still, God is angry with the wicked everyday. What else can "God is angry with the wicked everyday" mean? Some will say that does not mean what it says. Well, what does it mean if it does not mean that God is angry with the wicked everyday?

In Psalm 21:8-9, the psalmist, talking to God, says, "*Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee. Thou shalt make them [Referring to His enemies, those that hate Him.] as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: [God is angry everyday, but now we see a time of His anger, which would be the display of His anger, His wrath.] the LORD shall swallow them up [That is the display of His anger, His wrath.] in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.*" From these verses, you

learn there is a **time** of God's anger. He is angry with the wicked everyday. There is not a time when he is not angry with the wicked. But this **time** of God's anger in Psalm 21:8-9, is the display of His anger.

Man takes advantage of the long suffering of God. Man, as well as God's people will say, "Well, if I was wrong, God would have stopped me right then." You do not understand God at all if you believe that. God does not stop us immediately every time we get out of line. That is not how God operates. People misunderstand the long suffering of God, thinking it is God's approval upon that which is wrong. God is holy, He does not approve of wrong.

Psalms 76:7, *"Thou, [even] thou, [art] to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?"* Again, God's angry everyday, and this verse is obviously talking about the display of His anger. It is equating anger with wrath, when God is angry.

Psalms 78:49-51, *"He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger; [This shows degrees of anger. The psalmist lumps several things together.] wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels [among them]. [Those are evil spirits He sends among them.] He made a way to his anger; [He displayed His anger.] he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence; And smote all the firstborn in Egypt;"* That was the anger of God, the wrath of God. People say, "Well the first born seems to be the innocent party." There is no innocent party before God. "Why would God strike the first born?" God is sovereign and can do whatever He pleases. That includes the display of His anger. It was God's anger that, *".... smote all the firstborn in Egypt; the chief of [their] strength in the tabernacles of Ham:"*

In Psalms 90:7, the psalmist is referring to God's people, *"For we are consumed [Not outwardly, of course.] by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled."* Consumed and troubled by the anger and wrath of God. Verse 11, *"Who knoweth the power of thine anger?"* You and I have no experience with perfect holiness. We can not fully

comprehend the anger of perfect holiness against sin. Who can stand, who can know the power of His anger. God does not always display the power of His anger. "... *even according to thy fear, [so is] thy wrath.*"

You read in Psalms 103:8, "*The LORD [is] merciful and gracious, [People do not have a problem with that part.] slow to anger, [He is angry with the wicked everyday, so this is a display of His anger.] and plenteous in mercy.*" Because He is merciful, because He is gracious, He is slow to anger, which means He is long suffering, also implies there is a point, which is God's prerogative, as to when He displays His anger. To put it another way, you might be able to go further in sin before God strikes. That is God's prerogative.

Look at Jeremiah 7:20. "*Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, [The fury of His anger being poured out is the display of anger, which is wrath. There is a connection between anger and wrath.] upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.*" That is the wrath of God.

When there is a tornado, a hurricane, an earthquake, or a volcano eruption, you wonder if that is a direct result of the wrath of God. I do not know. Many times, without a doubt it is. Sometimes it may not be. You can not dismiss God's wrath when He brings devastation. It can not be dismissed.

In Nahum 1:3 you find, "*The LORD [is] slow to anger, and great in power, [Power is in the context of His anger. God is almighty and anger is an attribute of God.] and will not at all acquit [the wicked]: the LORD [hath] his way in the whirlwind [Whirlwind refers to a destructive wind. God has His way and reasons for sending the whirlwind.] and in the storm, and the clouds [are] the dust of his feet.*" We see God's anger in this verse.

From these verses, it seems like wrath is the display of God's anger. So, what is anger? Anger is the stirring of resentful displeasure. Strong antagonism comes by a sense

of injury or insult. God's holiness is insulted by sin. Being insulted, there is a stirring of God's anger. Mankind gets angry if they are insulted or feel they have been slighted. You get angered. You may not always display that anger, which would be your wrath. You get the stirring of displeasure.

Deuteronomy 29:23, you can read of God's anger and His wrath in the context of the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah. When God destroys a place, bringing desolation and destruction, that could very well be the wrath of God. God was angry with Sodom and Gomorrah and the overthrow was the outward display of His anger. God was long suffering toward Sodom and Gomorrah, in that He was slow to anger and slow to display His anger, even though all the while, He never approved of what was going on in those cities. Because God is long suffering, people begin to think that everything is fine, that God sees nothing wrong with what is happening. ***Do not forget, God is angry with the wicked everyday.*** That is why it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. It ought to cause great fear to think that God is angry with us. That is not something we ought to dismiss lightly. People get upset if they think that a person is angry with them. It is upsetting. But, to think that God might be angry with you and I ought to cause great concern in our souls. Thankfully, God is slow, God is long suffering, in displaying His anger.

People today want a god that lets them do whatever they please, is pleased with whatever they do, and approves of everything they do and think. That is not the God of scripture of the BIBLE. He is angry with the wicked everyday, eventually displaying that anger, **always** in complete control. God can send a storm that will cause great chaos, uprooting thousands of lives. Everything seems out of control, but He is in perfect control. Whatever destructive force God sends, is just a small part of what He can do. People say, "I've never seen it this bad." It can be worse. God's wrath is just a small display of what He can do. God sends those things just to remind us just how powerful He is.

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As you work through a study of the wrath of God you learn that it is the display of some of God's attributes. Romans 1:18 shows that His wrath is something that is displayed, or unveiled. God's anger is one of His attributes which is part of His wrath. You can not separate God's wrath and God's anger.

His anger is not like man's. There is no taint, no sin in His anger. It is a holy anger, and when you think of God's anger, you must put it in the context of God's holiness. His anger is the holiness of God stirred against sin. God's anger is the stirring of resentful displeasure, or strong antagonism displayed by God towards sin.

The Bible seems to speak of various degrees of God's anger, just as there are various degrees of our anger. In Deuteronomy 29:23, in the latter part of the verse, where it is taking about the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, it says, "*... the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath:*" The *overthrow* was an outward display and something everyone could see. The context of this display is in verse 24, where you read, "*Even all nations shall say, [Meaning having seen this overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, they shall say the following about it.] Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what [meaneth] the heat [Or the intensity, the fervor.] of this great anger?*" The words "heat" and "great" show a degree or intensity of His anger.

In Isaiah 30:30, take note of the phrases in this verse, "*... the lighting down of his arm,*" and "*[with] the flame of a devouring fire, [with] scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.*" All of that is the manifestation of what Isaiah says between those two phrases, "*... the indignation, [Meaning the contempt, the disgust, the abhorrence.] of [his] anger,*" With God's anger, there is contempt, there is disgust, and there is abhorrence. If a sin disgusts you and I, which it should, think of the degree of disgust of a perfect holy God. Isaiah 42:25, tells of God's anger towards Israel due to their sin, "*... the fury of his anger,*" **Fury** means

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the outrage of God's anger.

From these verses, you can understand that God's wrath appears to be the display of His anger. The adjectives used to describe His anger are, the heat, the intensity, the fervor of His anger. You know how your anger is intensified when mankind talks about killing the unborn. Can you imagine the heat, the intensity, the fervor in the anger of God when people put their stamp of approval upon abominations like homosexuality. Oh, the intensity and the fervor of God's anger. He does not display it all the time, but His anger is there. Then you read of the indignation, the contempt and the disgust of His anger, as well as the fury, the outrage of His anger. God's wrath is the display of His anger.

You know the wrath of God is unveiled against sin. God's wrath is the outward result of His anger, resulting in His judgment upon man. That's why all through the Bible we see wrath and anger. The Bible makes it very clear that wrath is a prerogative of God and something that He displays upon His enemies, His people, and nations. He has always done this, ever since Adam and Eve and before, when He cast Lucifer and the fallen angels out of heaven. You should also know that the Lord overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah in His anger and His wrath, along with the fury or the heat of this great anger. Fury and great anger of God should be a fearful thing for all of creation. Hebrews tells us that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Our God is a consuming fire.

In 2nd Kings 22:17, it says, "*Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger ...*" They may not knowingly be provoking God to anger, but it is a very dangerous thing to provoke God to anger. "*... with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched.*" There was no longer a remedy. At the point where God displayed His wrath, there was no turning back. It was too late to say,

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“Sorry.” Even though people will say that God is long suffering, there is a point when that long suffering ceases.

Then, you read in 2nd Kings 23:26, *“Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath,”* There are times when the LORD turns from His wrath, because He is long suffering. However, this verse tell us that He turned not. Many times, those that profess salvation, have this idea that if they repent after God starts what they see as punishment, He of course, has to stop His wrath. That is utterly false. The verse goes on to say, *“... wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, [That is against His own people.] because of all the provocations”* This verse shows the long suffering of God. His anger was not the result of just one sin. There were many, many provocations. You can be assured when God does pour His wrath down, it is not because of just one sin. There have been and are many provocations leading up to the display of the wrath of God.

Many that profess Christ and as a nation, think all we have to do is start to pray and God will turn His wrath from us. You will not see evidence of that in the scriptures. People and nations reach a point when God is not going to turn back His wrath. I believe that is what you have in Romans 1. In 2nd Chronicles 34:25, you read, *“Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, [His own people] that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and shall not be quenched.”* Man will not escape this pouring out of the wrath of God.

Psalms 21:7, says, *“Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.”* There is the destroying wrath of God. Sodom and Gomorrah, the flood, old testament history, world history, and the happenings in our own time show many, many examples of the destroying wrath of God. In Psalm 90:7, we read, *“For we are consumed by thine anger; and by thy wrath are we*

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troubled." Wrath can cause great trouble.

There is the fury and anger of the wrath of God. In Jeremiah 21:5 you will find, *"And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath."* Here is the fury and the anger, His displeasure, seen in His wrath. God can be displeased and still bless in spite of His displeasure, because He is long suffering. When He does that, it is a magnification of His long suffering and NOT His stamp of approval on whatever it is that is causing His displeasure. Psalms 2:5 says, *"Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure."* In Psalms 38:1 you read, *"O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure."* You also find in this verse there are degrees in His displeasure just as there is with you and I. We see that in the use of the word, "hot" displeasure.

The Bible attributes anger to God. When God displays that anger, it is His wrath. I do not believe God's wrath is in the category of His attributes, but rather it is the display of some of His attributes. It is a display of His holiness, His anger, and His hatred, which are attributed to Him. People will say, "How can a loving God hate?" I have some news for such people; wherever there is love, there is hate. It is comparable to the two sides of a coin. You love somebody and you hate everything that is going to harm that individual. You have love and hate together.

The very fact that God is a God of love, means that He also has hate, but it is not like man's hate. God's hatred is a perfect hatred, in which there is no taint, no misreading, no misjudgment on the part of God, no prejudice. It is a perfect hatred. In Psalms 5:5 you will read, *"The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity."* You know many times the foolish stand in the sight of God and He blesses them in spite of what they do, who they are. However, at the end of it all, the foolish shall

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not stand in God's sight. In verse 6, it says, *"Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man."* These verses show the hatred and the abhorrence of God.

In Zechariah 8:17, you find, *"And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these [are things] that I hate, saith the LORD."* In Malachi 1:2, he makes reference to Esau and Jacob, which takes you to Romans 9, where you learn that God hated Esau, and God loved Jacob.

Hatred is a part of God's wrath. God hates sin wherever it is and He *does* pour His wrath down upon sin. To hate is to loathe, to detest, to abhor as well as a hostility, enmity, and contempt. God has anger and He has hate. Is God only angry with those that He hates? No, because you have already read that God can be angry toward His people, but He does not hate them. It is just like you being angry towards someone that you love. But, it is also of the utmost importance that you realize God's anger, God's hatred is flawless, impeccable, pure.

It is said of Christ in Hebrews 1:9, *"Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; ..."* You can not love righteousness and not hate its opposite. If you do not hate its opposite, you do not love righteousness. God loves righteousness, and you and I are to love righteousness. Because God loves righteousness, He hates unrighteousness. He hates unrighteousness wherever it is found, in whomever it is found and so should you and I. All the people today, including God's people, are trying to figure out some way to accept unrighteousness. If you love righteousness, you hate, and you are not looking for a way to accept unrighteousness and bring it into the culture.

Make no mistake, God is a God of anger and of hatred, but His is a holy anger, a holy hatred. God's unveiling, the display of His hatred and anger is His wrath. The different degrees and aspects of His wrath means you

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can not put it in a single "box". Failure to understand these differences causes people to think this nation, culture, and society are not already under the wrath of God. Just as His love, grace, and mercy are real, so is His wrath real.

Many scriptures as well as Romans 1:18-32 establish the fact of the wrath of the LORD and that it is one of His attributes as much as any of the others. His sovereignty and His holiness completely describe God's person and His wrath is centered upon them. God's wrath includes several things that man finds inconceivable of God; anger, indignation, and hatred. Indignation is God's displeasure. God is not pleased with everything. He is displeased with anything that is contrary to Him, contrary to His person. Also, it is declared in the word of God that God hates. I have said before, people do not have a problem with God loving, but as there is love in God, there is also hate. It is just the other side of "the coin", so to speak.

Just as wrath, anger, indignation, and hatred are attributed to God, so is vengeance. Vengeance simply means revenge, retribution, retaliation. But, you must remember to consider vengeance in the context of God's holiness. God **IS** a God of vengeance, but it is a holy and perfect vengeance.

There are many verses in the BIBLE that tell of God's vengeance. In Deuteronomy 32:35 you read, *"To me [belongeth] vengeance, and recompence; [That is one truth. The following is another.] their foot shall slide in [due] time: [In due time means when God is ready and it is related to His vengeance.] for the day of their calamity [is] at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste."* Then in verse 41 it says, *"If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me."* He will reward them with retribution. In verse 43, *"Rejoice, O ye nations, [with] his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, [and] to his people."* In the same sentence, you have God's vengeance, and God's mercy. From verse 35, you learn, when God is ready, He will exercise these things. We must never lose sight of that fact.

Psalms 94:1, *"O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; [Vengeance belongs to God. The psalmist repeats*

that statement.] *O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.*" In the context of vengeance, he is asking God to judge. That is made even more clear in the following verse, Psalms 99:8, *"Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions."* Here again, we see God's vengeance, His mercy, and grace. He shows vengeance, and on the very same ones, He also forgives.

Isaiah 35:4, *"Say to them [that are] of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come [with] vengeance, [God will come with a vengeance.] [even] God [with] a recompence; [For His people.] he will come and save you."* He does that many times by taking vengeance upon His enemies.

Isaiah 47:3 *"Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet [thee as] a man."* You could go throughout the old testament and find many more verses that show vengeance belongs to God.

In the new testament, in Romans 3:5, *"But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? [Is] God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? ..."* In other words, is God wrong in taking vengeance? No. God is holy and every thing He does is holy.

Romans 12:19, *"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but [rather] give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance [is] mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."* Vengeance does not belong to us, it belongs to God. It is not a blot upon His character.

Another thing that you have to include in God's wrath is His justice, which is another attribute. True justice demands wrath. There is no true justice if there is no wrath. The fact that wrath belongs to God, is because God is just. We have no right to murmur or complain when God takes vengeance and no right to judge how He does so, and upon whom He takes vengeance.

The justice of God is plainly established in the word

of God. In Genesis 18:25, we read, *"That be far from thee to do after this manner; to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"* We have no grounds, no right to question the vengeance of God, the wrath of God, because God does what is right. This is what man does not understand when things happen that they can not explain. Disasters happen that they can not explain, and some preacher will get on the news and say, "Well, we know one thing, God didn't have anything to do with this." Who did, then? We know He rules everything.

In Deuteronomy 32:4, *"[He is] the Rock, his work [is] perfect: for all his ways [are] judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right [is] he."* Romans 2:2, *"But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things."* The justice of God makes it impossible for God to let sin go unpunished. It was the justice and the holiness of God that made it necessary for Christ to die in the place and instead of sinners. God does not overlook our sins. God is just, a God of justice. Sin must be punished. For you and I who are saved, it was punished in Christ in our stead. God's justice is inflexible. He never sets aside His justice. This is a part of His wrath.

It must always be remembered that God's wrath, anger, hatred, vengeance, indignation, displeasure, and justice is always consistent with His sovereignty. He has the right to do these because He is God. It is always consistent with His holiness. You read in Deuteronomy 32:39-41, *"See now that I, [even] I, [am] he, and [there is] no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; [People do not have a problem with God making alive, but He says, 'I kill as well'.] I wound, and I heal: [We see that He is contrasting death and life, wounding and healing. His hand is in both.] neither [is there any] that can deliver out of my hand. [This is His sovereignty, His omnipotence.] For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever. If I whet my glittering sword,*

and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me." He is God in all of that.

You never have to explain God. Do not fall into the trap where you feel you have to explain God to the ungodly, where you have to almost apologize for what God is doing. The wrath of God is just as much of divine perfection as any of His other attributes.

It should be very plain by now that the wrath of God is established by scripture. That raises the question, "What is the object of God's wrath?" What is it that God pours His wrath upon? If God so desired, He could pour His wrath on any imperfection in any of us and He would still be holy, because our imperfection is contrary to Him. Because God is gracious and merciful, He does not do that, and we are thankful that He does not. Romans 1 says, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven "against", but be sure of this; God does not reveal His wrath, show His wrath, pour down His wrath upon everything He could. None of us would be here if that were the case. That is where God's grace and mercy come in.

The wrath of God is a display of His detestation and abhorrence of everything that is contrary to Him. It is stated in Romans 1:18, *"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against [Or upon] all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;"* From this verse you learn God's wrath is **revealed** and it is **against** three things; ungodliness, unrighteousness (which means there is a difference between ungodliness and unrighteousness), and against men who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Paul then goes on in the following verses to dwell upon these three things.

Taking the word *ungodliness*, the prefix, "un", explains, or defines the word. The prefix "un" means "not", it means the reverse of something. So, what is *ungodliness*? It is "not godliness". *Ungodliness* is the reverse of godliness. Everyone knows that. Ungodliness is to be

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deprived of godliness. Everyone knows, ungodliness is the reverse of godliness and *UNrighteousness* is the reverse of that which is right.

God's wrath is revealed against ungodliness. In order to fully understand the word, you have to understand the meaning of godliness. Ungodliness is not godliness. You have to understand also that these three objects of God's wrath; ungodliness, unrighteousness, and men who hold the truth in unrighteousness; are a summary of what the wrath of God is revealed against.

Romans 1:18, says, "... *the wrath of God is revealed from heaven*" That has been so since the fall of Adam and Eve. His wrath is always being revealed somewhere. Throughout the scriptures, many, many, many times, wrath is attributed to God. It is a truth that the world does not like or wants to think about. God's wrath is something that is revealed, manifested, and displayed. It is the display of His detestation and abhorrence of that which is contrary to His person.

I started into the topic of *the objects of God's wrath* in the last lesson. Romans 1:18, says, "... *against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*" This verse shows the objects of God's wrath are threefold. There is ungodliness and there is unrighteousness. Most people make those two the same, however, they are not the same all through scriptures. Lastly, there are those who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

In the last lesson, we looked at ungodliness. Ungodliness is the reverse of godliness. Godliness is reverence while ungodliness is irreverence. Godliness is devotion towards God. Ungodliness is just the opposite. Godliness is inward as is ungodliness. Godliness is an attitude that involves God, an attitude toward God. Ungodliness is an attitude toward God as well. Godliness is the occupation of the heart with God. Ungodliness is, basically, oblivion to God. All ungodliness, which includes the absence of reverence and devotion toward God, goes even further to a contempt and disregard for God. It is really an attitude of disagreement with God, a reaction against God.

It is this ungodliness that is within men, that feeds the wicked activities of men, which leads us to unrighteousness. God displays His wrath against the inward ungodliness of mankind, which always displays itself in unrighteousness. To be right with God is to be in accord with God, to be in accord with God's standard, in accord with God Himself. Unrighteousness is just the opposite of that. Unrighteousness is anti right, against, opposed to what is right.

Unrighteousness shows itself in deeds. 1st John 5:17, summarized all unrighteousness as sin. It is a part of ungodliness and the result of ungodliness.

Notice in 2nd Thessalonians 2:10, "*And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness*" Unrighteousness deceives. There are those who commit unrighteous acts, are guilty of unrighteousness, that are so deceived they think it is right. They see nothing wrong and are very quick to defend, or try to defend, their unrighteousness. That is why they will say, "Well, so and so is doing it." Or, "Well, there's nothing wrong with it." They have already convinced or are trying to convince themselves of that. Unrighteousness is our deeds. It stems from ungodliness. God reveals His wrath against ungodliness and against unrighteousness. Unrighteousness is really a progression of ungodliness.

We now come to the third object of God's wrath, which is those "*who hold the truth in unrighteousness.*" Most would read that and say, "They believe unrighteousness to be truth." While that is true, that is not what is exactly being said here. "*They **hold** the truth **in** unrighteousness.*" The key to understanding that phrase is to understand *hold*. They **hold** the truth in unrighteousness. *Hold* is a verb. It is something they do. They are ungodly, therefore, they commit unrighteous acts. However, they do something else. They *hold* the truth. Since *hold* is a verb, *hold* is an action concerning the noun *truth*. *Hold* explains what they do to the *truth*.

We will show here the word *hold* can mean to suppress. Men *suppress* the truth in unrighteousness. In their unrighteous deeds, they suppress the truth. They do something to the truth and they do it in unrighteousness. The word *hold* means to hinder. For example, a child wants to cross the street, and you *hold* them, you *hinder* them from crossing the street. Mankind hinders the truth. How do they do that? In unrighteousness.

Hold also means to hold back. In Luke 4:42, it is used in that sense of "hold back", where it says, "*And when it*

*was day, he [Jesus] departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, [The very same word translated **stayed** is translated **hold** in Romans 1.] that he should not depart from them." They suppressed Him.*

In 2nd Thessalonians 2, you read some things concerning the Spirit and the Antichrist. The writer is talking about the day of the Lord, the day of Jesus Christ being at hand. I believe he is referring to the tribulation period. Verse 3 and 4 say that the man of sin will be revealed, the son of perdition, which is the Antichrist, "*Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped;*" Then in verse 6, referring to the Holy Spirit, "*And now ye know what withholdeth [the very same word translated **hold** in Romans 1, meaning suppresses, hinders, restrains.] that he might be revealed in his time.*" I believe the Antichrist is alive today. What keeps him from just doing what he will? The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit withholds so that he can be revealed in his time. Continuing in verses 7 and 8, "*For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: [It is presently working.] only he who now letteth [This is same word again.] [will let], [Will restrain.] until he [Meaning the one who lets, who restrains.] be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume*"

This word *hold* in Romans 1, talking about those who hold, suppress, hinder, hold back the truth, these people hate truth. They seek to suppress it. They do so in their unrighteousness. When people speak of the liberals, or any group, for that matter, they will ask, "Why do they have to push their unrighteousness on an entire society? Why can't they just live their life and leave us alone?" That is not their nature. They suppress the truth. It is not just that they want to do what is unrighteous, they want to hold back that which is righteous.

That is why, for example, the homosexual crowd says, "All we want is to be free to marry our boyfriend or

whatever." But, that is not all they want. People in that crowd begin to look at a man and woman who are married as wrong, as not natural. They say, "It's wrong." What are they doing? They are suppressing truth. They are attempting to hold back truth. That is why they pass the laws that they pass. They hold the truth in unrighteousness. What is true is what they view as truth is unrighteous. However, this verse says more than that. They hold back the truth in unrighteousness. They do something to truth. They have an activity towards truth. They hold it back, they suppress it. They pass the laws they pass to suppress the truth in unrighteousness.

In the last several years, this crowd has become unglued, unhinged. They are openly displaying what has always been there, and it is very obvious they are not going to leave us alone. Their reasoning is because truth is an enemy to them. Those who believe truth is an enemy, are going to do everything in their power to suppress truth. Why is it that? Any idiot, (for lack of a better word), with the most ungodly thought process, can speak on a college campus, but someone who believes the truth can not. What are they doing? They are suppressing truth in unrighteousness. At the same time, they will speak of free speech. You say, "They don't believe in free speech." They do, but just for them. It is part of suppressing the truth. "You shut-up. We can't have you speaking." They suppress truth.

There are three objects of God's wrath. I believe they are progressive in nature. Ungodliness leads to unrighteous activity. This advances to the degree that they begin to suppress truth. It's a cycle. The ungodliness increases, the unrighteousness increases, and the desire to suppress truth increases. It is amazing when these people will say, "Why can't we just have an open discussion?" They want no such thing. They do not want to hear what you have to say. Their only desire is to suppress truth. Ungodliness, unrighteousness, suppression, is a cycle, a progression.

In viewing just the objects of God's wrath in Romans 1:18, you learn of the details of that cycle and how it works as you get further into Romans 1. Ungodliness is a wrong attitude that manifests itself in unrighteousness, or wrong actions. The unrighteous actions proceed from the ungodliness or the wrong attitudes. As they take their course, both of these end up in a suppression of truth.

The wrath of God is revealed against these three things. Since they are progressive, so is the wrath of God. That is basically what Romans 1, illustrates. Not only is sin progressive, but God's wrath is progressive, as well.

The subject of Romans 1 is the wrath of God and what the objects of that wrath are. Before going more into the study of Romans 1, it's important to understand the different aspects of the wrath of God. I believe there are a lot of God's people that do not understand there are different aspects of God's wrath. A tornado comes through a town and wipes it out. People will say, "That's God's wrath." It very well could be and probably is. But, that is not the only way God displays His wrath. God's wrath is displayed all around us. Everything that is happening today is the result of the wrath of God. It is a result of man's sin and God pouring His wrath down upon him because of that sin.

Throughout the word of God we read of different aspects of the wrath of God. There is the eternal wrath of God. When God takes an unsaved soul out of this world and casts it into hell, that is the eternal wrath of the LORD. It is the highest degree of God's wrath. The subject of hell is something that has been lost today, but it is just as real as heaven. Hell was created by God and God knew who would go there when He created it. I asked an arminian about that one time and he said, "God doesn't want anybody to go to hell." I asked, "Who created hell?" He had to give it some thought, because I knew he was thinking that Satan created it. Then he realized God did. I asked, "Does God know everything?" "Of course." "Did He know who He was creating hell for?" "Oh no, I'm not going there." It is just

logic. God created hell and He knew who was going there when he created it. Don't say God doesn't want anybody to go to hell. If He didn't, He wouldn't have a hell.

Matthew 3:7, says, *"But when he [John the Baptist] saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"* He is talking about eternal wrath, he is talking about hell. In Luke 12:5, *"But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."* That is not the devil. The devil does not cast anyone into hell. He is talking about God, fearing God. He can cast your soul into hell. If you are unsaved, may I tell you today, He could do that at any time.

Someone just this last week made a statement that those who have not heard the word of God go to heaven. That is heresy. I said to them, "Think about that. If that is so, if they never hear the gospel, they go to heaven, then the cruelest thing you can do to an individual is tell them the gospel." That is the most cruel thing you could ever do. But, of course, that is insanity.

2nd Corinthians 5:11, we read, *"Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."* Again, there is the eternal wrath of God. That is hell. That is only one aspect of God's wrath. There are other aspects of God's wrath which will be covered in the coming lessons.

It is so important to know the different aspects of the wrath of God as you study Romans 1. The last lesson was closed out with learning there is the eternal wrath of God. That is the final wrath of the Lord. There is also what I would call, the eschatological wrath of God, the wrath of God in the end times, which means the tribulation period. God manifests a different degree of His wrath during the tribulation period. Beginning with Revelation chapter 6 the record of the judgments begins. All through Revelation you read of God's wrath and you find those words, "*the wrath of God.*" That aspect of God's wrath is in the future, just as God's eternal wrath for those who are alive is yet future.

Take notice that what happens during the tribulation period has never been experienced to the degree that is revealed in Revelation 6. Revelation 6:16 says, "*And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:*" Jesus Christ is called the Lamb of God throughout the book of Revelation, however it is a different picture of Him, from a different viewpoint. When you think of a lamb, you do not think of wrath, but that is how Jesus is presented in Revelation. "*The wrath of the Lamb.*" Then in verse 17, "*For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*" Who shall be able to flee, to survive this wrath of the Lamb?

Revelation 11:18, "*And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come,*" These things are in the future. They are coming, but not for you and I that are saved. We will not be in this tribulation period, this time of wrath, but many will be. Revelation 12:12, "*Therefore rejoice, [ye] heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, [There is Satan's wrath as well.] because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*" The devil is aware, he does not know when Christ is coming, be he knows it isn't far off. Therefore, he becomes more enraged as well. That is why I believe demon possession is at least as high as it was when

Christ was on the earth and probably more so. Satan is so enraged and so active because his time is short. People do not identify demon possession like they should.

In Revelation 14:8, *"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."* Babylon is referring to religious institutions. In verse 10, *"The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture [Meaning there is no mercy in it.] into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:"* Revelation 15:1 *"And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God."* You can go through the book of Revelation and you can read that this eschatological wrath of God, this future wrath of God, that is coming.

Also revealed throughout the scriptures is the cataclysmic wrath of God. This aspect of God's wrath is revealed in storms, plagues, earthquakes, floods, famine, etc. All of those are the sign or the display of the wrath of God. Most of God's people, when they think of God's wrath, think of either His eternal wrath or this cataclysmic wrath that produces earthquakes, storms, and such. Again, all through the word of God you can read of this cataclysmic wrath. In Genesis 6:5, just prior to the flood, *"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man [was] great in the earth, and [that] every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] only evil continually."* Then in verse 7, *"And the LORD said, [In the context of verse 5.] I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."* This is the cataclysmic wrath that we are discussing here. Moses is talking about the flood, of course. The flood was the result of God's wrath, the cataclysmic wrath of God.

Chapter 3 - The Wrath of God, Part 8

In Genesis 15:12-14, *"And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land [that is] not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance."* Of course God is telling Abram about Israel being in Egypt. Continuing in verses 15-18, *"And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites [is] not yet full. And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, ..."* God is talking about the children of Israel going into bondage. That was God's wrath. Then He said He was going to bring them out, which was a type of salvation.

In Genesis 19:24-25, *"Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground."* That was God's cataclysmic wrath. God caused fire to come down. This doesn't mean that every storm, every tornado is the wrath of God. It could be just the providential hand of God. But don't overlook that many times these things are the wrath of the Lord.

In Isaiah 1:7-10, speaking to His people, *"Your country [is] desolate, your cities [are] burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and [it is] desolate, as overthrown by strangers. [Twice "strangers" has been mentioned already.] And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage [or a hut] in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, [There is God's mercy. God was the One Who brought these things unto His*

people.] *we should have been as Sodom, [and] we should have been like unto Gomorrah.*" That was the wrath of God.

Joel 1:4-10, gives a good example of the cataclysmic wrath of God. *"That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten. Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth. For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth [are] the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion. He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast [it] away; the branches thereof are made white. Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth. The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the LORD; the priests, the LORD'S ministers, mourn. The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth."* It goes on and on. That is the wrath of God against God's people.

There is another aspect of God's wrath I want to focus upon. I believe, aside from the eternal wrath of God and the tribulation wrath of God, it is the most severe. This type of wrath is also revealed in the tribulation. It is the wrath of abandonment. When God leaves a people to do as they please, that is the wrath of abandonment. In other words, God says, "You're going that way. OK, go ahead." That is the wrath of the Lord. It is what we are witnessing today. People will say God's wrath is coming. Yes, it is. But, it is already here in this form of abandonment. This aspect of God's wrath is what Romans 1 is speaking of. It is declared all through Romans 1. It is so important that we understand this aspect of God's wrath and in doing so, we can almost see what is coming next. It is a cycle. It is a cycle of sin and a cycle of wrath against sin.

Throughout Romans 1, you can see the cause of God's wrath is sin. God pours His wrath upon that sin. Then

the people sin more, rebelling against God. What God did in His wrath becomes the next cause. It is an inescapable cycle outside of salvation. While God's wrath of abandonment can happen to individuals, more often in the word of God, it happens to a society, a nation, or a culture. Basically, that is what God did in the old testament, to the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel. He took His hand off and they destroyed themselves. That is God's wrath.

God's wrath of abandonment is shown in Romans 1:24, *"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness"* They have been guilty of uncleanness, but they have hit a point where God removes His hand and says "Go ahead." God is in control the whole time and knows what is going to happen. Still, God gave them up. In verse 26, it says, *"For this cause [Which is equivalent to because.] God gave them up unto vile affections:"* Notice, there are vile affections and God pours His judgment down upon those vile affections in many different ways. Eventually those vile affections get to a point where God says, "That's it," and lets them go. The vile affections just get worse and worse and worse. They get "beyond imagination" worse. That is where we are today. Continuing in verses 26-27, *".... for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men,"* These things bring the wrath of God, but they are also the result of God's wrath of abandonment.

Notice in verse 28, *"And even as they did not like to retain God in [their] knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind,"* That is where we are today. A reprobate mind is a useless mind. *".... they did not like to retain God in [their] knowledge".* I believe that knowledge is the general revelation of God that we are born with. A general revelation of God. Man did not like that and God gave them over to a reprobate mind. Now, when man is given over to a reprobate mind, he is now in a cycle that he can not escape. A nation is in a cycle they can not escape. People think, "We just need to vote new politicians into office." That will not

fix what's wrong. They're in an inescapable cycle of a reprobate mind. What does a reprobate mind produce? Reprobate things. It produces abominations. What does God do? He pours His wrath down upon abominations and those abominations are also a part of God's wrath. God gave them over.

This facet of God's wrath is when God basically turns His back upon a people, upon a nation, upon a society. He leaves them to themselves. That is worse than an earthquake, a flood, or fire coming down from heaven. For God to just let man do what he pleases, is worse than any of these other aspects of God's wrath.

This is spoken of throughout scripture. We see this very clearly in the example of Samson. Samson is an example of this wrath. God left him alone. Samson hit a point where God said, "That's it, you're on your own." When that happens, you are in a heap of trouble. More than you realize. It is bad when it happens to individuals and it is even worse when it happens to a society. In Judges 10:13, God said to His people, "*Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you no more.*" In other words, "You have reached a point of no return. I will not deliver you. I've delivered you over and over again, but you have reached a point of no return." I believe that is where this country and the world is. Am I saying that God's not going to save anyone? No. I am not saying that at all. But, I do believe you are not going to see a major turnaround. It is not going to happen, because we are under this aspect of God's wrath.

In Psalms 81:11-12, "*But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: [The result of that....] [and] they walked in their own counsels.*" Man's own counsels will bring further destruction. Man does not like to retain God in his knowledge and his own counsels are Godless counsels, which simply leads to further wrath of God and is the result of the wrath of God. When God takes

His hand off, man is left to his own thinking and resolve, which results in more sin. The result of more sin is more of God's wrath. We are in a cycle. What a terrible, terrible cycle it is. This is also spoken of in Proverbs 1 and Hosea 4.

In Hosea 4:17, it says, "*Ephraim [is] joined to idols: let him alone.*" Leave them alone. When God leaves someone alone, there isn't anything you can do to help them. When God says, "I'm done," just let them live their life. You can not help that person. You can not help that nation, that society. People say that God's going to judge this nation, destroy this nation, because of (pick the sin.) You could pick one of many. Do you not realize that what God is doing is worse than if He would have just destroyed this land with an earthquake? It is a more severe degree of His wrath when He says, "Just let them go their own way." They will bring more sin into our society, then more and more and more.

That is why you can not even begin to imagine. People say all the time, "I would have never thought 20 years ago that we'd be here." Wait another 20, if the Lord doesn't come, it is going to keep getting worse and worse.

It is the result of sin. It is the nature of sin. It is the nature of God's wrath. If we understand the nature of sin and the nature of God's wrath, we understand what is going on and we also understand what is coming. It is very important that we understand God's wrath and the nature of sin.

The last lesson was about the aspects of God's wrath and in particular the wrath of abandonment. I believe that is what Romans 1, is addressing. It is also what I believe we are under, not as God's people, but as a nation.

In this facet of God's wrath, God turns His back on a nation, a society, a culture leaving the people to themselves. They will then do those things that bring the further wrath of God and are caught in this cycle.

We see this aspect of God's wrath throughout the scriptures. In Proverbs 1:24-33 it says, *"Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. [This destruction and distress are a result of their lifestyle.] Then shall they call upon me, [They use God as a fire escape] but I will not answer; [Then, they get mad at God] they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: [Here is why God does this.] For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, [That's a horrible thing, when God leaves a people to their own way.] and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil."*

This wrath of abandonment, in the context of it being upon a nation, being left to self, is seen throughout history. It is certainly seen in the biblical record. Paul said in Acts 14:16, *"Who [Speaking of God.] in times past suffered [Permitted] all nations to walk in their own ways."* The result of that is when man walks in his own ways it leads him further from God, further down the path of sin. God's wrath is revealed against all unrighteousness, against all

ungodliness. These men will try to restrain truth in their unrighteousness, and God's wrath is revealed. It is just a vicious cycle. History proves that you get to a point of no return, as a nation, as a society. Once they are in this cycle, they just keep going further and further and further from God.

My wife and I were discussing this. She said, "I can remember you preaching that 20 years ago and people came up and gave you a hard time about it." I remember that. I said that once homosexuality is accepted, bestiality follows and then the abuse of children. There is no stopping it. It just keeps going and going. I preached that at a conference 20, 25 years ago. Someone came up to me and said, "You're making homosexuality and bestiality the same thing." I was not. I was saying that the acceptance of one leads to the acceptance of the other. You accept one, you will eventually accept the other. That is the course of sin. That is how sin works. That is also how God's wrath of abandonment works.

This lesson is about a society under the abandoning wrath of God. That is where we are as a nation. It is no accident that we have been placed in this time. We need to be a witness and tell people the truth whether they want to hear it or not. They need to be told.

It is stated in Romans 1 that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven. Is God presently revealing His wrath or is wrath simply on the horizon, going to be revealed? I believe it is both. As a nation, we are presently under this wrath of abandonment and there is a wrath of destruction coming. There is a cataclysmic wrath of God on the horizon.

God is presently revealing His wrath. There are very few who even realize it. All He does is let us go our own way as a nation. You see the results. Watch the political news. Listen to the politicians. What they are saying is the result of a people that has been left and given over to a reprobate mind.

The wrath of God is not simply something in the future. We have heard it preached for decades that God will

pour His wrath down upon the United States because of homosexuality. What you have to realize is that homosexuality is the result of God's wrath. It is God leaving a people, giving them over to a reprobate mind.

Homosexuality is the result of the wrath of God, which will lead to a further cataclysmic wrath of God. Yes, there is a future wrath of God coming, but do not overlook that there is a present wrath being revealed right now. We as a nation are under that wrath. We are under that abandoning wrath of God. God's wrath is present and God's wrath is coming in the future.

The consequence of God's present wrath is future wrath. That is a terrible cycle to be in. The present and future wrath of God. God's wrath is present in the form of God's abandoning wrath. As a nation and a society, we are storing up more wrath by the result of being "given over." Man goes further from God. In doing so, he is storing up the future wrath of the Lord. God's wrath is continually proceeding from heaven. God's impending wrath is on the horizon. God is going to destroy America with His wrath, but man destroys himself. God is just taking His hands off. When that happens, man destroys himself.

We learned from Romans 1, that God's wrath is real, active today, openly displayed, and from the text in Romans 1, that the consequence of man's sin is God's wrath. The two combined, man's sin and God's wrath, result in a downward spiral that there is almost no end to. It is made clear in Romans 1, that moral collapse will not only bring God's wrath, but moral collapse is the judgment of God. It is the judgment of the Lord. Each consequence of sin is a further reason or cause of God's wrath. This is the cycle.

In 1st Chronicles 12:32, concerning the tribe of Issachar, that they "... *had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do;*" It is of extreme importance that we as the people of God have an understanding of the times in which we live so that we do not get these false hopes. "We can just get this man elected and the whole

country will turn around." No it won't. Yes, there may be a reprieve, but you have to understand the cycle you are in. There is no historical evidence or biblical evidence of a nation that has gone as far away from God as we have that ever came back. Somehow, people are so self righteous they think we are the exception. No, we're not. The United States is not going to be the exception. You look all through history. Nations get into this cycle and it is over, as far as a moral nation. It is of extreme importance that we understand these times.

Every child of God uses the phrase, "We are in the last days," We know that we live in the last days, but few understand what that means. Yes, we are in the last days and they are perilous. The Bible says that in the last days evil men shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Why is that? It is a result of the wrath of God and of sin.

Man is totally depraved. Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse. Does that mean that man will become more *totally depraved*? You can't get more than total. *Man is not more sinful in his nature than he ever was. BUT, man is more sinful in his practice than he was.* The result of that is God's abandoning wrath, and God just takes His hands off. "Go ahead. Go your way. Do it your way." It would be much better for man, if God were to destroy them after going so far. But that is not how God operates every time. Sometimes He just takes His hand off and says, "Go ahead." Therefore, seducers wax worse and worse. Their sinful *practice* becomes more and more. It is all around us.

In Genesis 6 the Bible records that man's imaginations were evil continually. They just kept getting worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Men are deceivers and they themselves are deceived. That is why you can listen to someone talk or listen to a politician and you can say, "He doesn't have a clue what he's talking about." That is true, because they are deceiving and they are deceived. Two things are going on. The reasons for this are

explained in Romans 1.

We know from observation that our country, our society, our culture is becoming more and more wicked in practice. As they do, they become more and more mired in wickedness by the day. By tomorrow it will be worse. The next day it will be worse, by the day after that, worse. That is the cycle we are in.

In spite of all that, God's people are to be a remnant, a light in this cycle, and not to get caught up in that cycle. From Romans 1, God's people are able to get a better grasp of the pattern, the cycle of what is happening and why it is happening. What is made so clear in Romans 1:18-32, is cause and effect and its progression.

Our society has a generation that has no mental concept nor any "clue" about cause and effect. They do not understand the concept of, "I do this and this is going to happen." What they do is, "I do this and something happens. Now I'm mad at everyone else because they're mistreating me." Then, mom and dad come along and say, "You're right little Johnny, you're being mistreated. People don't understand you. You're special." Yeah, they're special only because they do not understand actions have consequences. We have a whole society that way.

Throughout Romans 1, cause and effect is made very clear. You read the words that show us cause and effect in Romans 1:19, we see, "*Because.*" That is showing us cause and effect. Verse 21, "*Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God,*" Verse 26, "*For this cause*" By the way, that means the same thing as "because." We have "because" twice and now we have "*for this cause*". You go to verse 24 and you see "*wherefore*". All of these words show us the progression of cause and effect. It is a progression in a downward spiral.

Cause and effect is also seen in the fact that there are three exchanges made in Romans 1. In verse 23, they, "... *changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man,*" In verse 25, "*Who changed*

the truth of God into a lie," You see there is an exchange made. They do away with truth and bring in lies. That exchange is going to have an effect, a result. In verse 26, it says, "*For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change [They have made an exchange, they made a trade.] the natural use into that which is against nature:"* They willfully made this exchange. The progression just continues and continues.

One of the worst mistakes God's people can make is to think, "We need to try and understand *that (whatever that is).*" I don't have a problem understanding *that*. It is sin. It is not a difficult thing. What they really mean by, "We have to understand" is, "We have to learn to adapt, we have to learn to accept what they're doing." That is bologna. You never want to get in that mindset where, "I need to try and accept what God rejects." If you do that, you have now entered that cycle. You have become part of the cycle. We as God's people are never to become a part of that cycle. We are the solution to ending that cycle.

Chapter 4

Intuitive Knowledge of God

Chapter 4 - Intuitive Knowledge of God

In the last lesson we focused on the abandonment wrath of God upon a society, a nation, a culture, and individuals. Furthermore, as you read through Romans 1, you understand there are identifying words that point out there is a progression to God's wrath because of the progression of sin. In verse 19 and 21, there is the word "*because*", in verse 26 there is "*for this cause*", and in verse 24, there is "*wherefore*". There is cause and effect throughout Romans 1, as the consequence of sin and this wrath of God.

There is a reason for this abandoning wrath of God. In verse 18, Paul stated a practice of sinful man. He describes their character as ungodliness and unrighteousness. Then he speaks of something they do. They hold the truth in unrighteousness. It's already been said that the word "*hold*" means to suppress. They attack the truth, they attempt to suppress the truth.

Then in verse 19, comes the word "*because.*" Paul is going to give us the reason that men suppress the truth, the reason they hate the truth, "*Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed [it] unto them.*" The *them* is referring to those who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. Continuing in verse 20, "*For the invisible things of him [Refers to God.] from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, [even] his [Refers to God.] eternal power and Godhead; so that they [Refers to those who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, all the unsaved.] are without excuse.*"

I believe the BIBLE teaches that there is an intuitive knowledge of God that mankind possesses. It is not a saving knowledge, of course, but nevertheless, there is an intuitive knowledge that mankind has of God. In Romans 1:19 it says, "*... that which may be known of God is manifest [Is evidenced.] in them;*" In other words, inside of them there is an intuitive knowledge of God. We must be clear that this knowledge does not save anyone and this knowledge as we

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see here, does not make anyone right. But people are born with an intuitive knowledge of God. Man would say that it is knowledge of a “higher being”. Man has that instinct within them.

Looking at the first part of verse 19, “... *that which may be known of God ...*” We all know there are things that can be known of God. The scriptures teach us everything we need to know about God, but not everything about God. That is not possible. God is infinite and there is no way that a book can teach us everything about God. But, the BIBLE does teach you and I everything we need to know about God. We must realize that there are things about God that we do not know. Of those things we do not know about Him, none contradict what is made manifest in His word. There is a point we come to in our life, that when it comes to God, we just do not know everything. But, we know it lines up with everything in His word.

There are things that can be known of God. Some of those things have been communicated to mankind in general. I have heard preachers try to explain John 1:9 away. You can not explain it away because there is an intuitive knowledge in man of God. In John 1:9 “[*That*] *was the true Light, [Referring to Jesus Christ.] which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.*” Man is totally depraved and this does not lessen his depravity. However, every one enters this life not with a spark of goodness, which is what the arminian teaches using this verse, but every man comes into this life with an intuitive knowledge of God. They know. There is something in them that tells them there is someone higher than them.

Romans 2:14-15 says, “*For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, [This means that everyone obeys the law to some degree.] these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew [Which manifests.] the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and [their] thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing*

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one another;" The key here is *"their conscience also bearing witness."*

I could go into great length on the conscience of man. While not true in every case, when someone does wrong, why do most try to hide it? Because they have a conscience. In other words, there is that light that is in them. They don't know who it is, but they have this sense there is someone higher than them. There is God. They may not put it in those words. But, there is a general knowledge of God in the conscience of man.

Paul goes on to say in Romans 1:19, *"... for God [Or because God] hath shewed [it] unto them."* God has shown Himself unto man, but not in a saving way. God has made man to have a general knowledge of Himself. It's an external, a general knowledge of God. We have to keep stressing that it is not a saving knowledge. It is a knowledge that is mostly in the conscience of man.

From Romans 1:21, Paul mentions this general knowledge, *"Because that, when they knew God, ..."* They don't know much about Him, but they know there is a God. In verse 28, *"And even as they did not like to retain God in [their] knowledge, ..."* Mankind has this intuitive knowledge of God but does not like it, because it is that knowledge that causes him to feel guilt. It's a knowledge that to some degree binds and they did not like to retain God in their knowledge.

Again, having a general knowledge of God, when you look up in the night sky and see the stars and the moon, common sense tells you someone put them there. That's a general knowledge. Why do the evolutionist and the like explain it away? Because they do not like to retain that knowledge in themselves. This is what Romans 1, is teaching us. They have this intuitive knowledge, but they don't want it. They start to explain away things.

Notice in verse 21 what they do with this knowledge, *"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God,"* They knew God, but they may refer to Him as "the man upstairs". To call God something like that is to *"glorify*

Him not as God." Oh, they know someone is up there, but they think, "the man upstairs", which glorifies Him not as God. Why is it when man curses, they use God's name? How does he even know to use God's name? Because there is this intuitive knowledge. When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God.

I believe that a lot of the religious world does not have a spiritual knowledge of God, but rather an intuitive knowledge of Him that they have built upon with their own theology. That is why the majority of the religious world glorifies Him not as God. In most pulpits today, God is not glorified as God, but rather He is demeaned. Whether they are of the religious world and build upon the intuitive knowledge of God or they of others that simply explain it away because they do not like to retain their knowledge of God, the result is all the same. They glorified Him not as God.

In Romans 1:28, "... *they did not like to retain*" Retain means keep. "*They did not like.*" We know what that means. "I do not like such and such." They found this intuitive knowledge unpleasant. This is why so many people are angry. They have this intuitive knowledge that there is a God and they don't like that, so they attack and suppress righteousness. They hold the truth in unrighteousness. They suppress truth in their own unrighteousness. "... *They did not like to retain God in [their] knowledge.*"

Where does this intuitive knowledge of God come from? The obvious, of course, is it comes from God. It's not a Holy Spirit imparted knowledge that is in salvation. In Romans 1:20, we read, "*For the invisible things of him [Which is explained later in the verse. The invisible things speak of His eternal power and His Godhead. Those are the invisible things.] from the creation of the world [Keep in mind what he is talking about. He's talking about the invisible things, the power and the Godhead.] are clearly seen,*" These invisible things thought they are invisible, they can be seen by creation. God declares Himself in creation.

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Why is it that man looks at the Grand Canyon, and he says, "Look what mother nature has produced." Why does he say that? Because they do not like to retain God in their knowledge. Creation reveals, creation declares there is a God, the creator. I can look at a piano and common sense tells me somebody made that piano. You can look at a pew. Somebody made that pew, somebody made this pulpit. Am I foolish enough to believe that my watch was once a checker and through the millions of years it advanced and now it's a watch? How do people come up with such foolishness? They do not like to retain God in their knowledge. They are doing everything in their power to get rid of the intuitive knowledge of God. But, creation itself declares, "I'm God!" The invisible things of God, the power of His Godhead, though they are invisible, they can be seen through creation. Verse 20 says, "... are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made," Man has an intuitive knowledge of God.

God's power and God's person are manifested in creation by providence. Providence means the things that happen. The power of God is manifest in creation by the things that happen in this world. It would be amusing if it wasn't so sad, to watch people who do not like to retain this intuitive knowledge try to explain providential actions. They become fools.

In Romans 1:20 it says, "*For the invisible things of him [His eternal power and Godhead] ... are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made ...*" Then in Psalms 19:1-6 it says, "*The heavens declare [Proclaim, announce, reveal.] the glory of God; [The beauty and magnificence of God. Man not liking to retain that message, replaces it with evolution.] and the firmament sheweth [Which is the same as declare.] his handywork. Day unto day [God declares this. The sun rises, and sets. That is a declaration that there is a God. The seasons come and go. Day unto day.] uttereth speech [Shows], and night unto night sheweth [Reveals this,] knowledge. [There is] no speech nor*

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language, [where] their voice is not heard." That is the voice of creation. It's everywhere.

Those who have never, ever heard the gospel are without excuse because of the creation that is all around them, because of the works of God that is all around them. They are without excuse. I recently heard someone say that if they've never heard the gospel, then they go to heaven. That is so foreign to the word of God. It's absolute stupidity. Why would anyone tell anyone else about the Lord if that were so? That would be the most cruel thing you could do, because if they don't know they're OK. That's utter foolishness. This was said by someone that ought to know better. I was just aghast. I could hardly believe what I was hearing.

Continuing in Psalms 19, *"Their line is gone out through all the earth, [Talking about creation.] and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, Which [is] as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber; [Talking about the sun rising.] [and] rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth [is] from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof."* Creation declares the glory of God.

In Psalms 97:6 we find, *"The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory."* They see it in the heavens. It's all around us. The providential acts of God are all around us. This general revelation renders man without excuse. Romans 1:20, says "so" That's a very important word. Since creation reveals God and since all can see or hear creation, experience creations, "... so that they [Man in general.] are without excuse:" They can say, "No one told me." That won't fly. They are without excuse just being and experiencing the creation, and experiencing the providence of God.

Things happen in people's lives and they say, "WOW! What a coincidence!" Why do they say that? Because they do not like to retain God in their knowledge.

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Why don't they say, "WOW! God has done a wonderful thing there!" You and I say that because we see it. But man with his intuitive knowledge of God, wants to get rid of it, so he will say, "WOW! What a coincidence, I sure am lucky. I sure am fortunate."

I hate those words, lucky and fortunate. A lot of God's people have replaced lucky with fortunate. Explain to me the difference between lucky and fortunate. There is no difference. It's "blessed." We are blessed.

Romans 2:1, *"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things."* The key point is, *"Therefore thou art inexcusable."* It is a continuance of what is said in Romans 1. As you come to this knowledge that creation reveals God, man is without excuse. You can say, "Well, they don't know any better." They should because creation itself reveals that there is a God. What man does with his intuitive knowledge is a display of man's depravity. They do not like to retain God in their knowledge. That is a display of the depravity of man.

General revelation, revelation from creation, the providence of God is a declaration, "I am God". A child is born by the providence of God. That is a declaration, a proclamation, "I am God." Every time someone dies that is a message, "God". Everywhere around us is the message of God. All these things render man without excuse. That means it renders him without justification before God.

We must stress again that intuitive knowledge does not save people. That's why God sent Christ into the world so that man can be justified. Intuitive knowledge does not justify anyone. Really, intuitive knowledge manifests the depravity of man, because of what he does or doesn't do with that knowledge. It's simply another manifestation of the depravity of man.

Chapter 5

Rejection of God

Chapter 5 - Rejection of God - Part 1

As you study Romans 1:18-32, the verses explain what exactly is going on in our society and pretty much what is going to continue to happen. Repeatedly, throughout Romans 1, it shows cause and effect and the progression of it.

By way of review, Romans 1:19 and 21 begins with, "*Because*" and verse 26 says, "*for this cause*", which is the same as saying "*because*." In verse 24, is the word "*wherefore*". These words and phrases demonstrate cause and effect. "Because" or "for this cause" the effect "wherefore" happens. Additionally, cause and effect has a progression.

Beginning with verse 23, three changes are made In verse 23, "*They **changed** the glory of the uncorruptible God*", in verse 25, "*Who **changed** the truth of God into a lie*", and verse 26, "*... **did change** the natural use into that which is against nature:*" All of this is a part of the cause and effect.

Romans 1:18 begins with "*... the wrath of God*". From several lessons concerning the wrath of God, it's clear there are different aspects of God's wrath. The aspect being spoken of here in Romans 1, is the abandoning wrath of God. God does abandon a society, meaning He simply takes His hands off and you go your way. In the United States and pretty much the whole world, God has let man follow his own course and man will destroy himself.

Romans 1:19 tells why (the *cause*) God's wrath is revealed, "*Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them*". From our lessons on this, it is plain that man is born with a conscientiousness of God, but it does not justify him or her in any way and does not save them. In fact, they will misuse it. Verse 20 tells how God "*... is manifest in them*"; "*For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen,*" Creation itself is a testimony, a manifestation of God. Man is born with that conscientiousness.

Moving on from the review, Romans 1:21 begins to

tell what man does with his natural conscientiousness of God, the general knowledge, the general revelation of God. It is one of the reasons for the wrath of God. *"Because that, when they knew God, [Refers back to verses 19 and 20, man's natural, not saving, knowledge of God. Because of that man is without excuse.] they glorified [him] not as God,"* When they knew God in this general way, they glorified Him not as God.

People will say all the time to proclaim their righteousness, "I've always believed in God." It doesn't make them right with God, but rather probably puts them right here in these verses. *"When they knew God they glorified Him not as God."* What does that mean? It means they didn't reverence the Lord. They did not admire, honor, or exalt God. They know God in their conscientiousness, they have a general revelation of God, but that does not mean they admire, exalt, or honor God. General knowledge will not lead anyone to reverence the Lord.

Question people a little further who say, "I've always believed in God," and you will find that they don't believe in the God of the BIBLE. They believe in the image of the god that they've created in their mind and the God of the BIBLE goes against that. They don't love the God of the BIBLE and have created a god in their minds they can mold and fit into their lives. It makes them very comfortable, and the God of the BIBLE upsets that and disturbs them. They don't value God in their heart, nor praise or truly worship Him. Only the saved can do that. The general revelation of God in creation, in providence by itself, does not cause men to praise or glorify the Lord. When they know God in a general way, in the context of a general way, they glorify Him not as God.

Continuing in verse 21 it says, *"... neither were thankful;"* That phrase means more than most people realize. Even with a general revelation, surrounded by God's creation, surrounded by God's everyday workings in their lives, people are oblivious to God. The same ones who say, "I've always believed in God," go through their day oblivious

to God, void of a spirit of gratitude. "*Neither were thankful.*"

What does that word "*thankful*" mean? First of all, thankful is a noun and therefore names a thing. The "thing" thankful names is an inward emotion, a way of thinking, an inward disposition and inclination. "*Neither were thankful*" shows that there is something missing inwardly.

Thankful is an attitude of giving thanks. Being thankful and giving thanks are two different things. The attitude and spirit of thanks is an inward feeling of appreciation. Why don't people **give** thanks? Because they're not thankful **inside**. That is why they hear a message on giving thanks and they say, "From now on I'm going to give thanks," and that lasts about twenty minutes.

Being thankful is an inward problem which is made clear in Colossians 3:15, "*And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.*" Verse 17 refers to **giving** thanks, "*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, [do] all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks ...*" **Being thankful** and **giving thanks** are two different things. Being **inwardly** thankful comes before you can **outwardly** give thanks. Why do we have to remind our children when they were small to say thank you? Because they aren't thankful inwardly. Why do you have to keep reminding them? Because they don't have it inwardly. People are teaching them to outwardly give thanks. I'm not so sure that's a good thing. It is being respectful, but at the same time it isn't coming from the heart, from inside. We're teaching them to be future members of Baptist churches and as such to put on a "show" and that nothing has to be inward.

Let's think about the phrase, "*neither were thankful*". Colossians 3:15 says, "... *be ye ...*" That is a state of being. If "thankful" is our state of being, we will give thanks. We won't have to be reminded. "... *be ye thankful,*" is a state of being that involves an awareness of God. Romans 1 says the unrighteous knew God, but they did not glorify God, neither were thankful. Just because one knows God created the

moon and the stars, doesn't mean they are aware of God inwardly. To be thankful is to be aware of God and the fact that the unrighteous were not thankful means they were not aware of God.

To be thankful involves a spirit of humility. To know God in a general way, yet to not glorify Him, neither be thankful means people are not humble enough to have a thankful attitude. This humility comes from a sense of unworthiness, and people today do not feel themselves unworthy. In their minds they are worthy of everything because since they were a baby, they've been raised that way, the government teaches them that, along with every TV commercial and advertisement. "You deserve the best." In individuals with this general knowledge of God, there is no humility. Humility comes from an inward sense of insignificance and dependence upon God. However, men don't feel themselves insignificant. They are proud, self willed, independent of God, and they do not submit to God. The result is they *neither are thankful*.

In Colossians 3:17 there is, "... *giving thanks...* " If you're thankful, you give thanks. People generally as an everyday habit do not give thanks, because they are not thankful. God makes us thankful. The thankful heart God gives us prevents and protects us from a life of bitterness. It's hard to be bitter and discontent if you're thankful.

To be thankful refocuses our perspective, taking it off of our self and putting it on the Giver, refreshing our heart and diminishing bad feelings. Being thankful will change a bad mood. It will be soothing balm in times of trial. Being thankful brightens hope, enhances enjoyment, strengthens love to God, and the desire to live for God. The people Romans 1 is referring to, knew God, but neither were thankful. They weren't any of these things. They are bitter and discontent. Look around you today and you will see people in general are very bitter about everything. Even churches today are bitter. A thankful heart would cure that. Discontentment is why people are constantly pursuing the

things of the world. They are not satisfied. A thankful heart will cure that, too.

This spirit and attitude of unthankfulness is a result of *"they glorified not God."* It is irreverence and oblivion toward God. 2nd Timothy 3:2 declares, *"For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, [‘Unthankful’ is a state of being. Notice what follows.] unholy,"* Unthankful and unholy go hand in hand. This general revelation of God does not render man thankful or holy.

Romans 1:21 says, *"they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful"*. It wasn't one or the other; not glorify God, or not be thankful. They didn't do either one of these things. This verse is stating the reasons for God's wrath, the cause and effect, the reasons for this progression. *"... when they knew God, ..."*, the general conscientiousness of God, does not result in man glorifying nor being thankful to Him. That speaks of a negative attitude toward God. The world has a negative attitude toward God, considers God as a nuisance, and that He is in the way. That's why they try to eliminate and expel Him from everything.

The attitude toward God in various nations, societies, and cultures, as well as our country, society, and culture, is revealed throughout history and reveals what we've just read here in Romans 1:21. This attitude towards God is evident everywhere, and is widely declared in the humanist manifesto, which we will go into in more detail in future lessons.

What is the Humanist Manifesto? There is Humanist Manifesto 1, written in 1933; number 2, written in 1973; and number 3, written in 2003. In general, the Humanist Manifesto is simply the declarations and aspirations of the humanist worldview. That's all it is. You say, "I don't really care." You ought to. "It doesn't concern me." Oh yes it does. You need to be aware because we are bombarded with it every single day. If you are aware of Humanist Manifesto

1, 2, and 3, you will become aware of their world view. It explains a lot of the thinking of children, young adults, and even older adults. Everyone has become a victim to some degree of humanism.

So what is humanism? Perhaps you have or have not seen the logo of the humanist associations, which is depicted in humanist manifestos, for what it is. This logo is everywhere, on all kinds of buildings in the city, near where I live. It's supposed to depict a human and the logo says, "Good without a god." That sums up everything they believe. "Good without God." "*... when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful.*"

This **rejection of God** is spoken of very clearly in Romans 1, and is declared very clearly in the Humanist Manifestos. The foundation of **all public education** is humanism. **Almost every TV show is based on humanism. That's why it ought to concern you.**

In Humanist Manifesto 1, it's written "religionist humanists", which I find humorous. They hate religion, but they call themselves "religious humanists". Humanism is a religion, declared so by the Supreme Court in 1961. It's the only religion allowed in the public schools today. In Humanist Manifesto 1 it says, "Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created. Humanism believes that man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as a result of a continuous process." That is evolution. "We are convinced that the time has passed for theism, deism..." **That was in 1933.**

In Humanist Manifesto 2, under the heading of "religion," it says, "We believe, however, that traditional dogmatic [*They put some emphasis on that word.*] or authoritarian religions [*Next is what they mean by dogmatic and authoritarian.*] that place revelation, God, ritual, or creed above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species." In other words, God's people are the enemy. If you do a disservice to the human species, to mankind, you're an enemy. It goes on, "We find insufficient

evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural; it is either meaningless or irrelevant to the question of survival and fulfillment of the human race. As nontheists, we begin with humans not God, nature not deity."

I believe every single time that you and I begin with man and not God, that is humanism. That's not where you begin. I don't care if you're problem solving, that's not where you start. That's what the humanist does. They start with man. That's where man always starts. He leaves God completely out of the picture. Christians start with man and eventually work their way to God. It's still humanism. Because you've started wrong.

In Humanist Manifesto 3, from 2003, it says, "Humans are an integral part of nature, the result of unguided evolutionary change." What foolishness. "Humanists recognize nature as self-existing. We accept our life as all and enough, distinguishing things as they are from things as we might wish or imagine them to be. We welcome the challenges of the future, [*If they only knew. If they would read Romans 1, they might know a little about the future.*] and are drawn to and undaunted by the yet to be known." Evolution is the foundation of what they believe in. They believe in man, not in God.

"When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God neither were thankful" results in humanism. Humanism left to itself will follow that path of man. Proverbs 14:12 & 16:25 say the same thing, *"There is a way which [or that in chapter 16] seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof [are] the ways of death."* The reason is because of the abandoning wrath of God. God eventually takes His hand off and says, "Follow your way." Now you see the results everywhere.

The Supreme Court cited secular humanism as a religion in 1961. Most public educators realize that the foundation of the entire education isn't God. I'm not saying that every person in public education is a bad person. But they know the foundation is not God. Humanism, according

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to the Supreme Court, is a religion and is allowed to be taught in public schools to the exclusion of all others.

Our government has embraced humanism. If you really pay attention to almost any politician, even those who make mention of God, you will see they are humanist through and through. Even when God's people talk, humanism comes out all the time. It's everywhere. Romans 1 shows the cause of and effect of humanism.

Chapter 5 - Rejection of God - Part 2

We started in the last lesson, looking at Romans 1:21, "*Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God,*" That "knowledge" of God is a natural consciousness of God, it is not the saving knowledge of the Lord.

"... they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful;" This rejection of God that is spoken of throughout Romans 1, is very clearly manifested in the Humanist Manifestos 1, 2 and 3, written in 1933, 1973 and 2003, respectively. The Humanist Manifestos are pretty similar to a church's statement of faith. Humanism, being a religion, has their own statement of what they believe.

The Supreme Court cited that secular humanism is a religion in 1961. They declared that secular humanism was a religion and it is the only religion that is allowed in the public education system today. On June 17, 1963, the Supreme Court banned prayer, banned government endorsed prayer and Bible reading in public schools. It wasn't always followed or practiced. The point is that the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the religion of secular humanism. They've been doing the same thing ever since. It's proof in our society of, "*... when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God,*"

In 1968, the Supreme Court overturned state laws that banned the teaching of evolution in government funded schools. In doing so, they again ruled in favor of the religion of secular humanism. They again proved, "*...when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God,*" Here we are today. People talk about the younger generations, how they don't think right and so on. That's all true. There are always exceptions, of course. But, how did that happen? We are looking at it today.

For the most part we, as a society, gave our children over to the religion of humanism. As Baptists you did not raise your children in nor permit them to go to The Church of Christ, the Nazarene church, Catholic or Lutheran church.

But yet, those same parents sent their children to the church of humanism. The truth is this, God's people can be very hard on the younger generation, but there comes a time when God's people better look in the mirror and fall on their knees asking God's forgiveness for sacrificing their children on the altars of humanism.

Here we are in 2019. We are now a society where the median age is around 37 and 1/2 years old. About 80% of the population was born from 1960 on. That is very significant. That explains a lot of what is going on today. What that means is that the vast majority of our population have lived their entire life under the perverted narration, bombardment, pervasive lies, control, and manipulation of humanism. Secularism is one in the same. Pluralism. Humanism is pluralistic. Relativism, materialism, atheism are all connected with the religion of the humanist.

The vast majority of our population have lived their entire lives not just in the classroom, but have lived their entire lives exposed to anti God philosophy. It's everywhere. Now here's the foolishness. "They ought to know better, because when they were being raised, they were in church every Sunday and every Wednesday." That's three hours. Compare that to all the hours they sat in the religious classroom of humanism. It does not compare.

The vast majority of our population have lived their entire life in a society infiltrated by the godless religion of humanism. I'm not bragging, because we have all been affected by humanism in our thinking, to some degree. However, I can remember very well that our kids never went to a public school. I can remember very well, preachers lecturing me on how that was not right. I'm sorry, but if you want to talk about what's not right, let's talk about the public school system. It's evil and it has been for a long, long time, going back to the early 1960's. Even prior to that, humanism had already gotten in, to some degree.

The vast majority have lived their entire lives with

their brains saturated with that which is twisted, they which is perverted and erroneous. Their brains are saturated with it, even if they don't pay attention in school, they are bombarded with it. Television and radio contribute to this bombardment. We did have TV in the house, but if I had it to do over, I probably wouldn't. It doesn't make sense that you would raise your kids one way and then bring something in your house that teaches them just the opposite. It doesn't make sense.

My kids will say, "You were so strict." I wasn't strict enough, because there were inconsistencies. I would not have allowed someone to come into my living room and curse, but you have that television where cursing goes on. "Well, we turn it off." By the time you turn it off, it's too late, the words have already been said.

What is the result of this general rejection of God? *"... when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful;"* Notice in verse 21, *"... but became ..."* Oh, we need to just stop at those two words. Society knew God in an intellectual way, a natural consciousness of God, but they did not glorify God. They were not thankful to God and they became something. You follow the history of our nation, specifically, beginning in 1960 and go on from there. You follow that and you will see that we have become something, and it's not good.

There was a progression. Really, we should say there was a digression. They became. What did they become? They became vain in their imaginations. This is the result of, *"... they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful;"* In other words, God was replaced, and they became vain in their imaginations. These very people would be the ones who would teach the children. They became vain in their imaginations. They became teachers, leaders, but in their minds, vain. That word vain means more than most people think.

"... they glorified [him] not as God, neither were

thankful;" because they grow or digress into vain imaginations. This is the pattern that is seen all through the word of God. A rejection of God results in vanity of mind, vanity of imaginations.

Again, this pattern is seen throughout the scriptures. Look at 2nd Kings 17:15, *"And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity ..."* They rejected God. You remove God and you replace Him with something. What you replace Him with is vanity. *"... and became vain,"* There are two different things here. Following after vanity is bad enough. But you follow after vanity long enough and you become vain. That's more serious. It is the result of following vanity. Following vanity is the result of a rejection of God. You follow vanity long enough you become that which you are following.

"... and went after the heathen that [were] round about them," That's the result of becoming vain. You follow the heathen. The humanist manifestos are the belief system of the heathen, those without God, those who reject God. *"... [concerning] whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them."* Reject God, follow after vanity, become vain, then they become very accustomed to and finally adopt the ways of the heathen. Jeremiah 10:2 says, *"... Learn not the way of the heathen,"* That's where we are, that's what we've become in our society. We are a heathen nation who grasps, embraces humanism and secularism.

You reject God and vanity is what follows. You can see that in the lives of individuals. You can see that they reject God and they become something. You can't reject God and not have consequences. You become something. What they become affects the next generation and the next and the next. Pretty soon, that cycle is almost unbreakable. God, of course, can intervene.

Romans 1:21 says, "... when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful;" 'They' refers to the "... men who hold the truth in unrighteousness," from verse 18. They had a natural consciousness of God. This comes about from creation and it is the providential acts of the Lord. Verse 21 also shows they had two problems; they did not glorify Him as God as He is revealed in the scriptures, and they were not thankful. Continuing, verse 21 next says, "... but became." They became something as the result of their general rejection of God.

Verse 21 shows there is a progression, or more properly, a digression. It says they became vain in their imaginations, meaning they became futile and wasteful in their minds. Man would have you believe that he just keeps getting more and more intelligent. The Bible, of course, speaks to the contrary. Man became vain, empty, futile, wasteful in their minds. They grow or they digress into vain imaginations.

In the last lesson we showed this pattern of digression is shown throughout the word of God, beginning with 2nd Kings 17:15. Now, continuing with this pattern, Psalms 81:11-12 says, "*But my people [Referring to Israel.] would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: [and] they walked in their own counsels.*" We see a digression in that He gave them up, He let them go and they walked in their own counsels.

In Isaiah 44:9-20, speaking of idol worship, "*They that make a graven image [are] all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they [are] their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed. Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image [that] is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed: and the workmen, they [are] of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; [yet] they shall fear, [and] they shall be ashamed together. The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with*

hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint. The carpenter stretcheth out [his] rule; he marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house. He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish [it]. Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth [it], and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth [it]; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth [himself], and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire: And the residue thereof he maketh a god, [even] his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth [it], and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou [art] my god. They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; [and] their hearts, that they cannot understand. [They've become vain in their thinking.] And none considereth in his heart, neither [is there] knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten [it]: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, [Is there] not a lie in my right hand?"

These verses show that man in his foolishness and vanity, creates idols. The world is full of idols as is the American society. "*He feedeth on ashes.*" Does man get better by these things? No, he gets worse. Is his life improved? No, it gets worse. "*A Deceived heart hath turned him aside.*" When they do not glorify God as God, they become vain in their imaginations, their heart is deceived,

and life gets worse and worse and worse, gets less and less meaningful. Man loses his mind and digresses in his so-called intelligence. That's where we are today.

I have to laugh. I believe that most of America believes mankind is just so much smarter than he's ever been before. I believe he is stupider than he's ever been. The ignorance is at an all time high. In Jeremiah 2, beginning with verse 5, *"Thus saith the LORD, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, [That's glorifying not God as God.] and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?"* You walk after vanity long enough, you become vain. It's one thing to follow that which is vain, but it is a far more serious problem when you become vain and can not help but follow after that which is empty. These here in Jeremiah became vain just like we read in Romans 1.

Continuing in Jeremiah 2:6, *"Neither said they, Where [is] the LORD that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt?"* They didn't look to God for the solution. People today, in their so-called intelligence, do not even consider God as a solution to their problem. That's how it was here.

In verse 7 and 8, *"And I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination. The priests said not, Where [is] the LORD?"* No one was turning to God. He was not even considered, just as Romans 1:21 says also. *"... and they that handle the law knew me not:"* It is like that today, people don't know God. *"... the pastors also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after [things that] do not profit."* That's vanity. Even among the religious leaders of the day, all is vanity.

Jeremiah 2:9-11, *"Wherefore I will yet plead with you, saith the LORD, and with your children's children will I*

plead. For pass over the isles of Chittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing. Hath a nation changed [their] gods, which [are] yet no gods?" That's what it is not to glorify Him as God. "... *but my people have changed their glory for [that which] doth not profit.*" For that which is vanity, that which is empty.

Verses 12-13, "*Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters,*" In Romans 1:21, when they knew God they glorified Him not as God. They forsook God and then became vain in their imaginations, and they replaced God. It always happens that people forsake God and they replace Him with something, which becomes a greater problem. Continuing in verse 13, they have forsaken God, the fountain of living water. "... *[and] hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.*" They took the time to plan and hew out these cisterns. But the problem was that the cisterns could hold no water. They were empty. They became vain.

Then in verse 14-15, "*[Is] Israel a servant? [is] he a homeborn [slave]? why is he spoiled? The young lions roared upon him, [and] yelled, and they made his land waste: [Vanity, waste.] his cities are burned without inhabitant.*" Jeremiah goes on in verse 18, "*And now what hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of Sihor?"* You see how this people has digressed. There was God, the fountain of living waters, and now they are drinking out of the polluted rivers of Egypt. They think their life is improving.

People will go to great lengths to try and convince one another that life is so much better than it has ever been. "Really? I didn't know that." Nothing could be further from the truth. But that's what man does; he rejects God, he replaces God, and then tries to convince himself that life is better than it has ever been, that he is making improvements to his life.

Then Jeremiah 2:18, the question is asked, "*why do you drink the waters of Assyria?*" In verse 19, "*Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that [it is] an evil [thing] and bitter,*" It will make your life bitter. It will not improve your life. "... *that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, and that my fear [is] not in thee,*" They not only reject God, but they get to the point where there is absolutely no reverence for God whatsoever. "*My fear is not in thee.*" That's where we are as a society.

In verse 20, "*For of old time I have broken thy yoke, [and] burst thy bands; and thou saidst, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, playing the harlot.*" That's what society is doing. They just wander. Verse 21, "*Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?*" God says, I blessed you greatly, but you have turned into a degenerate plant. Life is not improving anywhere in the world because it's based upon this rejection of God.

In Jeremiah 2:23, God is reasoning with them, but you can't reason with a fool. "*How canst thou say, I am not polluted,*" How can politicians and religious leaders look at society and say there is nothing wrong? How foolish. They have convinced themselves that there's nothing wrong with them. "We're not polluted."

He said earlier, in verse 22, "*For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, [yet] thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD.*" They think they have made themselves better. They think they have progressed as human beings. But God says their iniquity is marked before me. So it is today.

Again in verse 23, "*How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim? see thy way in the valley, know what thou hast done: [thou art] a swift dromedary [Camel] traversing her ways;*" Following, in verse 24, is a pretty good picture of a man that rejects God.

"A wild ass used to the wilderness, [that] snuffeth up the wind [Just out there sniffing away. Life is empty.] at her pleasure; in her occasion who can turn her away? all they that seek her will not weary themselves; in her month they shall find her."

Then in verse 27, *"Saying to a stock, Thou [art] my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth:"* Saying to a dead idol, "You're my father." What foolishness. They became vain.

Today, one of the great idols of American society is education. Education, I believe, is one of the most overrated things in the world. Education, *"Thou has brought me forth,"* is what man believes about education today. They believe it has caused him to progress, it has made him better, made society better. They are vain, *"for they have turned [their] back unto me, and not [their] face:"* Any time we turn our back upon God, vanity is the result.

Talking to their idols, whatever they have made an idol, they say, *"... but in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us."* Man actually believes that the people they elect to office will solve their problems. They actually believe that. That's is just as stupid as someone looking to an idol and saying it will help them in time of trouble. They have become vain.

In Jeremiah 2:31 God asks what He has done, *"Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness?"* God is asking if He has done something to them that would cause them to turn away from Him. Their reply, *"We are lords; we will come no more unto thee."* What they were saying is, "We are masters of our own lives. We can handle this." People talk about the American spirit that it will get us through anything. In other words, we are our own savior. Really? People believe that foolishness.

Verse 32, *"Can a maid forget her ornaments, [or] a bride her attire?"* It's not very likely that the bride is going to forget to put on her bridal clothes, but this is far worse, *"yet my people have forgotten me days without number."*

Chapter 5 - Rejection of God - Part 3

Jeremiah 2:33, "*Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love?*" They just want to be loved, just want to be liked, and they will do anything to achieve that. In verse 36, "*Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?*"

You see that when you forsake God, you follow vanity. You forsake God, you replace God with vanity. You do that long enough, you become vain. In other words, you just keep doing the same things over and over.

Jeremiah 10 is the chapter that those who are adamantly opposed to Christmas and Christmas trees, always go to. Jeremiah 10 is not talking about Christmas trees. It's talking about idols

In Jeremiah 10:3, "*For the customs of the people [are] vain: [That's true.] for [one] cutteth a tree out of the forest, [Most people link this to cutting a Christmas tree out of the forest. I bought mine at the store.] the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; [See, they are putting the ornaments on the tree.] they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. They [are] upright as the palm tree, [talking about this tree] but speak not: they must needs be borne, [Carried. There's no life in them.] because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also [is it] in them to do good.*" That's still true today also. That tree can not do evil, that tree can not do good. "*Forasmuch as [there is] none like unto thee, O LORD; thou [art] great, and thy name [is] great in might. Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as among all the wise [men] of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, [there is] none like unto thee. But they are altogether brutish...*" He is talking about the people who worship these trees. He's talking about them making trees their idols. He says they are brutish. "*...the stock [is] a doctrine of vanities.*" He's simply talking about idols.

The pattern is this; reject God, end in vanity. They did not glorify God as God, therefore they were not thankful, they didn't even think to show gratitude toward God. God is

not in their thoughts, they rejected Him and they became vain. This vanity now becomes a further cause of God's wrath. It's not only a cycle of sin, but a cycle of God's wrath. The fact they become vain, by itself, gives reason for God to display His wrath. Everything they do in their vanity becomes further reason for the wrath of God.

Rejection of God results in a forfeiture of real meaning in life. That which is vain really has no meaning, no purpose. American society is filled with that which has no purpose or meaning. 50,000 people gathered in a stadium cheering and going nuts has no meaning, no bearing upon life, none. I happen to like sports, and I do watch it, but it's meaningless. People's days are ruined because it didn't turn out the way they thought it would. They are angry. It doesn't matter.

We could make lists all day long of things that are just vain, that just don't matter. Where does it all come from? These vain things are not decreasing, they are increasing all the time, because man has become vain and he invents more vain things. All that does is take him further from God and cause God to display His wrath even more. It's a cycle that you do not want to get caught in.

Yet it is the cycle of mankind. It has been the cycle of mankind since the fall. It happens to be the cycle that society is caught in, especially in these last days. Not just American society, but societies in the whole world are caught in this cycle. They have rejected God, they have pursued vain things, they have become vain, they invent more vain things and they go further and further and further from God. God just lets them go, which brings about more of the wrath of God.

People say, "What will man come up with next?" If you think you've seen it all, you haven't. It's going to be worse, more foolish and more vain. Sadly, God's people to some degree, get caught and become victim's of this vain society. God help us.

Chapter 5 - Rejection of God - Part 4

From the last lesson, Romans 1:21 shows a cycle of digression that explains the way things are in the world today. It begins with a rejection of God. Man's natural consciousness of God's creation and providence manifests itself and man rejects that. Why? Paul states the reason, *"Because that, when they knew God, [That is in their natural consciousness.] they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful;"*

Next, verse 21 says, *"... but became ..."* As a result of their rejection of God, man's state of being, his imaginations became vain. The rejection of God leads to vanity, to vain imaginations. Vanity is the lack of meaning. It is emptiness. Rejection of God results in the forfeiture of the real meaning of life. You see it everywhere, even among God's people.

To become vain conveys the idea of futile, useless. Vain imaginations refers to mankind's thought process; which is our reasoning, speculations, conclusions, and incentives. Man's entire thought process, their thinking became futile, useless. You're in a pretty sad state when the thought process of the "thinkers", the problem solvers of the day, is futile and useless. They became vain and unproductive in their imaginations.

For a lost man to say, "Well, let's reason this out," You're reasoning with the wrong person, because their thought process is futile. Their reasoning is contrary to scripture which is going to lead to further problems and further manifestation of the wrath of God. In his vain imaginations, man comes to some pretty wild conclusions. He can look at facts and draw conclusions that are beyond belief. These are educated people. Why is that? Because they become vain in their imaginations and they draw wrong conclusions. It's all vain, it's all empty, it's futile. The entire thought process is vain.

When people, which applies to the child of God as well, reject God and His word in any area of their life, their thought process becomes skewed. They begin to make

decisions on that skewed thought process and what happens? They get further and further into the mud. That's the world. That's why it's scary when congress meets. If you think about it, it's a scary thing when any group of people meet to solve a problem. The problem is they are the problem, but they, of course, don't see that.

The entire thought process is vain. Psalms 94:11 is very plain on this, "*The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they [are] vanity.*" Why? It is the result of rejection, of not glorifying God as God. In Psalms 119:113, "*I hate [vain] thoughts: but thy law do I love.*" The psalmist draws a contrast between vain thoughts and God's word, which explains that vain thoughts are thoughts contrary to the word of God. Today, of course, man is completely secular, which means his thoughts are contrary to the word of God. We as God's people ought to hate vain thoughts. We ought to be able to detect vain thoughts in ourselves.

God, speaking to His people in Jeremiah 4:14, says, "*O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. [Delivered] How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?*" Their vain thoughts are what brought them to the place where they needed deliverance. The word "lodge" is used, showing these vain thoughts are not just passing through, they are there to stay.

I will never understand why a child of God would go to the world for advice, especially spiritual advice. I understand you go to certain professional people for advice on things, but I'm speaking of spiritual, moral advice or about how to raise a child, whatever. Why would you do that? You're talking to someone whose thoughts are vain, futile. In 1st Corinthians 3:20, the BIBLE says, "*The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, ...*" The wise aren't individuals who the Lord recognizes as wise, but are those you profess to be wise, who the world recognizes as wise. The Lord knows their thoughts, "*... that they are vain.*" They are futile, useless. It doesn't mean that they are uneducated.

It means that they did not glorify God as God and they became vain in their thought process, in their imaginations.

This is also what the Psalmist is referring to in Psalms 2:1, *"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD,"* They do not glorify Him as God, as Romans 1 speaks of. Continuing, *"... and against his anointed, [Meaning His people.] [saying], Let us break their bands asunder,"* This is what people, who do not glorify God as God, think in their vain thoughts. They are saying, "The Lord and His people are restricting us, our life, our freedom." *"Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."* In their view, their vain thinking, the Lord and His people are restrictive on their life. They became vain in their imaginations.

Why is it that the lost and even some who profess to be saved, get out of sorts, get themselves in the mire, and the first people they want to blame is the church or the pastor? And people actually listen to that garbage. Don't give them an ear, don't listen to them. Tell them to stop right there. You should tell them, "I don't care what the church has done. That is not your problem. Your problem is a spiritual problem and it's not somebody else's fault." If someone listens to them, then in their own vain imaginations, they start to think, "Well, you know, they have a point." Really? They became vain in their imaginations. It's a dangerous thing to get caught in the cycle of vanity in our thoughts.

Ephesians 4:17 refers to vanity of the mind. *"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, [How do they walk?] in the vanity of their mind,"* The mind is powerful. They become vain because they glorified God not as God and rejected God and the knowledge of Him. Now they conduct their lives in the vanity of their mind. There is no good that can come out of that. You're going to find yourself in the hog pen and it's

no one's fault but your own.

In Colossians 2:18, *"Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,"* This is speaking of pride! Man thinks he's smarter than everyone else by his fleshly, secular, carnal mind. That's the problem today. These people have rejected God and they think that's progress and a sign of intelligence, but it's a sign of foolishness, of being a fool. The result is they conduct their lives building themselves up as something they are not, and it gets worse and worse and worse.

In Titus 1:15, it says, *"Unto the pure all things [are] pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving [is] nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled."* That's a vain mind. They became vain in their imaginations, and even their mind and conscience is defiled.

This display or the manifestation of a vain mind, vain imaginations, a vain thought process, vain reasoning, is about self-esteem. That's why we hear so much about it today. You can not tell anyone they are wrong because that would hurt their self-esteem. "Little Johnny, what color is this?" It's blue but Johnny says it's red. "Well, Johnny, if you think it's red, then it's red." That's about where we are. "If you think it's red, then it's red to you."

Vanity of mind, self-esteem, results in self absorption. We are a self absorbed, self glorifying society, which is the result of a vain mind. Yesterday at some event, I was talking to someone and I said, "You know, I can never remember this type of event when I was a kid. They didn't have them. They didn't have a celebration for an occasion like this." You weren't congratulated for doing something you were supposed to do in the first place. It was like, "Well, that's what you're supposed to do. Why are we celebrating this?" There's nothing wrong with celebrating things, but it's to the point where we celebrate everything. "Little Johnny's

got to get a star because he went to the bathroom." That's what he's supposed to do. It's self absorption, self gratification, self will, self seeking, self sufficiency, all of which are the result of vain imaginations.

What do these vain imaginations lead to? There is a cycle here. They rejected God, they became vain in their imaginations. This isn't something they did occasionally. They have become something; their state of being became something different and what they became results in a lot of other things.

Vain imaginations result in vain babbling. 1st Timothy 1:6, it's talking about charity out of a pure heart, good conscience, and faith, *"From which some having swerved have turned aside unto [You leave something, you go to something else.] vain jangling; [Vain babbling]."* You listen to a politician talk for an hour and they might make one point. The rest is vain babbling. They can't help it. They have become vain in their imaginations.

Timothy was a young preacher and Paul is telling him in 1st Timothy 6:20, *"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane [That which is holy, but treated unholy.] [and] vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called."* We know true science does not contradict the word of God, but **so called science** does. These are vain babblings and oppositions of science falsely called science. Many things are falsely called a lot of things today because of vain imaginations. That's why instead of using the word "Sodomite", we use the word "gay". They call it what it is not. Definitions of words have changed because of vain imaginations.

In 2nd Timothy, 2:16, we're told, *"But shun profane [and] vain babblings: [Here is why.] for they will increase unto more ungodliness."* So it is, when they reject God, they do not glorify God as God, they become vain in their imaginations and this increases into more ungodliness.

Ephesians 5:6, says, *"Let no man deceive you with*

vain words:" Vain imaginations lead to vain words. Vain words are deceiving words. "... *for because of these things [Vain words] cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.*" Romans 1 is talking about the wrath of God. They become vain in their imaginations, in their thoughts, in their words, and things get worse and it causes God to unveil more of His wrath.

There is vain knowledge. Job 15:2, says, "*Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind?*" "*East wind*" means emptiness. Vain knowledge is knowledge that is futile. Remember trivial pursuit? People say, "I'm good at that!" I wouldn't brag about it because it falls under the category of **vain knowledge**. It doesn't do any good to know those things. What good is knowing Elisabeth Taylor's birthday? It's vain knowledge. That's what vain imaginations lead to, vain learning, vain knowledge.

There is vain labor. Everything becomes vain when the imaginations become vain. Psalms 127:1, "*Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it:*" In other words, they built it, but it's vain, it's empty. "... *except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh [but] in vain.*" Vain imaginations lead to vain babbling, vain words, vain knowledge, vain labor. In Jeremiah, 51:58 says, "*Thus saith the LORD of hosts; The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary.*" They labor in vain and they become weary. Vain imaginations have sad, sad consequences.

Vain imaginations also result in false hope or vain hope. Society today is built upon vain hope. Notice in Jeremiah 3:22-23, "*Return, ye backsliding children, [and] I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou [art] the LORD our God. Truly in vain [is salvation hoped for] [Deliverance] from the hills, [and from] the*

multitude of mountains." Israel had a spiritual problem and they were looking to the hills for armies to come and save them. They looked to the secular for the solution to a spiritual problem. That's vain hope because the secular does not fix, does not solve your spiritual problem. A spiritual problem has a spiritual solution. This verse shows vain hope. "You do this and take these ten steps, you'll be delivered." "... *truly in the LORD our God [is] the salvation of Israel.*" If your hope is not in the Lord, that's a vain hope, it's an empty hope.

You notice people who reject God, who become vain in their imaginations, and they begin to reason, to conclude, and draw assumptions from their vain imaginations. Their life is a mess, and they start thinking, "Everything in my life is falling apart, BUT if I can just get a good job everything will be better." They land a good job and guess what? Everything is not better. They have vain hope, "The job will fix my problems." But the job won't fix your problems and at best, it might solve some financial problems. A good job won't fix a spiritual problem. They have this vain hope that just keeps getting worse and worse.

Next, they get a job and keep it for two weeks and either quit or get fired. Now they've got that to blame for their situation. "Those people did that to me. If they hadn't made me mad, I wouldn't have had to quit." Then, here we go. Somebody comes along and says, "Oh, you poor thing. You've been done wrong." God help us. Don't you see the cycle they're in? You're not going to fix their problem. Only God can fix that problem. "Well they just need another job." How long will that one last, another two weeks or a month? It's vain hope. That's what vain imaginations lead to. They lead to vain hope and pretty soon people are chasing these vain hopes. It's like chasing the wind. You never catch it. Even if you did, you wouldn't know what to do with it. Vain hope.

There is a cycle here in this vain imaginations that

Chapter 5 - Rejection of God - Part 4

only the Lord can break. The cycle was started because of a rejection of God. It can only be reversed by getting back to God. Vain imaginations lead to more, not less, vain imaginations. Anything you try outside of getting back to God will not reverse it, either. Only God can do that. Vain imaginations is a serious, serious problem with destructive consequences.

The subject of Romans 1, is the revealing of God's wrath. It's a very accurate portrait of not only our nation, but also of society and the world in general. Romans 1:21 describes this cycle, "*Because that, [There is a reason and the reason follows.] when they knew God, [When they knew God in their natural consciousness.] they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful; but became*" They became something because they rejected God and were not thankful.

They did not become something better. You will never become something better by rejecting God. Politicians and educators along with many others try to convince us today that man is getting better. But that's not possible because man has rejected God. They are becoming something, but it's not better and it's not progress in the good sense of the word. They "... *became vain in their imaginations,*" That is their minds become futile, useless, unproductive.

As pointed out in the last lesson, "*imaginations*" has to do with our thoughts, reasoning, speculations, and conclusions. Their thoughts become vain. Trying to reason with most people today is almost beyond belief. They have no ability to reason because their imaginations are vain. Man can take basic facts and come to a conclusion that is pure fantasy. He has some facts, but is not able to make a right conclusion. That's a vain mind. That's a vain imagination. That's where we are today. It also would include our incentives. Our mind is vain, useless, and futile.

The entire thought process is vain, which leads to no good thing. It leads to self-esteem, self superiority; we are surrounded by these things today; self absorption, self glorification; self will, meaning, "I'll do what I want and I have the right to do what I want"; self seeking, self sufficiency, and on and on we go. They became vain in their imaginations. It leads to vanity in every area of life.

Vain imaginations lead to vain babbling. There is a lot of vain babbling, vain words, vain knowledge, as Job speaks of in Job 15:2. People today think that they are more knowledgeable than any other society that has inhabited the

earth. Nothing could be further from the truth. What they know is vain, empty, and it doesn't do them any good. Take trivia for example. We have a society that loves trivia. That's vain knowledge. It's futile, it doesn't mean anything.

People have vain hope. They build their life on vain hopes, vain customs, vain comfort. The things people look to for comfort today do not give them lasting comfort. It's vain.

There is vain worship. This is everywhere. You look at the so called religious world, so called Christendom and for the most part their worship is vain. That's because they have become vain in their imaginations. The Lord speaks of this vain worship in Isaiah 1:11-15, and 29:13. Jesus makes reference to it in Matthew 15:9, where, if you go to most churches today, this is what could be said, *"But in vain they do worship me, teaching [for] doctrines the commandments of men."* In verse 8, He said, *"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with [their] lips; but their heart is far from me."* When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God and they became vain, not only in their imaginations, but they became vain in their worship. Most worship services today are just utter foolishness just to appease the flesh of man. In Mark 7:7, *"Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching [for] doctrines the commandments of men."*

There is vain glory. Galatians speaks of vain glory in chapter 5:26, it mentions the things that people take glory in, are vain. Their sports team wins and they will say, "This is the happiest day of my life." That's pitiful, that's really sad. That's vain glory.

Then, there is the book of Ecclesiastes. Some would debate that Solomon is the author, but that's foolishness. Solomon was an individual who had everything, but his life is very sad. He fell into sin and, for the most part, lived his life apart from God. He was miserable because of it. There are also different views upon the meaning of the book of Ecclesiastes. Some people read Ecclesiastes and they say, "Everything is vanity." I don't believe that. What is the

point that Solomon was making? Solomon found that *apart from God*, life is vanity. That's the whole point of Ecclesiastes, "*Apart from God*, everything is vanity, even if you have everything the world has to offer, as Solomon did."

Romans 1:21, "*Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, ... but became vain in their imaginations,*" means they began to live their lives apart from God. It's like Solomon is saying in Ecclesiastes, "This is what I have discovered, this is the point that I have come to. *Apart from God*, everything is vanity, it's futile, it's worthless, it means nothing." That is the world today. The world lives their life apart from God. They are oblivious to God. They give no concern, no thought to God. In fact, people are becoming more and more offended by God.

Solomon discovered, apart from God all earthly pleasure loses its meaning. Is all earthly pleasure vain? No, I don't believe so. Not if you live it with God. Is it vain to have pleasure in visiting with your family or your friends? No, but if it's apart from God, it means nothing. All earthly pleasure apart from God loses its meaning, is empty, and brings no real satisfaction. Solomon says in Ecclesiastes 2:1, "*I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure:* [Solomon is searching. He says in his heart, go find pleasure and that will make you happy.] *and, behold, this also [is] vanity.*" Why is the world always coming up with new pleasures? Because the old one was vain. They are hoping this new one will last. What is pleasure at one time will not be in another time, because man continues to change.

In Ecclesiastes 2:10, he says, "*And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy;*" People love to have a good time. It's unbelievable how far people will drive to have a good time. "*... for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour.*" It was all vanity apart from God.

In chapter 7, verse 6, he writes, "*For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so [is] the laughter of the fool: this also [is] vanity.*" In other words, like the thorns under a pot,

the laughter, the good time of the fool doesn't last long. Who is the fool? What Solomon wrote in Proverbs is, "The fool says in his heart there is no God". It's the person who tries to live their life apart from God.

We see that apart from God, worldly possessions are empty and unsatisfying. Ecclesiastes 2:4-11, notice, "*I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards: I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all [kind of] fruits: I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees: I got [me] servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me: I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, [as] musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: [He was the richest man of that time.] also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all [was] vanity and vexation of spirit, and [there was] no profit under the sun.*" Apart from God, it's all vain, it's all vanity.

Along those lines in chapter 5:10, "*He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; [Why? Because it doesn't bring him what he thought it would.] nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this [is] also vanity.*" Not only is the silver vanity, more importantly the thought process of, "Silver is going to make my life better. This or that is going to make my life better," that thought process is vain imaginations. What makes your life better is a closer relationship to the Lord. Without God, it's all in vain.

Take notice of all of Solomon's labor and what being "successful" meant. Christianity has bought into the world's definition of success. Success is not happiness, because you

can be foolishly happy and ignorant. Success is not what you achieve in this world. Remember what God said to Joshua, in chapter 1, *you will find GOOD success*. It was all related to God. Here is success; you do what God tells you to do, you stay in the will of God. You might die in poverty, but that's success, just simply doing what God tells you to do, being in the will of God. Don't buy into the world's definition of success. The world's definition is apart from God. Apart from God, all is vanity.

In Ecclesiastes 1:17-18, *"And I gave my heart to know wisdom, [That's education. We're not criticizing education or knowledge. But, apart from God, it's dangerous.] and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. For in much wisdom [is] much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge [That is, outside of God.] increaseth sorrow."* You can't just take that as a blanket statement and say that all knowledge brings sorrow. But rather, **apart from God**, education is in vain, it's futile, it doesn't amount to anything. *When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful. They "became"*.

Man is "becoming" more and more. That's the cycle. Man rejects God more and more, so he becomes more and more vain and futile in his thought process. Common sense is a very, very, rare thing, because man is becoming more and more vain in their imaginations. If you were to listen to some of the things politicians think, it is beyond belief. No right thinking two year old who would believe such nonsense. They have become vain in their imaginations. It just gets worse and worse. When you think you've heard the stupidest thing ever, the next day you will hear something even more stupid. It's almost like there in a contest to see who can outdo the other in stupidity. That's why the upcoming presidential debates (2020 election cycle) will be interesting. It's a contest to see who can show who's the most stupid, the most ignorant. I wouldn't want to win. They have become vain in their imaginations.

Romans 1:21 continues with, *"AND"*. Other than

becoming vain in their imaginations, in addition to their minds becoming vain, "... *their foolish* [Their God thoughtless and vain,] *heart was darkened.*" It became more foolish. Because of their rejections of God, their hearts are immersed in darkness. In describing the heart; the very being of the ones who rejected a natural knowledge and consciousness of God, the individuals who did not glorify God as God; those who are not thankful, oblivious of the blessings of God, just like the hog under the acorn tree eating away, never looking up, never giving a thought to where those acorns might be coming from; that's how people are. They enjoy God's creation and bounty, and for the most part, they never give thought as to where it comes from; that's a foolish heart.

They weren't thankful and became more and more secular in their thought, their reason, speculation, and conclusions. Paul in the inspiration of the spirit said, their hearts were foolish. The word "foolish" in this case is the Greek word, *asunetos* [as-oon'-ay-tos], meaning without discernment. They had no discernment or understanding. It means they are senseless. Their foolish heart is that which lacks discernment and understanding and sense. That's their foolish heart. A heart that has no discernment.

For the most part, discernment died a long time ago, yet there are some that, of course, have discernment. What is discernment? Discernment is the ability to make a distinction between what is true and false, right and wrong, good and bad. When presented with two contrary things, you have the ability to say which is true and which is false, to know what is right and wrong, to make a distinction between good and bad. Not only does man not have discernment, he encourages no discernment by saying there is no right or wrong. That's even worse than not having the ability to discern. Man's foolish heart lacks discernment. From Ephesians 5:15, "*See then that ye walk circumspectly*, [That is, very carefully. See that you live your life carefully, or with great care.] *not as fools*, [Not as those who have no discernment.] *but as wise*," They became vain in their

imaginations, their heart is foolish, meaning they live life carelessly, in a very unthinking way. They are inattentive.

We have a society in which at least a couple of generations now, do not seem to have the ability to say, "If I do this, this will be the consequence." They make no connection between behavior and consequence. When they behave a certain way, the natural consequence comes, because they can't make that connection. Really, they can't, because their foolish heart is darkened. It's not that they won't, it's worse, because they can't make that connection between behavior and consequences. Instead of tracing the consequence back to the behavior, it's the fault of everybody. There's no connection. Their brain doesn't work that way. Why not? Because they became vain in their imaginations. There are people who father children, over and over again. They don't make the connection. They do so out of wedlock and mothers are left raising children by themselves and they can't understand why. Vain imaginations. Their foolish hearts were darkened. They have no discernment, they do not have the ability to discern, they do not make the connection.

I'm sure the inability to make the connection between behavior and consequence is some sort of mental illness. That is the point. They became vain in their imagination, they became vain in their thought process and their foolish heart was darkened. The mental illness is not because of a medical condition, but because of sin. Sin is insanity. Sin can cause mental illness. Society is absolutely plagued with the mental illness of sin.

When you sit down and try to reason with a person who can not make the connection between behavior and consequence, it will drive you nuts. You're trying to reason with someone that does not have the ability to reason. This is the result of, "*became vain in their imaginations*". That's where we are as a society. People will say, "All you have to do is sit down and talk with them." Try it. "They just need a good talking to." If it was only that easy. It's much, much deeper than that. It's the progression of sin.

Chapter 5 - Rejection of God - Part 6

To recap the previous lesson, in Romans 1:21 it says those who reject God become vain in their thoughts, they become ignorant, and blind. Then it goes on to say, "*and their foolish heart was darkened.*" In addition to their minds becoming vain, they are foolish, that is their God thoughtless and vain heart was darkened. It starts with a rejection of the Lord. That results in their hearts being immersed in darkness. They reject the natural knowledge or consciousness of God, they did not glorify God as God; they were not thankful, they became oblivious to the blessings of God; they are secular in their thoughts, reasoning, speculation, conclusions; their hearts were foolish.

Also from the last lesson, you learned the Greek word for foolish means "without discernment." Their hearts were without discernment, meaning they did not understand. They become senseless. Discernment is the ability to make a distinction between what is true and false. Mankind today has lost discernment. They do not have the ability to recognize the difference between true and false, right and wrong, good and bad. That's how wrong becomes right and right becomes wrong in their minds. Most people today do not know the difference between good and bad. What they call good is bad and vice versa. We see a cycle here.

When their foolish heart was darkened, Ephesians 5:15, says they began to walk carelessly. They began to walk in an unthinking and inattentive manner. What does this bring? This brings greater danger, greater consequences into their lives. It also provides another reason for the wrath of God. They're in that cycle. That's where we are today as a nation, as a society, as a culture. Their foolish senseless, hearts were darkened.

Darkness is used all through the scriptures to represent sin, evil, wickedness, corruption, guilt, error, ignorance, sorrow, misery, danger, and that which is satanic. This darkness has a power, In Colossians 1:13, speaking of our unsaved condition, darkness applies in this sense, "*Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness,*" It's not who

hath delivered us from darkness, but who has delivered us from the POWER, the control of darkness.

"Their foolish hearts were darkened" also speaks of the fact that they are digressing further. That's mankind today. That's why they are trying their best to convince you that even though they are going further and further down into the pit they are progressives. They are not progressing to the better. All the world is in a state of digression. We can see the pattern in Romans 1. They digress into a lack of good sense, judgment, and discretion.

Vanity is the result of the rejection of God, and it leads to greater foolishness. The more vain you become in your imaginations, the more foolish you become in your life, which leads to greater blindness. It's a cycle you can not just get out of in and of yourself. They think educating the people is the answer. Who's doing the educating? Those who have become *vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened*. The cycle just continues and continues.

This is the pattern all through the word of God. It shouldn't be a shock. In Deuteronomy 28:15, *"But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:"* There is the key. They will not only come upon you, but they will overtake you. You're under their power. You become a slave. Then in Deuteronomy 28:28-29, *"The LORD shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart: [That's the wrath of God that is revealed.] And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, [Their foolish heart was darkened] and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save [thee]."* No man can deliver you. Man does not have the power to fix the problems of our country, our society, our culture. No man can deliver us from where we are. Only God, by His grace,

can.

You reject God, that leads to vanity, which leads to spiritual blindness and ignorance. This is the cycle. Rejection of God results in vanity. Vanity results in spiritual blindness. Spiritual blindness results in more rejection of God. That results in more vanity, and more spiritual blindness. Are we getting smarter? Not according to this pattern, this cycle. Man is not getting smarter, he is digressing further and further.

In our society, this rejection of God, this disregard for God, oblivion of God, has resulted in many things. It has resulted in God being expelled from the schools. I have even heard God's people, those who profess to be saved, say, "Well, God doesn't belong in the public school." You're a fool. If someone believes that, they're a fool. Their foolish heart is darkened. God has been dismissed from the schools and the courts. He's been evicted from all areas of our society and culture. His word has been systematically pushed out of the national consciousness. The result is we have, for the most part, a Godless society. It's not getting better because it's a cycle. This cycle is all through the word of God.

As a result of this rejection of God, this disregard of God, oblivion of God, we have become a nation, a society and culture that is mired and saturated with vanity. We are in the stranglehold of vanity and ignorance. It's this rejection of God that has brought us humanism. We've already spoken at length on humanism and will continue to do so. Humanism, to make it simple, is a worldview that centers upon human interests, human dignity, human worth, human potential and goodness. Someone might say, "Well, that doesn't sound that bad." But it begins with a rejection of God. It makes man god. It puts man in the place of God. It is the religion of self.

Humanism is the national religion of the United States. The national religion is not Catholicism. The national religion is the religion of self. That is the religion

that is taught in public schools and all kinds of schools, even christian schools. It's taught everywhere.

Rejection of God has led to secularism. What is secularism? It's a worldview that stems from humanism and places the emphasis upon the temporal instead of the spiritual. The Lord has a lot to say about that in His word. It is basically the pathway of the unsaved, who know not God, who are walking in the darkness of their fallen state. Secularism is the life and activity of the result of the fall. Everything is secular. We live in a society that boasts that we are a secular society. They boast about it. Why would you do that? Because their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. Secularism is the thinking, the ideas, the philosophies, the values, attitudes, ambitions, the goals, pursuits, and behavior of those who are alienated from God. It is secular. It is temporal rather than spiritual.

You have humanism, secularism, and then you have pluralism. You may hear someone say, "We live in a pluralistic society." We do. That can simply mean that as a country, we are made up of many races and backgrounds. That is a pluralistic society. We're not saying it is sin to be a mixed people in a nation. The danger is pluralism. Pluralism is the view that there is more than one kind of reality. That is to say, what you think is real and what I think is real, are both correct and both legitimate. In other words, since we have this mixture of people and religion, we just have to accept what they believe is true and everything is equal. That, of course, is not so. Their foolish heart was darkened. There is no ability to discern. How many times have people said, "Well, we worship the same God." But we don't. That's pluralism.

Pluralism feeds tolerance and political correctness. It's pluralism that feeds the attitude that you can not offend anyone. If Johnny says this is blue, although it's red, the teacher says that if Johnny thinks it's blue, it's blue. That's ignorant. But that is where we are as a society. "Well, if

they think it's right, then it's right." There is no ability to discern. It's this pluralistic attitude that makes an attempt to make all beliefs valid. The Bible is very clear that all beliefs are not valid. All of these stem from humanism and secularism.

There is relativism. Relativism basically declares that truth and morality are determined by their relation to culture, society, or circumstances. In other words, what was wrong twenty-five years ago is no longer wrong because culture now accepts it. Culture, rather than God's word, becomes your standard. Circumstances become your standard rather than God's word.

This is all the result of, *"their foolish heart was darkened."* They think they are progressing. They think this is a sign of intelligence. "This was wrong thirty years ago, but we've advanced past that. It's no longer wrong, We've declared it to be right. We're smarter." But, they are not.

Relativism is the view that truth does not exist in any objective sense. Everything is relative to your circumstances, relative to what's going on around us. It's the view that there is no absolute. There is no absolute moral standard. If there is no absolute moral standard, then everyone becomes a standard to themselves. That's exactly what humanism teaches. That is exactly what was going on in Judges. "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes." "Well, that's wrong, but, if they think it right, who are you to say it's wrong." That's the thought process. God help you if you're in that thought process.

Pluralism is the rejection of dogmatism and that which is absolute. It is what gives us situational ethics. "Well, it's wrong in normal situations, but the situation ... " The Bible doesn't teach that anywhere.

All of these things go back to a rejection of God. Ours is a nation, a society, and a culture that lives under the perverted bombardment, the pervasive lies, the control and manipulation of humanism, secularism, pluralism, relativism. People are spellbound by the philosophies and fantasies of

such teachings.

This is a cycle, a loop. Once in that cycle, that loop, the only hope is that God intervenes. As the cycle continues, the wrath of God continues. These things are the wrath of God in which God leaves man to himself to do what he would naturally do. The result is disaster and ruin. God's wrath is not just tornadoes, hurricanes, and whatever else. The wrath of God is God saying, "Go ahead. Do it your way." Man suffers as a result.

Continuing from the last lesson in Romans 1:21, it says, "*but became vain in their imaginations, [The result of that was.] and their foolish heart was darkened.*" That is their vain or empty thought process led to greater ignorance, greater blindness, and that has led to such things as humanism, which centers upon human interests, human dignity, human worth, human potential, human goodness. The result of that is a lot of other things. The most obvious result is man becomes more and more self centered as he focuses upon his own worth and potential.

A foolish darkened heart also leads to secularism. Secularism and humanism go together, but they are not the same thing. Humanism centers upon self, while secularism centers upon the temporal, meaning the seen rather than the spiritual. The results of that are devastating as well.

Then there is pluralism, where all thought is equally valid and legitimate. It comes from a pluralistic society, in which there is the attempt for everyone to get along and accept their erroneous beliefs. We, meaning God's people, are expected to admit that their pluralistic beliefs are just as valid as ours. That of course is a serious error. It's an attempt to make all beliefs contrary to the word of God valid, and to encourage individuals to embrace, to accept, to approve of, and participate in all other beliefs.

Then there is relativism, which stems from all the above "isms". Relativism is that truth and morality are determined in relation to culture, society, and circumstances. In their view, the Bible doesn't determine what is true or false. Society, culture, and your circumstances determine what is right or wrong. With relativism, the basic thing is that truth does not really exist. Truth is objective. All of these things are the result of "*they became vain in their imaginations.*"

Our society, our nation, and culture is spellbound by these philosophies. These philosophies are taught everywhere, even in little children's books. People are bombarded by it and we, as God's people, need to learn to

identify humanism, secularism, pluralism, and relativism. These philosophies are everywhere and if you look, you can not help but see them.

We are a society that is becoming more and more tolerant of abomination and man thinks he is wise in doing so. Man is more and more accepting and accommodating of abomination. Abomination is embraced, and even celebrated. We see that in the forefront of our culture. They have parades and politicians feel they must join in on those things that are abominations and celebrate those things because they don't want to be thought of as unkind or unloving. When that happens, you've fallen into the trap of vain imaginations and all the results from it.

Romans 1:22, says, "*Professing themselves,*" referring to those that are vain in their imaginations, whose foolish heart is darkened. They are "*Professing themselves to be wise,*" which is the common boast of those who reject God. "We're smarter than everyone else. We're wiser, more intelligent. Our IQ is higher." This verse uses the term "***Professing***", which ***does not mean*** that they ***possess*** the greater intelligence they claim openly. In other words, it's not a secret. Sadly, they claim falsely, "Professing themselves", to be something they are not. They are deceived.

Rejection of the natural revelation of God leads to man claiming for himself what he does not possess and will not possess if continuing on his present course. Ezekiel 28:2 shows what Romans 1:22 means by "Professing themselves to be wise". Ezekiel 28:2 says, "*Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart [is] lifted up, and thou hast said, I [am] a God, I sit [in] the seat of God, in the midst of the seas;*" This first part of the verse describes basic humanism. Men become God. If God exists in their mind, He is lower than they are. This is what man professes in his own wisdom. The last part of this verse, however, is the truth. "... *yet thou [art] a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God:*"

As we have said over and over, they see themselves as evolving, progressing in intelligence. Their vain imaginations only increase, their blindness increases, yet they continue to profess themselves to be wise. What is the result of that? They trust more and more in themselves and become more and more filled with their own ways. That results in them going further and further from God, which leads to the wrath of God. It's that endless cycle. That's why it continues to get worse and worse. Man follows this path. You follow a road long enough, eventually you get to where the road leads. That is true in behavior as well.

At the very best, mankind possesses a carnal and worldly wisdom. The Bible distinguishes between a carnal, worldly wisdom and a true, spiritual wisdom. Man sees himself evolving, progressing in intelligence; they trust more and more in themselves; they become more and more filled with their own ways. Jeremiah 4:22 says, "*For my people [is] foolish, they have not known me; [That's foolish.] they [are] sottish [Habitually drunk.] children, and they have none understanding: [Professing themselves to be wise, yet being filled with their own ways.] they [are] wise to do evil, [They are clever to do evil.] but to do good they have no knowledge.*" They call evil good and good evil being twisted in their entire thought process. James 3:14-15 shows us the nature of carnal, worldly wisdom, "*But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom [That is the mindset that leads to envy and strife.] descendeth not from above, [It is not from God] but [is] earthly, [It's the spirit of the world. The spirit of the world is anti-God, anti-Christ.] sensual, [It appeals to the human flesh.] devilish. [It is demonic.]"*

Man continues to follow this path, this cycle, in which carnal, worldly wisdom is devilish, demonic. That is why demonic activity is not going away. It is only increasing more and more. People think demons are some fantasy. Even God's people seem to downplay the possibility of that happening today. I believe it's more so today than it's ever

been and will be even more so tomorrow. That's the cycle we are in. The sad truth is, just as many of God's people who can not identify humanism or secularism when it's right in front of them, can't identify demon-ism. It's all around them and they don't see it. All you have to do is look at the characteristics of the demons in the scriptures and it's very obvious we live in a demonic time.

Reverence for God is where true wisdom is found. Remember where this started. They glorified Him not as God. They don't have reverence for God. Since they don't have reverence for God, they can't have wisdom. They can't have true spiritual wisdom. It's a sad day when God's people go to the world; which does not have any spiritual wisdom whatsoever, and they seek advice. They seek spiritual advice from the world.

There are several scriptures that show reverence for God is where true wisdom is found. Remember the cycle here in Romans 1; they glorified Him not as God, there is no reverence for God. Job 28:28 says, *"And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, [Which is reverence.] that [is] wisdom; and to depart from evil [is] understanding."* Those who became vain in their imaginations, have no understanding. What do they do? They don't depart from evil, they go headlong into evil and the cycle continues.

Psalms 111:10, *"The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of wisdom."* Education, learning the way of the heathen is not the beginning of wisdom. The beginning of wisdom is to reverence God. *"... a good understanding have all they that do [his commandments]: ..."* This reverence leads to obedience to His commandments, to a departing from evil.

Proverbs 1:7, *"The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of knowledge: [but] fools despise wisdom and instruction"* referring to Godly wisdom and instruction. When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God and they became vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened. This verse shows fools despise or think

lightly of wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 9:10, *"The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy [is] understanding."* Holy is that which God has set apart from the secular. These people who are vain in their imaginations, their foolish heart is darkened, they profess themselves to be wise, yet they think they are the ones that understand. They understand nothing. They have no understanding. Their foolish heart is darkened. Proverbs 15:33, *"The fear of the LORD [is] the instruction of wisdom; and before honour [is] humility."* Reverence for God instructs us in wisdom.

These individuals who profess themselves to be wise and have not glorified Him as God do not even have the **beginning** of wisdom and understanding. It is these people that our country elects to understand our problems and come up with solutions to what plagues society. The truth is they are a major part of what plagues society. That's why God's people ought not to put their trust in these human leaders. I'm not saying that everyone who holds public office is a fool, certainly not. There are some exceptions. However, the general rule is; their foolish heart is darkened.

The so-called wisdom or knowledge that they have is really of their perverting nature that takes them further off course. Isaiah 47:10 says, *"For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; ..."* Man in his vain imaginations has come up with such things as abortion. It's perverted. To show how foolish they are, they try to argue killing an infant from a position of morality. It's sad any time these people even mention the word morality. *"... and thou hast said in thine heart, I [am], and none else beside me."* That's humanism.

In Isaiah 59:8 it says, *"The way of peace they know not; and [there is] no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace."* In their foolishness, in their professed wisdom, they have made themselves *crooked paths*, and

never reach the peace that they long for.

We see this general cycle of ruin, of destruction. As man follows this cycle, things get worse and worse. People ask all the time, "Do you think it can get worse?" Oh, I know it will. I not only think it will get worse, I know it really will. The Bible bears that out. People say they "... can't imagine it getting worse." It is getting hard to imagine, but it can be worse. As bad as it is now, it can be worse, and it will be worse.

In the past couple of lessons, we have focused on the phrase in Romans 1:22, "*Professing themselves to be wise.*" The truth is that mankind is anything but wise. Those who have glorified God not as God, became vain in their imaginations, whose foolish heart was darkened, are self deceived. Then they profess to have what they do not possess. What this does is take them further off course. They have gotten side tracked and are going a different direction away from God. Their own thought processes take them further and further off course, which leads to things getting worse, not better. Isaiah 47:10 says, "*For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: [They trust in their own foolishness. They lean upon that.] thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I [am], and none else beside me.*" There is self centeredness and they put themselves in the place of God.

Their twisted thinking and lifestyle is part of their perversion. "*Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee.*" It has twisted them and they continue to go further and further off course, becoming more and more twisted. We of course live in a day where the twisted thought processes of society are very manifested.

As they go further off course, the more twisted they become. Here, today, it's almost a contest as to who can be more twisted. I know it's not, but it seems that way. In Jeremiah 5:4, it says, "*Therefore I said, Surely these [are] poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the LORD,*" They are foolish because, in their wisdom and in their knowledge, they know not the way of the Lord. Their own wisdom takes them further and further off course.

In Amos 3:10, you find, "*For they know not to do right, saith the LORD,*" That is very true. As they become twisted in their thinking, and stay in that "place" long enough, *they know not to do right.* They don't even know the difference between right and wrong. That's why many times people will say, "They know better." Do they? Perhaps they do, which doesn't make it any better because they are

deliberately sinning against what they **do** know. Do they really know better? Because, if they've lived in this twisted thought process long enough, they get to the position where they don't. They may have known at one time, but they don't know it any more. *"They know not to do right, sayeth the Lord."* What's right is wrong in their eyes, and vice versa.

"... who store up violence and robbery in their palaces." They bring upon themselves the judgment of the Lord. They store up robbery, meaning they are going to lose more and more. However, they think they are gaining. You look at people today and their whole life is dysfunctional, and yet sometimes they will speak as if they are on top of the world. They are so ignorant, they don't even know. Their thought process is twisted.

In Micah 4:12 it says, *"But they know not the thoughts of the LORD"* Professing themselves to be wise, but the truth is they know not the thoughts of the Lord. *"... neither understand they his counsel:"* Not only do they not know His thoughts, they do not understand His counsel. The ways of God do not make sense to them, because their mind, their thought process is twisted. Nor do they have any desire to understand the counsels of the Lord. *"... for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor."* Judgment is coming. That's what Romans 1, is talking about, the wrath of God is judgement.

These individuals reject their natural consciousness of God; they glorify them not as God; then next, they become vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart is darkened; their thoughts are empty, futile, blind in their heart but they profess themselves to be wise. They say they're advancing, progressing, evolving into something better, professing themselves to be wise. The truth is wisdom begins with reverence towards God, and they don't have that. They don't have spiritual wisdom, spiritual knowledge. They have a worldly knowledge, which according to the book of James is devilish, it's carnal. Jeremiah 5:4 says, *"... they know not the way of the LORD, [nor] the judgment of their God."*

Now in Jeremiah 10:14 you find, *"Every man is brutish [Animal like, savage.] in [his] knowledge:"* This so-called wisdom, this worldly wisdom turns people into savages, which would be very well manifest in abortion. They think they are wise, more advanced by killing the unborn. *"... every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image [is] falsehood, and [there is] no breath in them. [Meaning their images]"*

In Romans 12, we are told not to be wise in conceit. People who have rejected God are wise in their own conceits, in their own imaginations, in their own opinion. Having an opinion doesn't make it fact. Someone has degree after degree; they're wise in their own imagination, in their own opinion. But just because one is wise in their own imagination, in their own opinion, doesn't mean they are. We are not to be wise in our own conceits. These individuals who have rejected God, they're wise in their own opinions. Proverbs 3:7, *"Be not wise in thine own eyes:"* This is exactly what these individuals are. They are wise in their own eyes, wise in their own conceits. In Isaiah 5:21, *"Woe unto [them that are] wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!"* God isn't saying woe unto them who are wise, but rather woe unto them who are wise in their own eyes, who in their own opinion, consider themselves intelligent.

Man today thinks that he is more intelligent, more advanced than any other society that has ever lived upon the earth. That is just not so. It is true, we have more technology, but that's not the issue. Is man smarter? I don't think so. I don't think he's smarter than he was 30, 40, 60 years ago. There's been a dumbing down, and as people are dumbed down, they think they are smarter than anybody else that has ever lived. What happens is they become wise in their own eyes, trust more and more in themselves, which takes them further and further from God, which brings them into the judgment of the Lord. That's not more intelligent, but that's where we are.

In 1st Corinthians 1:19, it is implied that this

professed wisdom is really enmity against God. *"For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. [That is, 'I will bring it to nought.']"* Then there is a challenge in verse 20, *"Where [is] the wise? where [is] the scribe? where [is] the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"* Do not be intimidated by the so-called knowledge of the so-called educated, because their wisdom really is foolishness. Then in 1st Corinthians 1:21, *"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God,"* Man in his own wisdom does not know God. *"... it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching ..."* Do not confuse this with foolish preaching. There's plenty of that going on. Man in his wisdom thinks preaching is foolish; thinks it's foolish for someone to stand up and preach; thinks it's even more foolish for people to sit and listen to that kind of thing. *"... by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."* It's implied here that this wisdom that man possesses, this worldly wisdom is really enmity against God.

Society, in general and God's people have been convinced that our children have to be educated by the world. That is a trap that God's people have fallen into. Parents will pay for four or six years so children can go to college and get out and work at Koles or McDonald's. Thousands and thousands of dollars. It's foolishness, but people have been convinced that they have to have that, and they can't survive without a college education. Really? What happened to God taking care of His people? Again, they glorified Him not as God.

The history of Israel in Psalms 106:35-42, is talking about God's people, [35]*"But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works."* You better be careful about mingling among heathen and sending your children off to college to mingle with the heathen. [36]*"And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them."* [37]*"Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,"* The Israelites literally did sacrifice their children to the false god,

Moloch. Parents don't literally sacrifice their children today, but they do in other ways. [38] *"And shed innocent blood, [even] the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood."* That is how it is today. The land becomes more and more "polluted", meaning Godless, as generation after generation learns the way of the heathen. [39] *"Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions."* 'Went a whoring', means they went apart from God, dedicating themselves to that which was not of God. They 'went a whoring' with their own inventions, which they invented in their own wisdom and learning the way of the heathen. [40] *"Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance."* These things bring the wrath of God. [41a] *"And he gave them into the hand of the heathen; ..."* That's the judgment in Romans 1; *"He gave them over."* Here we see they learned the way of the heathen, continued in it, had the inventions of it, and they went apart from God. The result was He gave them over into the hand of the heathen. There's no turning back once that happens. [41b] *"... and they that hated them ruled over them."* [42] *"Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand."* Those who reject God don't want anybody to rule over them. But everybody has someone ruling over them and serves something. The truth is they serve those who hate them. Man is a slave to heathen society today.

Generation after generation learns the way of the heathen, who's knowledge and thought process is twisted. That takes them further and further from God. Every generation, although not every person in that generation, gets further and further from God. It's part of the wrath of God. People go against God for so long and God turns them over, lets them go their own way. This is the wrath we read of in Romans 1.

The cycle is this; you reject God, vanity follows, which is emptiness, futility. You stay in the vanity long

enough, you become spiritually blind. You no longer even know that you are living your life in vanity. Then, their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise means self deception and ignorance. Each of these things; rejection of God, vanity, spiritual blindness, self deception and ignorance; has the consequence of becoming a further reason for the wrath of God. It just brings more of the wrath of God. This is a cycle of digression.

A lack of knowledge of God leads to a manifestation of deception and ignorance. What is sad is not just that they're ignorant, but they see themselves as intelligent. As a result, they trust more and more in themselves, which takes them further off course. Proverbs 14:12 says, "*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, ...*" meaning in man's own thought process, it seems right. The truth is, "*... but the end thereof [are] the ways of death*" Notice it doesn't say, 'IS the way of death of death', which is true, it says something that is far more. The end thereof ARE the WAYS of death. Man's way results in several things, several ways; all these ways lead to death. It's a digression.

When this happens, everything is out of order. Almost everything in the United States is backwards. This nation has lost its collective mind. It's now wrong for only citizens of the United States to vote in a political election. That's amazing. Why don't we send ballots to China and let them vote too? Everything in the family is out of order. When this continues long enough, people think this is order, this is how it should be. The perversion of the mindset is almost beyond belief. If we didn't know what Romans 1 teaches and what the Bible teaches, it would be almost beyond belief.

When man gives a wrong place to God, he ALWAYS gives a wrong place to himself. The result is everything is out of whack, out of order. But they go on professing themselves to be wise. "We're so intelligent." Professing themselves to be wise, they **became** fools.

This is the second time this word "*became*" shows up here in Romans 1. Verse 21 says, "*Because that, when they*

knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations." "They became" means to pass from one state into another. In verse, 21, they became vain in their imaginations. They had a natural consciousness of God, but they moved from that and became vain in their imaginations, they became unthankful, foolish. They professed themselves to be wise, and they became. They moved from one state to another.

Here in Romans 1:22, they **became** fools. They moved from one bad place to a worse place. They moved from the bad place of being vain in their imaginations, their foolish heart was darkened, professing themselves to be wise, to a worse place of being fools. They moved from one state to another. They further digressed into foolishness. But, it says much more than that. They digress into foolishness, that's true, but it's more than that, they became fools. You can do a foolish thing and not be a fool, but you keep doing foolish things and guess what? You *are* a fool. They not only digress into foolish things, they are fools. What does that mean? It means they will continue to do foolish things.

As we have pointed out in other messages, the Greek word here, translated as "fool", is "moraino". It's where we get our English word "moron." They became morons. A synonym for morons is idiots. They became idiots. It's pretty accurate today to say, "Those people are a bunch of idiots." Some other synonyms are ignoramuses, imbeciles, nitwits, dingbats, numskulls; the list goes on and on. This is what they become, what they are. They profess themselves to be wise, but they are fools, because God has let them go, let them proceed in their own ways. That has resulted in "They became fools". That's where we are today.

All of these things are the reasons for this wrath of God. They became fools, which furthers the process of secularization. That which is secular of course is that which is worldly and opposite of God. Secularization is that which brings us to that point of the secular. It's sad to watch God's people fall into the process of secularization. When you're in

that process, it doesn't take long to result in you becoming secular. That's where we are today.

Nobody in their wildest imagination can say that this is a Godly nation. You have to be sound asleep to believe that. This is a secular nation. Are there people in this nation who are spiritual? Of course there are. That doesn't, however, make us a Godly nation. "Well, we say 'God bless America' and our coins say 'In God We Trust'." You can profess anything, but it doesn't make it so. It doesn't make it a fact.

They become fools, which furthers the process of secularization, which brings more of the wrath of God upon a society. There you are again, in that cycle. That's why things continue to get worse and worse. God's people who have fallen into this mind set, say, "We just need to be more politically active. We need to elect the right people." Yes, that's true. We need to elect good people. I don't deny that. However, the order is wrong. What we really need to do is trust God and lean upon God, draw from God. We need to realize we are not citizens of this country, we are citizens of heaven. We need to live as citizens of heaven, being a testimony to those who have become fools. We need to try to explain to them the word of God. It's frustrating to talk to them because it's like talking to a wall. Nevertheless, that's what we have to do.

We have to continue living for the Lord, continue trusting the Lord, realizing which direction we're headed, but also realizing the point to which we are coming is the coming of the Lord. We need to act like citizens of heaven, and not be sucked in by the process of secularization. God help us as we live in these times.

People get discouraged. We all do. But really, that should not be the case. We ought to become more and more encouraged, because we are getting closer and closer to the coming of the Lord. We ought to be anticipating the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In looking at Romans 1:22, we read, "*Professing themselves to be wise, they became [They digress] fools.*" Verse 21 is the first mention of "they become" something. They pass from one state into another. In verse 22 they pass from their vain imaginations and their foolish heart being darkened to professing themselves to be wise, digressing into that they become fools.

This furthers the process of secularization, which is the process of separating from the Lord and His word. It IS a process of removing the influence of God and His word. We have shown that the process had already begun before most of us were even born.

It's the process of removing biblical faith, biblical morals and biblical values from the public arena. It's the process of moving from absolutes to relativism. Actually, we are not in the process, because we have a secular society. We live in a secular nation. We have gotten there through the process of secularization, which is the process of moving towards acceptance and tolerance and non-judgmentalism of what is condemned by God.

A brother in the Lord was talking about right and left, meaning politically, right of center, and left of center. We ought to be right of right. I don't know of a single true conservative in the political arena, of those who are considered conservatives. None of them go far enough. We need to be right of right. We ought not to be afraid to be right of right, either.

Professing themselves to be wise, they become fools. That is a self proclaimed wisdom, it is a worldly and carnal wisdom. In their self proclaimed wisdom, people spew out such philosophies as manifested in the humanist manifestos. There are three of them. Humanist Manifesto I, II, and III, published in 1933, 1973, and 2003, respectively. The logo of the humanist manifestos is "Good with a God". It goes on to say, "Advocating progressive values ..." Their progressive values lead to no values. "Advocating progressive values and equality ..." You hear that a lot. "... equality for humanists, atheists, and freethinkers." That's how they

identify themselves. "We're freethinkers." No, they are not. Their thinking is controlled by Satan.

Manifesto I says, "The Manifesto is a product of many minds." That is supposed to be impressive, by the way. "It was designed to represent a developing point of view, ..." "The time has come for widespread recognition of the radical changes in religious beliefs throughout the modern world. The time is past for mere revision ..." That is, they want to go beyond revision. "... of traditional attitudes." It's important that we know these things, because when you hear these people talk, you recognize where they are coming from.

"Science and economic change have disrupted the old beliefs. Religions the world over are under the necessity of coming to terms with new conditions ..." In other words, they **HAVE TO** come to terms with new conditions. "... created by a vastly increased knowledge ..." Meaning, we are smarter than the old belief system of God's word. We have advanced past God's word in our knowledge. "... and experience. In every field of human activity, the vital movement is now in the direction of a candid and explicit humanism." What they are stating there is they are moving in the directions of the human and not God. That's what that means.

This was written in 1933. "There is great danger of a final, and we believe a fatal identification of the word religion with doctrines and methods which have lost their significance and which are powerless to solve the problem of human living in the Twentieth Century." That line says a lot. It's fatal. That is why they have absolutely no tolerance for the word of God. People ask that all the time. We're supposed to be tolerant of their opinions but listen to the left, they're not tolerant. They are the most intolerant group of people on this earth. Why is that? Because they believe what God's people believe is what? *Fatal!* If something is fatal to my family, that is an enemy. That makes us, God's people, the enemy, an object of hatred, because in their mind a Bible belief system is fatal and it's powerless.

They say it's powerless to solve the problems of human living in the Twentieth Century. Oh, they are doing a great job solving the human problem, aren't they. "Religions have always been means for realizing the highest values of life." But, according to the humanists, we have passed the time for and moved beyond that. "*Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.*"

At the beginning where the manifesto said, "This is the product of many minds", it certainly is. "*Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.*"

Humanist Manifesto I goes on to declare fifteen tenets. (You can look these manifestos up on the internet, and you can read them for yourself.) In these tenets, you will find such statements as, "The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained." "Religious Humanism considers the complete realization of human personality to be the end of man's life ..." That's man's goal. The human is the focus. "... and seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now."

It goes on to say, "In the place of the old attitudes involved in worship and prayer the humanist finds his religious emotions expressed in a heightened sense [Again, they have moved beyond God.] of personal life and in a cooperative effort to promote social well-being." "It follows that there will be no uniquely religious emotions and attitudes of the kind hitherto associated with belief in the supernatural." "Man will learn to face the crises of life in terms of his knowledge ..." We face our problems not in the terms of God, because they believe God is powerless to solve man's problems of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. So man learns to face the crises of life in terms of his knowledge.

"Reasonable ... attitudes will be fostered by education and supported by custom." "Believing that religion must work increasingly for joy in living, religious humanists aim to foster the creative in man and to encourage achievements that add to the satisfactions of life." It's an achievement if it gives you satisfaction. That's what that is saying.

"Religious humanism maintains that all associations and institutions exist for the fulfillment of human life." It's pretty sad when a humanist talks about the fulfillment of human life and are the same individuals that kill babies. That's a pretty sad statement. "The intelligent evaluation ..." Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools and now they talk about intelligent evaluation. "... transformation, control, and direction of such associations and institutions with a view to the enhancement of human life is the purpose and program of humanism." The enhancement of human life, but it's good without God. Life is never enhanced without God.

"Certainly religious institutions, their ritualistic forms, ecclesiastical methods, and communal activities must be reconstituted as rapidly as experience allows, in order to function effectively in the modern world." This, again, is still "Humanist Manifesto I" from 1933. The process was beginning. They began to put these people in the schools and now they're just about all that's in them. Not everybody in the schools have been brainwashed with humanism, but the vast majority have been. They may not even identify themselves as a humanist. They may not even know what a humanist is. However, that's the line they are in. That is their thinking.

It's important that we are at least aware of the agenda of humanists, because you can hear it in almost every conversation you have with people out in the world. It's there. Their brains have been saturated with it.

Romans 1, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, shows us where we are. We can get a little better understanding of why people think the way they think. You say to most people, "That's humanistic." They will ask, "What do you mean by that?" What an opportunity to tell them. Many have no idea what humanism is.

Chapter 5 - Rejection of God - Part 10

NOTE: An audio recording for the lesson covering some aspects of Humanist Manifesto II is missing. However, from the short review given here in and reading the section on "Religion" in Humanist Manifesto II, you can still learn about what was covered. The Humanist Manifesto II section on "Religion" has been included below.

Continuing with our look at humanism, it is important that we understand the times in which we live. It is important that we understand the foundations, the roots of humanism, because we are a humanistic society. In 1933 the first of the three Humanist Manifestos was written. That was not the beginning of humanism. It began in the garden with Satan's approach to Eve. "Thou shall be as Gods." That's humanism, and it's not new. Humanism has manifested itself throughout history, with Nazi Germany being a good example of an evil humanistic empire. I believe humanism is probably more evident in our day than any other time. Most people are humanists and do not even know it. Many of God's people are as well and deny it, but it's a fact.

In the last lesson, we looked at Humanist Manifesto II, under the heading of religion. Basically, they believe that religion is in the way, religion is outdated, religion does a disservice to mankind. As you understand the tenets of humanism, you can begin to understand their hatred of truth, where this hatred comes from. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

Humanist Manifesto II: Religion

"FIRST: In the best sense, religion may inspire dedication to the highest ethical ideals. The cultivation of moral devotion and creative imagination is an expression of genuine "spiritual" experience and aspiration. We believe, however, that traditional dogmatic or authoritarian religions that place revelation, God, ritual, or creed above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species. Any account of nature should pass the tests of scientific evidence; in our judgment, the dogmas and myths of traditional religions do not do so. Even at this late date in human history, certain

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elementary facts based upon the critical use of scientific reason have to be restated. We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural; it is either meaningless or irrelevant to the question of survival and fulfillment of the human race. As nontheists, we begin with humans not God, nature not deity. Nature may indeed be broader and deeper than we now know; any new discoveries, however, will but enlarge our knowledge of the natural.

“Some humanists believe we should reinterpret traditional religions and reinvest them with meanings appropriate to the current situation. Such redefinitions, however, often perpetuate old dependencies and escapisms; they easily become obscurantist, impeding the free use of the intellect. We need, instead, radically new human purposes and goals.

“We appreciate the need to preserve the best ethical teachings in the religious traditions of humankind, many of which we share in common. But we reject those features of traditional religious morality that deny humans a full appreciation of their own potentialities and responsibilities. Traditional religions often offer solace to humans, but, as often, they inhibit humans from helping themselves or experiencing their full potentialities. Such institutions, creeds, and rituals often impede the will to serve others. Too often traditional faiths encourage dependence rather than independence, obedience rather than affirmation, fear rather than courage. More recently they have generated concerned social action, with many signs of relevance appearing in the wake of the “God Is Dead” theologies. But we can discover no divine purpose or providence for the human species. While there is much that we do not know, humans are responsible for what we are or will become. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves.

“SECOND: Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful. They distract humans from present concerns, from self-actualization, and from rectifying social injustices. Modern science discredits such historic concepts as the “ghost in the machine” and the “separable soul.” Rather, science affirms that the human species is an emergence from natural evolutionary forces. As far as we know, the total personality is a function of the biological organism transacting in a social and cultural context. There is no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body. We continue to exist in our progeny and in the way that our lives have influenced others in our culture.

“Traditional religions are surely not the only obstacles to

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human progress. Other ideologies also impede human advance. Some forms of political doctrine, for instance, function religiously, reflecting the worst features of orthodoxy and authoritarianism, especially when they sacrifice individuals on the altar of Utopian promises. Purely economic and political viewpoints, whether capitalist or communist, often function as religious and ideological dogma. Although humans undoubtedly need economic and political goals, they also need creative values by which to live."

(This marks the end of the review of the missing audio recording.)

Continuing with the current lesson; It's sad when a humanist or a politician talks about ethics. It just goes through me when a politician starts talking and using the word morality. In Humanist Manifesto II, under the heading of "Ethics", they say, "We affirm that moral values derive their source from human experience. Ethics is autonomous ..." That means independent of the Bible or any standard. "... and situational ..." In other words, the situation determines what is ethical. "... needing no theological or ideological sanction." The book of Judges says that every man did that which was right in his own eyes. "Ethics stems from human need and interest." So, to humanists, ethics are autonomous, situational, not needing any theological or ideological sanction; and they stem from human needs and interests. This is what determines ethics. It goes on to say, "To deny this distorts the whole basis of life." When you and I declare the word of God as a standard of truth, in their eyes, we are attacking the whole basis of life. That makes us an enemy.

Continuing on, "Human life has meaning because we create and develop our futures. Happiness ..." Happiness ... that's humorous as well, because anytime they talk about happiness, they need to tell their face. "Happiness and the creative realization of human needs and desires, individually and in shared enjoyment, are continuous themes of humanism." Happiness is the continuous theme of humanism. But, there is no happiness outside of God. "We strive for the good life, here and now." What is "the good life"? Happiness.

They go on to say, "Reason and intelligence ..." Any time someone who has become a fool talks about reason and intelligence is scary. "Reason and intelligence are the most effective instruments that humankind possesses. There is no substitute ..." THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR REASON? The problem is they can't reason. There is no substitute for intelligence. They go on to explain, "neither faith nor passion [Zeal, religious in this case] suffices in itself. The controlled use of scientific methods, which have transformed the natural and social sciences since the Renaissance, must be extended further in the solution of human problems." They are saying that science is the remedy for human problems. Science! There's where reason and intelligence comes in. "But reason must be tempered by humility, since no group has a monopoly of wisdom or virtue. Nor is there any guarantee that all problems can be solved or all questions answered. Yet critical intelligence, infused by a sense of human caring, is the best method that humanity has for resolving problems." The best remedy is intelligence and caring. "Reason should be balanced with compassion and empathy and the whole person fulfilled." The goal is that the whole person be fulfilled.

It goes on to make these statements under the heading of "The Individual". "The preciousness and dignity of the individual person is a central humanist value." That is a bold faced lie. They talk about the preciousness and dignity of the person. They know nothing about the preciousness and dignity of human life. That is proven by their stance on abortion. But, they say it is a central humanist value.

"Individuals should be encouraged to realize their own creative talents and desires." The problem is when you deny God, your talents and desires are going in the wrong direction, pointing towards the wrong thing. "We reject all religious, ideological, or moral codes that denigrate the individual ..." Again, we are the problem. What we believe, in their minds, denigrates individuals. In other words, we are an enemy to human kind. "... suppress freedom, dull intellect, dehumanize personality." Personality means

humanity. They believe we dehumanize humanity. By simply standing for the truth, we suppress freedom, and we dehumanize personality.

"We believe in maximum individual autonomy consonant with social responsibility." Maximum individual autonomy is a scary statement. "Although science can account for the causes of behavior," I didn't know that science can account for causes of behaviour. "... the possibilities of individual freedom of choice exist in human life and should be increased." In other words, man is autonomous and he should have the right to do whatever he pleases, whatever he wants. Furthermore, no one has the right to infringe upon his right.

They go on to say, under the heading of "The Individual", "In the area of sexuality, we believe that intolerant attitudes," That's you and I, speaking of adultery and fornication. "... often cultivated by orthodox religions and puritanical cultures, unduly repress sexual conduct. The right to birth control, abortion, and divorce should be recognized. While we do not approve of exploitive, denigrating forms of sexual expression, neither do we wish to prohibit, by law or social sanction, sexual behavior between consenting adults. The many varieties of sexual exploration should not in themselves be considered "evil." Short of harming others or compelling them to do likewise, individuals should be permitted to express their sexual proclivities and pursue their lifestyles as they desire." That shouldn't be surprising. We see that all around us.

"We wish to cultivate the development of a responsible attitude toward sexuality," The problem is that when you reject God, the word responsible kind of dies. Furthermore, since everyone is autonomous, everyone has a different definition of what is responsible. "... in which humans are not exploited as sexual objects," The very ones who exploit humans as sexual objects have the audacity to say something against it.

"... and in which intimacy, sensitivity, respect, and honesty in interpersonal relations are encouraged. Moral

education for children and adults ..." In the context, this would be referring to sexual education. One of the greatest tragedies in our country is turning over to the public schools. sexual education. "Well, who's responsible for that?" Mom and dad. The problem is today, mom and dad don't have any sense. "Moral education for children and adults is an important way of developing awareness and sexual maturity." Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

In Humanist Manifesto III, it is stated in the introduction, "Humanism is a progressive ..." Humanist Manifesto III uses the word "progressive" quite often. We hear that word all the time, now. Continuing, "... a progressive philosophy of life ..." The very word progressive is deceptive. They put that out there and people think, "Wow! Things are improving. We're heading in the right direction." Nothing could be further from the truth. "... a progressive philosophy of life that, without supernaturalism ...," that means without God, "... affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment ..." There it is again, personal fulfillment, personal happiness. "... that aspire to the greater good of humanity."

You look at humanism, and ask yourself the question, "Are we headed towards the greater good? Have things gotten better?" You'd have to be a fool to think things are better and better than they have ever been.

It is also stated in Humanist Manifesto III, "Knowledge of the world is derived by observation, experimentation, and rational analysis. Humanists find that science is the best method for determining this knowledge as well as for solving problems and developing beneficial technologies. We also recognize the value of new departures in thought, the arts, and inner experience—each subject to analysis by critical intelligence."

"Humans are an integral part of nature, the result of unguided evolutionary change." Again, they think we are progressing. "Humanists recognize nature as self-existing.

We accept our life as all and enough, distinguishing things as they are from things as we might wish or imagine them to be."

With regard to ethics, "Ethical values are derived from human need and interest ... shaped by human circumstances, interests, and concerns and extended to the global ecosystem and beyond." Humanist Manifesto III addresses one world government over and over and over again. They don't use that exact phrase, "one world government", but it's everywhere. "*Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.*"

There is no right or wrong. We must be tolerant, accepting of that which is abominable to God. That's what they want us to think. This thought process has affected God's people. It's sad because a lot of God's people don't think they have the right to speak out on something. But, you do and you should. Even if they take that right away, which is coming, you should speak out. "Well, I don't want to upset ..." That's humanism. You're caught, you're trapped.

Humanism has greatly affected God's people. One could preach a message on humanism in the Lord's churches. People do not necessarily recognize it, nevertheless, it's there. We need to train ourselves to recognize it so we can be cautious and be aware of the danger all around us.

Chapter 6

Replacement of God

Chapter 6 - Replacement of God - Part 1

In several previous lessons, we have been studying Romans 1:21, where it says, *"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,"* That of course is the result of rejecting God. In their self proclaimed wisdom, they spew out such philosophies as, there is no right or wrong, we must tolerate and accept that which is an abomination to God. The result is wrong is defended, that which is right, descent, and God honoring is mocked, ridiculed, and attacked. That is evidence of professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

We now live in a "me first" society that is immersed with an entitlement attitude. People live under their baser instincts. There is the murder of babies in the name of choice. Back in 1972, 1973 when abortion was made legal, the baby could be murdered up to the first 3 months of it's life. Now they're at nine months. Right before the baby is delivered, that baby can be murdered. It won't stop there. As it goes, if you can do that, why can't you kill them when they are in kindergarten. Eventually, if we live long enough, it will get there. *"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."*

Now, there are the dysfunctional. You and I are surrounded by dysfunction. In the upcoming generations, there is dysfunction, and it has become normal. Dysfunctional is now the norm.

We are inundated with political correctness. I get a kick out of Joe Biden [Presidential candidate in 2020]. The poor guy is old enough to still say some truth every now and then. But political correctness comes along and gets him every time. I find it a little humorous. We have a government that can not function in the realm of common sense because we have become a nation of fools. These are our political leaders. These are the ones who head up academia and our nation. That leads to the next effect stated in Romans 1:23.

There is a cycle going on here. In verse 22, *"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,"* Then in verse 23, *"And [There is a continuation] changed the glory*

of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things." Verse 23 speaks of a replacement of God. So far there is a rejection of God's general revelation. That results in vain imaginations and darkened hearts. Vain imaginations and darkened hearts result in a self proclaimed wisdom in verse 22, but in reality it's utter foolishness. All of this leads to a replacement of God.

Bible history bears out that any time God is rejected, He is replaced with something. Our society has come to this point in the cycle where God is replaced. It began with a rejection of God and now there is a replacement of God. That is to say, they put false gods in the place of God.

When it says here in verse 23, *"And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God"*, they do not change God. Man does not change God. However, in their own twisted views and life; as a result of their vanity, their spiritual blindness, their self deception, thinking themselves to be wise, and in their ignorance; in their own minds they move God out of His rightful place and replace Him with something else. Here they replaced Him with creation. They reject the creator and replace Him with creation. It is the very thing that is forbidden in the first commandment.

Exodus 20:3, *"Thou shalt have no other gods before me,"* That's the very first commandment. It is a foundational commandment. It's foundational to all the other commandments. If you break the first commandment, it's just a matter of time before you break all the rest. It is the same in living. You break the first commandment, you reject God, and all of life begins to fall apart.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me." What God is saying there is, "I am number one. There are to be no other gods before me. I am to be foremost." Now, if God is number one, if God is foremost, that prevents a lot of problems. A lot of problems do not even exist if you keep God first.

God is saying He is what is most important. That's true nationally, that's true individually. You look at the lives

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of people. You look at the lives of God's people who have gone astray. They may deny it, but it doesn't change the fact that God has ceased to be what's most important to them. When that happens, you begin to replace Him. You begin with putting one thing in the place of God and before long, there are two, three, four. Before long, He isn't even on the list. This is the progression of sin.

God is saying, "I am the preeminent one, the supreme one, the predominant one. Thou shall have no other God before me." He is to be central. He is to be the main focal point. He is the purpose, the object, the aim of life. In that very first commandment, God is declaring something about himself. He is declaring Himself number one. It is the duty of the first commandment to make God our chief end. God is first. How many times have you heard it said, God is never to be next. He is always to be first. As individuals, any time we put God next, we are headed down a dangerous road. You better pray that God intervenes, because pretty soon there will be many things ahead of God. Pretty soon, there is no time for God. God is never to come next. Yet, we read in Romans 1:23 as a result of the rejection of God, they changed the glory of God. They put other things in the place of God.

Nothing is to compete with God. That's true nationally as well as individually. It's true congregationally. Nothing is to compete with God. Any time we try to "balance" there is a competition going on. Nothing is to compete with God. This is true concerning you and I as God's people. If we exchange the glory of God, if we begin to replace God, our life is going to fall apart. Dysfunction is going to become the norm. You can talk to almost anybody that's fallen into sin, and they begin to progress in that sin, it's because they broke this first commandment. Somewhere along the line, God was replaced with something else. Once you do that, it just sort of continues. God is to be first.

In this first commandment, "*Thou shalt have no other gods before me*", is not God saying, "I am God"? "Since I am God, you are to acknowledge me accordingly. Since I

am God, you are to think of me accordingly. You are to esteem, desire, believe, cleave, surrender to me accordingly." On and on we could go. Romans 1:23 is the result of breaking the first commandment. The first commandment is a statement that life is to be all about God. *"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."* That requires absolute commitment to God. When that is not there, you end up in Romans 1:23, *"And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image"*, which is a result of Romans 1:22, *"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,"* From Romans 1:23 you end up in Romans 1:24, *"Wherefore God also gave them up..."*

When you talk to someone who has gone down this road of sin, whether it be a lost person or a saved person, they begin to try and defend their wrong; *"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."* Anybody that defends wrong has become a fool. Anybody that defends what has gotten them to this place of dysfunction is a fool. It began some time back with a rejection of God. You and I do not fall overnight. Our life does not become dysfunctional overnight. It's a process. It goes on for a while. That's what we have here in Romans 1.

The first commandment requires us to recognize God as master above all. Matthew 6:24, says we can not have two masters. You will love one and hate the other. It becomes a competition. You'll serve one or the other. God is to be revered, esteemed above all else. In Psalms 89:7, *"God is greatly to be feared [Reverenced] in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all [them that are] about him."*

They began rejecting God, which is a result of irreverence, which feeds more irreverence. As irreverence is fed, pretty soon, God doesn't even exist in the minds of the people. So it is today. You look at most people, even many who profess to be God's people; it's bad enough if you and I go through a day without thinking about God, but I'm convinced there are people that go years without giving any thought of God, whatsoever. They have rejected God, and

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now through the years, they have replaced God with many, many things. The religious will try and make a little bit of time for God, just to soothe their conscience. They fall into that trap and are satisfied with that. However, that won't last long either, as their conscience becomes seared and they don't need to soothe their conscience any more. God is replaced. This applies to the unsaved and the saved as well.

Psalms 111:9, *"He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend [is] his name."* That speaks of respect for God. This cycle began with a rejection of God, a loss of respect for God. That's where it began and now we're here in Romans 1:23, where God has been replaced.

Psalms 145:1, *"I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever. Great [is] the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness [is] unsearchable. One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works."* God is to be revered, God is to be esteemed above all else.

God is to be loved above all else. Deuteronomy 6:5, says there is to be nothing to come into competition with our love for God. Not our spouse, not our children, nothing. We are to love God above all else. If we don't, then eventually, God's going to be rejected and you start into this cycle. The only way this cycle can be broken is if God intervenes. However, the cycle is that once you start this cycle, God leaves you to yourself, and one continues on. That's where we are in Romans 1.

God is to be desired above all else. If this is true of our life, we are going to be pretty safe. In Psalms 73:25, we read, *"Whom have I in heaven [but thee]? and [there is] none upon earth [that] I desire beside thee."* That needs to be true. There is none upon earth, nothing upon this earth that we desire beside God. That needs to be so in our lives. If it's not, we are going to reject God and find ourselves in

this cycle, the cycle that our nation is in.

It's true when people say of the United States, "We need to get back to God." That's true, but it's not that easy once you have rejected God. Read history. Once you reject God, most don't come back. Read the Bible. It's there, over and over.

There is a rejection of God and you begin to go down that path, and unless God intervenes, it's a path of no return. That's why when people say, "Well, I'm only going to do it this one time." You do not understand two things, the nature of sin and your own sinful nature. You don't understand the progression of sin. It's repeated all through the Bible in numerous ways, but it's still the same. It's the progression of sin.

Romans 1, is perhaps the best illustration in all the word of God of the progression of sin. It's not like you can just turn on a switch and say, "I'm going to go back to God now." It doesn't work that way. While it's true that people need to get back to God, it's easier said than done. In Isaiah 26:9 it says, "*With my soul have I desired thee* [God is to be desired. He goes on to say ...] *will I seek thee early.*"

God is to be served above all else. God told Israel this over and over again in Deuteronomy, that God must be served above all else.

We come to Romans 1, and there is this cycle of digression and it begins with "*They glorified him not as God.*" That's where it began. One many think, "That's no big deal." It's **foundational**. They rejected Him as God, and now we come to verse 23, and they have changed the glory of God into an image, into a thing. Paul states it in another form in Romans 1:25, "*Who changed the truth of God into a lie,*" He is basically saying the same thing as he did in verse 23, just in a little different way. They changed the truth of God into a lie, the result of which is, they, "*worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.*"

They changed, they exchanged, they traded the truth of God for a lie. That's what Esau did. He made a trade, he

made an exchange. Any time we reject God, that's what we are doing. We are going to come out on the short end every time. It's a bad exchange every time, whether it be God Himself, or whether it be the truth of God. They changed the truth of God into a lie. Here we are, as a result, a society surrounded by more idols than ever before. In the history of our land, there have never been this many idols. By next year there will be more.

These idols, these false gods, they leer at us from billboards, magazine covers, they call us from the television, radio, computer, cellphone, whatever; they want to capture our attention. They do a good job. People who are in advertising are not ignorant. They have studied the human mind. They have some knowledge of human nature. They direct that, whether it be just music in a store, it is all designed to capture your attention, your interest, to get your money. That's the goal, of course, in advertising. They want to capture your time, your commitment; all things that should be captured by God.

Anything and everything can become an idol. A little child can become an idol, a grandchild can become an idol. Anything can become an idol. Idolatry can lay in lawful things and unlawful things. It is all a matter of where you put it. There is nothing wrong with owning things. It's lawful. But, when you put it ahead of God, it's now sin. It's now idolatry.

Whatever gives a back seat to God is an idol. That is where this cycle begins. This rejection of God, which leads to vanity, which leads to spiritual blindness, which leads to self deception and ignorance. In all of that, they move God out of His rightful place and replace Him with something else. That is testified loud and clear when you get into your car on Sunday morning, and you head to church. There aren't many others doing that. They are out mowing their lawns, washing their boat, camper, out at the ball field, and no time for God. That didn't just happen overnight. It's a cycle.

It's going to continue to digress. As a nation it's

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going to continue, but as individuals, God may intervene and save a soul and get them on the right track, or God may intervene in a saved person's life and get them back on the right track. However, over all, it is a cycle of digression that does not improve over time.

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In Romans 1:23, it says, *"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."* This is an advancement, a progression upon verse 22, *"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."*

We spent a lot of time on verse 22, *"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."* Every day, you can read a headline and you could write that verse above it. Most of you probably have seen that the San Francisco city board of supervisors decided to ban certain words, such as "convicted felons". They are not going to call them convicted felons anymore. Instead, they are going to call them "justice involved individuals". The people that they committed crimes against are also going to be "justice involved individuals." What does that do? It puts them on the same level as the criminals. *"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."* San Francisco, right now (2020) has the highest crime rate of any city in the country. This is their solution. It's amazing. Their solution is not more police. Their solution is, "We just won't call them felons anymore."

They are also going to do away with the term, "juvenile delinquents" and call them "young people impacted by the juvenile system". That makes it sound like it's the justice system's fault. This is their solution to the problem of crime. These are the elected individuals who, *"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools"*. It says the same thing about the people that elected them. Romans 1:22 is proven everyday.

Then, in verse 23, they replace God. It's a violation of the very first commandment, which is foundational. *"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."* Anything that gives a back seat to God is an idol. They take God out of His rightful place and replace Him with something else. That has been going on for a long, long time.

To replace God is utter foolishness. *"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools"*. Then in Psalms 135:15, we find, *"The idols of the heathen [are] silver and*

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gold, the work of men's hands." Think about the heathen. Heathen are anybody who puts something ahead of God. That's heathenistic. Speaking of their idols, Psalms 135 continues in verse 16-17, *"They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there [any] breath in their mouths."* In other words, these individuals settle for shadows rather than substance.

This becomes degrading. In verse 18, *"They that make them are like unto them: [so is] every one that trusteth in them."* That idol is dumb, has no life. *"They that make them"* and trust them are like them. To replace God is degrading. Those *"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools"* don't look at it as degrading. They look at it as, "We're progressing."

In Jeremiah 2:5, *"Thus saith the LORD, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?"* They not only walk after emptiness, they have become vain. They have become empty. It all starts with a rejection of God's general revelation. That leads to vain imaginations, which leads to darken hearts. That results in self proclaimed wisdom, which in reality is a digression in thought process. That leads to a replacement of God. We will replace God.

That leads to the next thing in Romans 1, which is in verse 25, *"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."* Some may look at this verse and say it is just a repeat of verse 23. In a sense, it is. It's a further step away from God. They not only replace God, but in verse 25, life is now about self. Life is about the temporal. When you replace God, that changes the meaning of life. That changes the focus, the priority of life. The key here is, they worshiped and served the creature, created things, more than the creator. Life has now become about self and temporal things.

That describes the world today. Life is about self, about the temporal. Overall, generally speaking, that is so.

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People worship and serve the creature more than the creator. That is not only so for unsaved people, it is so of God's people who have fallen into this cycle of digression. They put the creature ahead of the creator. They put creation ahead of the creator. The creature, created things, including themselves, becomes the focus in life.

When you replace God, that eventually leads to a "me" centered, temporal centered life. The temporal becomes the purpose of life, the supreme thing in life. What does that mean? That means that you have a life of misplaced purpose. Purpose defines everything in life.

You have a life of misplaced values. If the focus is upon self, you have a self value system in which everyone determines their own value. There is no standard of measurement and there are no values. When the temporal becomes the meaning of life, and then vanishes away as temporal things do, life has no real meaning, life becomes meaningless. If life is meaningless, that affects values.

When the temporal becomes the pursuit of life, that results in a life of misdirection. We have a life of misplaced purpose, misplaced values, no real meaning, and a life of misdirection. When God is replaced, when life is about self and the temporal, the temporal becomes the dominating factor in life. When that is so, you have a life of enslavement.

Today, we see people talking about freedom, and they are slaves. There are a lot of slave masters in the United States. There are a lot of slave masters throughout the world. Romans 6:16 says, "*Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants [His slaves.] ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, [If your slave master is sin, that road is going to take you to death.] or of obedience unto righteousness?*" Everybody is controlled by something or someone. We, of course, are to yield to God. The temporal becomes the focus, the dominating factor in life, you have a life of enslavement.

When the temporal becomes man's hope in life, you have a life of disappointment. This is life today. The

temporal is man's hope in life. That's why people talk about the economy so much. That's where their hope is. We all enjoy a good economy, we all want that. But that's not the main focus, for you and I. For those who put their hope in the temporal, it's going to be a life of disappointment.

The word of God teaches that God is the source of life. Man has moved away from God. In man's vain imaginations and darkened heart, self proclaimed wisdom and foolishness, he views the temporal as the source of his life. Everything is disorder, chaos. Man moves away from God, living his life detached from God. Then he lives his life in close relationship and association with the temporal. The temporal becomes everything, and life is no longer joyful. Life is no longer sweet and fulfilling. Life becomes an exasperation and annoyance, and empty.

Listen to these people who, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools". They are angry individuals. They are not happy. Regardless of where you are, just sit and watch people. You won't see too many people happy. because. There aren't very many people who do not find life to be an annoyance and just empty. It all begins with a rejection of God. That eventually leads to a replacement of God, which leads to a life that is about the temporal. They worshiped and served the creature, created things, more than the creator.

Man, in this state of departure from God and with vain imaginations, darkness of heart, gives preeminence to the temporal. He desires, revels in, and thinks upon the temporal. He loves the temporal rather than God. The temporal includes himself. Man becomes a god to himself. That's where we are. Then, he worships the creature or the temporal and he serves the creature or the temporal. Man reverences these things, exalts them, honors, gives preeminence to, desires, revels, thinks about, loves these things rather than God. He has become a god to himself. Not only does he worship these things, he serves them. Man gives his life to the temporal. They give their lives to that which will ruin them, destroy them, make them miserable,

ruin their home. They give their life unto these things.

They feel that the temporal is the reason that they are here. It's their god. Everything becomes self and temporal centered. We live in the era of the narcissists, where narcissists are raising narcissists. It's just going to get worse and worse and worse. The result is many very serious and destructive problems. We have problems we have never had before. We are going to have problems that you and I can not even imagine. That's where this stuff leads.

The culture of narcissism fosters such things as discontent, restlessness and it feeds dysfunction. The emotional and spiritual devastation caused by narcissism has not been fully comprehended. The monster of self has been unleashed in our society. What a destructive monster it is. Now we live in a society that is overcome with the idea of self importance, the overestimation of abilities, the inflation of so-called accomplishments, expecting constant attention, constant admiration. It is an obsession with self. That's what happens when you replace God. The results are manifold.

The cycle so far is; reject God; that leads to vanity; vanity as it progresses leads to spiritual blindness; spiritual blindness leads to self deception and ignorance; as that progresses, it leads to a replacement of God; then life eventually loses its meaning, life loses its purpose. The cycle continues throughout generations.

The cycle accelerates as it goes. In the last ten years, that cycle has accelerated at an unbelievable rate. It's going to accelerate more. It's going to keep picking up speed. The consequences become more and more grave and more and more widespread. The politicians and the educators talk about fixing the problem. They don't even know what the problem is. They don't realize ***they are the problem.***

This cycle just leads to a greater judgment from God. It is the result of the judgment of God and leads to a greater judgment of God. Since the fall of man in the garden, we see this deadly cycle. History has been marked by this cycle. The book of Judges is basically a summary of that cycle over and over. It's where we are today.

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Let's look at the subject of philosophy. I can remember philosophy class in college, thinking it was extremely boring. However, it is something interesting if you look back, you can get a better picture of where we are today. (None of this is new, by the way. It goes back to Genesis 3.) Georg Frederick Hegle was a German philosopher, at the time just before Adolf Hitler. He presented the concept of *dialectic materialism*. What does that mean? Simply put, here is what he says; you have this idea, and it is "attacked" by an opposite idea, and out of that comes a new truth. That's why they always want to "discuss" matters. They believe that ideas can present new truth. They have already rejected truth. They want "new truth." ***(Those two words, "new truth", are very dangerous. There are no new truths. The book of Ecclesiastics states as much. There is no new truth.)***

This philosophy is deeply rooted in the idea that there is no absolute truth. They think that truth is constantly evolving. You might be thinking, "What does that have to do with anything." It has a lot to do with everything. The public education system goes back to these philosophies. Hegle's foundation is that there is no absolute truth. That makes man the determiner of truth.

Hegel also added the concept of two spheres. You have a public sphere, you have a private sphere. The two never ever come together. They are two opposites. The idea is that the spiritual is never to influence the public. Never! They are two separate entities. There are a lot of God's people that think that way. They believe they can behave however they want on their job. They have their church life and they have their church. That goes back to the garden. It goes back to Hegle's philosophy. If you have spirituality, you must keep that separate from the public. It's the same today, that spirituality does not belong in government. It's the same idea. These are not new thoughts. There are no new thoughts. It goes back to Hegle, to his philosophy. He got his philosophy from before that, and eventually traces itself back to Satan.

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There is no correlation between private and public. That's why there are God's people who can vote for people who do not line up with what they profess spiritually. You see, they don't have a problem because to them it's two separate things. It's like they are living two separate lives. "Yes, I believe this, but that's my private life, and my private life is never to effect my public so I can vote for someone who believes in abortion or whatever." There are no new theories.

Along comes Karl Marx. He advances on Hagel's philosophy of dialectic materialism by adding some of his own thoughts. He said that God is a creation of man. Religion is the drug of the people. Religion is just a drug and that the state is to be the absolute authority over a man's life and the state determines what is right or wrong. With Hegel, you have this idea, and an opposite idea, and these two conflict and then you come up with a new truth. Karl Marx takes it further by saying it is the state that determines what is true, what is right, what is wrong. We are right back there today. These are no new philosophies. They just feed upon old philosophies, worded a little different. They are basically the same thing.

Sigmund Freud comes along, known as the father of modern day psychology. He adds the idea of central desires. The idea is that all of man's motivations are based upon physical desires. In order to fulfill those desires there is no absolute right or wrong, but all is relative to man fulfilling his desire. Again, we are right back there today. That's why when these people are talking about progressing, they are not progressing, but digressing. They are going back to old ideas that have been around for thousands of years. They think this is something new. There's nothing new about it.

John Dewey, takes all of these philosophies and makes them the foundation of progressive education, establishing a humanistic approach to education. John Dewey studied the philosophies of these individuals and took a little of all of them and became the father of education. Now we have generations that have developed the mindset of

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these philosophies. That's why people think the way they think today. Their foundation is built upon false philosophies.

We have to have some understanding of where these things come from. They are not new ideas. They are going backwards to old philosophies. I get a kick and not in a humorous way when the liberals talk about the conservatives who won't let go of "the old ideas". They are the same and won't let go of a different set of old ideas. They think they have come up with all these things as a result of their thought process, but, there's nothing new. It all goes back to Satan and philosophers through the years.

God help us to be able to identify all the foolishness that goes on all around us in the world today.

Chapter 7

God Gave Them Up

Romans 1:18 through the end of the chapter helps us to understand what's going on in the world in which we live. Verse 23 says, "*They changed ...*" They didn't change God but they, "... *changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.*" In other words, they replaced God. Becoming fools; again, it all began with rejection of God; they now have replaced God with other things

Now, here we are thousands of years later with Generations that have developed the mindset of, basically, four fundamentals. It all goes back to this rejection of God. You look at the world today and you will find, in most people, this mindset that consists of four fundamental errors.

First there is *moral relativism*. Simply put, what is right or wrong is decided by culture or by social location, or the situation. The Bible does not determine, God does not determine, what is right or wrong. Culture decides what is right or wrong. This is why people will say, "Everyone else is doing it." That means they've determined that this is okay, because of an area you live in, or because of the situation, or the circumstances.

The next is *autonomous individualism*. This means all moral authority comes from within the individual. "It's my life, I can do with it whatever I want." That's autonomous individualism. It's a mindset where each individual is the arbiter of their own morality. If I don't think it's wrong then it's not wrong. It may be wrong for you, but it's not wrong for me because I don't see it as wrong. Autonomous individualism.

We hear much today about individualism. Abortion would be a case that would fall under autonomous individualism. "It's my body." The truth is we're talking about two bodies and one of them isn't yours. It goes back to this mindset of autonomous individualism. If you accuse someone that they were of the mindset of autonomous individualism, they would deny it. They wouldn't know what you're talking about. It's everywhere. People have

developed and been taught this mindset for many, many years.

Narcissistic hedonism. The focus is upon achieving personal pleasure. It's all about personal pleasure.

Then there's *reductive naturalism*, which basically means the only reliable knowledge is found in what you can see, hear, and feel. That of course does away with faith. The only reliable knowledge is found in what you can see, hear, and feel.

All of these are manifestations of this cycle that we see here in Romans 1. It is an insane cycle of destruction that is laid out here in this first chapter of Romans. These four things, these four erroneous mindsets, are in all of us to some degree. If you listen to people talk, you find these things all the time. They permeate our culture. It causes us to see how people think, how they reason, how they come to the conclusions they come to. We may observe their conclusions and the reasoning of people; and we may stand back and shake our heads, but if we can understand the cycle, we can see how they got there and what the problem really is.

These four errors have impacted man's view of God, of himself, of life. What happens is, life becomes based in atheism, or secularism. The idea is that man is his own god. Man is in charge. Each individual is his own god. That's how we get to the narcissistic society that we now live in.

The cycle continues. One generation teaches it to the next and it continues on. God is the only one who can break the cycle. I don't believe God is going to break the cycle for a nation. I believe He will break it for individuals. That will be the "remnant" of people. The cycle continues, accelerates and feeds itself throughout the generations. The consequences become more grave and widespread. Each consequence leads to the judgment of God. As the consequences grow the judgment of God grows as well.

As we were speaking upon the judgment of God, there are different types of God's judgment. Most people when they think of God's judgment they think of cataclysmic

earthquakes, floods, things of that sort. That's the Judgment of God. It may be, it may not be. But there's a more severe Judgment of God and that is, as people reject God and begin to progress through the cycle, God turns them over to themselves. That's what's being talked about here in Romans 1. That's where we are as a nation. Not only our nation but pretty much worldwide. God is turning people over to themselves. What happens is the cycle accelerates, which leads to greater judgment.

This brings us to verse 24, "*Wherefore* [Because of all these things we've mentioned.] *God also gave them up.*" He turned them over. "*Wherefore.*" For this reason or this purpose God gave them up. This is the judgment of God. God giving them over to themselves has very serious consequences, which is only going to lead to the next cause of God's wrath. You have man progressing in his sinful ways and at the same time you have the wrath of God progressing. God just letting them go.

Now in verse 24, "*God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:*" Look at that statement. God gave them up to uncleanness, to impurity, to moral defilement. He just let them go. They progress in impurity and world defilement. This is through the lust of their own hearts. Do not lay the fault on God. God's just giving them over to their own hearts, what they would naturally do, "... *through the lust* [Or desires.] *of their own hearts.*" Remember these hearts are spiritually darkened. They've rejected God, "...*to dishonour* [That is to disgrace.] *their own bodies between themselves.*"

Rejection of a natural knowledge of God results in vain imaginations, darkened hearts, self-deception and ignorance, a replacement of God, and obsession with self. Now we see in verse 24, a sex-obsessed, sex-crazed, sex-saturated society and culture. Here we are in a society and culture where the blatant expression of sexuality is in the forefront.

There is a constant bombardment of inappropriate

sexuality that man, because he's become a fool, sees absolutely nothing wrong with. We are constantly assaulted. Not just we adults, either. The children are constantly assaulted with sexual innuendo and inundated with the message and enticements of a sexuality that is distorted and unbiblical.

The Bible teaches God has set the boundaries for sexuality. But, man has rejected God and has become his own God. Now man with his mind determines what is right or society determines what's right. "It's okay," they will say for me to live with my girlfriend or vice versa. It's just the way the world is. Well, that's society determining what's right or wrong. That's twisted and it's a violation of the boundaries that God has set.

Boundaries serve a lot of purposes. One of the purposes of boundaries is protection. Many people look at boundaries as a restriction. They think that's unfair. But, boundaries can be for our own protection. God has set boundaries and when man goes beyond the boundaries of God, he is now outside of that hedge. He's in great Danger.

There is a sacredness that permeates the process of reproduction. In Genesis 2, you have the creation of humans, specifically stated male and female. That is repeated in Genesis 2:22. God made them male and female. That's God's design. Man, in his foolishness, thinks he can change God's design. That's God's design male and female.

As you read on, God brought the woman, female. (We have to stress, nowadays, the God created female. It's not a person who just decided they wanted to be a female.) God brought the God created female to the God created male. God did this. There was an establishment of marriage between man and woman. God created man. God created woman. God created male. God created female. God brings them together in Genesis 2:24.

Christ addressing the subject of marriage, made reference to that fact. Notice in Mark 10:7-9, "*For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; [His wife! That's NOT someone else's wife!] And they*

twain [Male and female, man and woman, in marriage.] shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain [Or two.] but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

You have the boundaries of marriage. God directly performed this marital union between Adam, the male, and Eve, the female. That is God's ordained plan for marriage; male and female. Man today will say, "Well that's not politically correct. Marriage can be between two males, between two females." No it can't. Not in God's eyes. God set the boundaries. If you have a problem with that, take it up with God. God established the boundary, male and female, within the bounds of marriage.

God placed honor upon marriage. In Hebrews 13:4, it says that marriage is honorable as God ordained it in the garden.

God established marriage for particular reasons. One was for the propagation of children. He told Adam and Eve, husband and wife, to be fruitful and multiply. Genesis 1:27-28. So, one of the reasons for marriage was reproduction.

One of the other reasons for marriage was for the benefit of man and woman. Genesis 2:18 says, "*And the LORD God said, [It is] not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet [A helper, fit.] for him.*" It was for the good of man.

It is also a preventative of immorality. 1st Corinthians 7:2 says, "*Nevertheless, to avoid fornication [Notice those two words, avoid fornication] let every man have his own wife and every woman have her own husband,*" It is to prevent fornication. Fornication is sex outside of marriage. Marriage is to prevent that. That's one of the purposes of marriage.

It is stated in Genesis 2:25, concerning Adam and Eve, "*... they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*" They were not ashamed because marriage is honorable. The words, "*the man and his wife*" are of great significance. God even sets bounds for

nakedness. It's for a man and his wife, not out there in the streets. God's definition of nakedness is quite different than man's definition of nakedness.

We want to establish that this cycle has now led to sexual impurity. God has established, has set boundaries for sexuality. What society says, what society believes has no bearing upon the God set boundaries. It does not change God's boundaries. When people remind us of what century it is, it doesn't matter. God's boundaries are still the same.

If man would just live within the boundaries of God, life would be enjoyable. You wouldn't have the problems that you have. Once those boundaries are crossed you have problems.

Chapter 7 - God Gave Them Up - Part 2

In Romans 1, we started looking at the evidence and progression of God's wrath. That brought us to verse 24, "*Wherefore* [Because they've rejected God.] *God also gave them up* [He let go.] *to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts*" Notice God did not put these desires in their hearts. He just let him go to fill the desires of their own hearts. The problem is the desires of their own hearts. The problem is not God. "... *through the lust of their own hearts to dishonour* [To dishonor is a very important word.] *their own bodies between themselves.*" God gave them up to impurity. This impurity as a result of the lust of their own hearts. What we have here in verse 24 is sexual immorality. Which of course increases as time goes on. Today, sexual immorality is a very common, and sadly, accepted form of behavior.

We saw in the previous lesson that God has set the bounds of sexual relations. He brought Adam and Eve together as husband and wife, male and female as God created them. Then we read in Genesis 2:25, "... *they were both naked, the man and his wife,*" I've had people say, "Well, they were naked so nothing wrong with it." What don't you understand about the man and his wife and the nakedness is in the context of the man and his wife. It's not public nudity. It's the man and his wife and they were not ashamed. People will take that and say there's no shame in public nudity. Well, that's not what the Bible says and you're really twisting scripture to develop that thought process from this verse. They were not ashamed as husband and wife, the man and his wife.

1st Corinthians 7 says, in the first couple verses "*let every man have his own wife.*" It doesn't say let every man have **a wife**, but rather, let every man have **his own wife**. She doesn't belong to anyone else. Again, it's not let every woman have **a husband**. It says. "... *let every woman have her own husband.*"

The sacredness, the bounds that God has set, that is to permeate the process of reproduction is this; the man and his own wife, her own husband; that's the bounds. It is

absolutely sickening when God's people try to defend the sexual impurity of their children or their grandchildren. There is no defense for it. God has set the bounds at the man and his own wife, her own husband. There's a sacredness about it.

Hebrews 13:4 says, "*Marriage [is] honourable.*" Going back to Romans 1:24, we read that word "dishonorable." To continue in Hebrews 13:4, "*Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed is undefiled.*" What bed is he talking about? He's talking about the marriage bed. The marriage bed is undefiled because that's within the bounds that God has set.

The sexual relationship which is necessary for reproduction as God created it and designed it is within the bounds of marriage. That was pure, that was wholesome, and still is. God's bounds are pure. Sex in the animal kingdom serves only one purpose; that is reproduction. That's what many have brought sex down to in human level is they've made it like the animals.

Within the bounds of God, God creates a sexual interest and appeal in human beings for the purpose of reproduction. Again, we have to state male and female. However, it goes beyond that. It's also an expression of love between a husband and wife. People outside of marriage say, "Well, I love them." Maybe you do, but that doesn't make sexual relations right. It has to be within the bounds of marriage if it's going to maintain its sacredness.

In ordaining sexual relations between male and female, as husband and wife, sex was created for marriage between male and female. God created male and female and he created them with a sexual drive. But he also designed marriage as the only outlet of sexual expression and the sexual act. By design of God, marriage is between a man and a woman. Marriage is the only acceptable place where sexual needs are to be met. The only place. That's God's design.

That seems strange today to many. That's out of date to many. That's because of what we've become as a society.

We are a sexually impure society. There's always been sexual impurity since the fall of Man. The sad thing is today it's accepted.

I can remember there was a girl, she was a couple years older than me and lived across the street from us where I was growing up. She got pregnant. I never saw her again. I don't know what happened to her. Nothing was said, but I never saw her again. Her parents sent her away. I'm not saying that's right. I'm just bringing that up to show the difference. There's a big difference between that and what we have today. What we have today is, "We're going to defend it." There's no defense. It's wrong, it's impure, but it's become accepted today.

We will teach on homosexuality in a future lessons. I stand here and I'll tell you; I may be with the Lord by the time it happens; but I tell you if the Lord doesn't come back, homosexuality will be accepted in Baptist Churches. It will be defended. It'll get in the same way that all other sexual impurity gets in. Someone's child or someone's grandchild that's a church member. People say, "Oh, that will never happen." That's what they said about divorce and remarriage. It'll happen. That's what they said about a lot of things. It will happen and will always get in the same way. It will happen. I hope I'm not here when it does, but it's going to happen.

Sex outside of marriage is always illicit. It's always a defilement. It's plainly stated in the seventh commandment. "*Thou shall not commit adultery.*" That command prohibits all sexual expressions, gestures, advancements, or acts outside the realm of husband and wife.

Adultery is a husband or wife seeking happiness and sexual satisfaction through someone other than their spouse. That's adultery. It is sexual relations between a married man and someone other than his wife or married woman and someone other than her husband. That's adultery. Such is forbidden, plainly condemned, throughout the word of God. Sexual satisfaction is not to be sought, is not to be promoted outside of husband and wife. For someone to say, "Well, if

they would have been a better wife or if they would have been a better husband.” Stop! Just stop! That's nonsense. People have to take some responsibility for their acts. Quit blaming everyone else. They have to take responsibility.

Under the umbrella of adultery is fornication. It's the same act but there is a difference. Fornication is sexual relations between unmarried people. Adultery involves married people. If a man who was married, has sexual relations with a woman who is not married, he's committing adultery, she's committing fornication. Same act, but different terminologies. You say, “Well, what's the point?” It's a big point when you come to the sermon on the mount and Jesus speaks upon the subject of divorce. That's where fornication comes in; people need to understand the difference between the two. Both adultery and fornication are condemned throughout all the word of God.

What is so sad today is not just that it's so common, and it is, but it's approved of by many of God's people. They won't come out and say verbally, “I approve of sexual relations outside of marriage,” but they approve of it with their actions. They will go out of their way to tell you they don't approve, but they do.

In 1st Corinthians 6:13, the latter part of the verse, “*Now the body [is] not for fornication,*” These people who say, “It's my body. I can have sexual relations with whoever I want.” Well, the Bible says the body is not for fornication. The body is for the Lord. It's not for impurity. Verse 18 says, “Flee fornication.” Flee it, don't play around with it. Don't play around with that which leads to it. You do not put yourself in those positions. Someone will say, “Well I'm strong and I'm spiritually mature enough to be in that position.” The very fact that you put yourself in that position shows that you're spiritually immature.

Notice Ephesians 5:3, “*But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;*” It's not becoming of the child of God. It should not once be named amongst us.

1st Thessalonians 4:3-4, “*For this is the will of God,*

[even] your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: [Same umbrella adultery and fornication] That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel [These bodies] in sanctification and honour;” We have that word again “honor.” That which glorifies God.

In Hebrews 13:4, “*Marriage [is] honourable in all, and the bed [The marriage bed.] undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*” The lie of safe sex has been propagated for decades, but here's the truth. There is no safe sex outside of the God set boundaries of husband and wife.

Both adultery and fornication are widely accepted today. Marriage is honorable. But God gave them over to dishonor their bodies between themselves. Fornication and adultery, sexual impurity is a result of a depraved heart. The problem is not “everyone else is doing it.” I mean that's a problem, but that's not the root problem.

The problem is a heart problem. In Mark 7 beginning with verse 19, the Pharisees are upset because someone wasn't washing their hands. “*Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.*” Not unwashed hands but it's what comes out of the heart. “*For from within, out of the heart of men, [And may I say it cannot come out of the heart of men if it's not in the heart of man] proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, ...*” It goes on and mentions many sins. They proceed from the heart. In Galatians 5:19-21 it says one of the works of the flesh is adultery and fornication.

Both adultery and fornication are destructive. People don't seem to understand that today. There's dysfunction everywhere. Families are dysfunctional and much of it is due to the fact that God's boundaries have been ignored. They don't make the connection. They think they've just had a run of bad luck. No, you've had a run of sin. You've disobeyed God. Now you have children by multiple people and the whole family unit is a mess. They want to blame it

on everybody and everything else. That's what I mean by "it's accepted" today. People don't make the connection that it's destructive. Anything outside of the bounds that God has set is going to cause destruction, is going to lead to dysfunction.

Beginning in Proverbs 5:1, the first few verses just show the destruction. "*My son, attend unto my wisdom, [and] bow thine ear to my understanding: That thou mayest regard discretion, and [that] thy lips may keep knowledge. For the lips of a strange woman drop [as] an honeycomb,*" Oh they seem so harmless. "*and her mouth [is] smoother than oil: But her end ...*" People need to understand there are consequences. There are consequences to actions. "*But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword.*" Sounds destructive and harmful to me. "*Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell. Lest thou shouldst ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, [that] thou canst not know [them]. Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth. Remove thy way far from her,*" That's the remedy. Far from her. As far as you can get. You do not play with this. "*... and come not nigh the door of her house: Lest thou give thine honour [There it is again.] unto others, and thy years unto the cruel:*" It's destructive.

Verse 10, "*Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth;*" It leads to poverty. A brother read a verse about that this morning. "*... and thy labours [be] in the house of a stranger;*" It's enslaving. I'm talking about sexual impurity. It's true of all sin. "*And thou mourn at the last,*" It doesn't bring happiness. How many times people say, "Well, it just makes me happy." It might in the moment, but misery is coming. "*... when thy flesh and thy body are consumed,*" It's destructive.

In Proverbs 7, there are the same warnings. Solomon, of course, fell into these sins. Solomon is writing to his son about his (Solomon's) own mistakes (his sins) and the misery that brought him. If you fall into these sins, at least have enough sense to warn others. Proverbs 7:5, "*That*

they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger [which] flattereth with her words.” The Bible uses *woman*, but it works both ways. “*For at the window of my house I looked through my casement,*” Okay, get the picture; Solomon is looking out his window, looking out into the street. Here's what he saw. “*And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding,*” How many young men are void of understanding? “*Passing through the street near her corner;*” Remove thy way far from her. This man's void of understanding. He goes near to her corner. “*... and he went the way to her house,*” Notice the progression. He went near her corner, and he wound up at her house. “*In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night: And behold there met him a woman. With the attire of a harlot.*” There is such a thing as the attire of a harlot. Why would any father want their daughter to wear the attire of a harlot is beyond me. “*... and subtil of heart. (She [is] loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house: She can't stay put. ... now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.) So she caught him, and kissed him, [and] with an impudent face said unto him,*” Someone will say, “Well, it's her fault. She's the one who took the initiative.” He went near her corner and did so on purpose. He's at fault. I'm not saying she isn't, but he's responsible as well. “*[I have] peace offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows. Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee. I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved [works], with fine linen of Egypt. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning:*” That is the mindset of many. Let us take our fill. “*... let us solace ourselves with loves.*” Let us comfort ourselves. This is so enjoyable. “*For the goodman [is] not at home,*” My husband is not at home. “*... he is gone a long journey:*” Not only is he not at home, I know he's not going to be home for a while. “*He hath taken a bag of money with him, [and] will come home at the day appointed.*” So she knew when to

expect him. *“With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter; [Destructive] or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it [is] for his life. You’ll ruin your life. Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth. Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths. For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong [men] have been slain by her. Her house [is] the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.*

Sexual impurity is destruction. It is destructive to life. It'll ruin individuals. It will destroy the family unit. It is draining upon finances. Proverbs 6:26, *“For by means of a whorish woman [a man is brought] to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life.”* The prodigal son in Luke 15:30 spent all of his living upon harlots. It'll drain you financially. There are people today who have crossed, they have violated, they have ignored God's set boundaries. They're now paying alimony to who knows how many and child support to who knows how many children and they ought to. They can never get out of the hole. “Oh, I feel so bad for him. They just had it so rough.” Why do they have it so rough? Because that's what sin does. That's what the Bible says. They're going to be poor. They're going to be poor most of the time. It's destructive.

The same thing here in Romans 1:24, is it's accepted today. It's the norm. It's the normal thing. That's where we are here in Romans 1. God just gave them over. When the norm is the violation of God's boundaries, you've got a society sinking fast in destruction, and that's where we are today.

Chapter 7 - God Gave Them Up - Part 3

Continuing in Romans 1:24, *“Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:”* We have come to the part of the cycle of sexual immorality, which is not only the reason for God's judgment, but it is also an aspect of God's judgment. He just gives them up to where their hearts lust will take them. That of course brings more reasons for God to judge. That's the whole cycle here in Romans 1.

In the last lesson, we learned that adultery and fornication is destructive. We see that in Proverbs and illustrated in many ways throughout the word of God. Certainly if you open your eyes and look around, you see it illustrated all around you. It's destructive and draining upon finances. If you look around today at people you know, adultery and fornication has drained their finances, put them in a financial bind, maybe for their entire life. There are consequences to adultery and fornication.

Adultery and fornication are also ensnaring. It brings a trap in one's life, which is illustrated throughout the word of God. Again if you look around, you see people ensnared everywhere, due to adultery and fornication. Life isn't easy for them. In Proverbs 23:27, *“For a whore [is] a deep ditch; [Not easy to get out of] and a strange woman [is] a narrow pit.”* Many are stuck in a very deep ditch. That's where they live due to their own sins. There are and have been people who have committed adultery and fornication, that didn't set out that day to do that. People will say all the time, “I didn't mean for it to happen.” That may be so, but that doesn't do away with the consequences of such. It's ensnaring, it's degrading, shameful.

Jeremiah 5:7-8 is the cycle of sexual immorality, *“... thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by [them that are] no gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses.”* This is willful. *“They were [as] fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife.”* That's part of sexual immorality. Everyone “neighed” or

bellowed after his neighbor's wife. We've tried to stress in the past two lessons, it's her husband, his wife. That's the bounds that God has set. Adultery and fornication impairs the mind. In Hosea 4:11 it says, "*Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart.*"

From all of this there is the violation of the marriage bed. The lust of depraved man leads to all sorts of issues, all sorts of problems and now, as Romans chapter 1 tells, there is a cycle of sexual immorality. In other words, there's a continuance of violating the marriage bed.

Romans 1, teaches that, if a society continues long enough in any sin, it eventually becomes an amoral society. Immersion in immorality leads to amorality. Though there is some common ground between immorality and amorality, they're not the same. There's no question we are in an amoral society, an amoral culture, which is really worse immorality. It's part of this cycle. Where there is amorality you can be sure there's much immorality. There is a distinction in that. not all immorality is amoral, but all amorality is immoral. Rampant immorality leads to amorality, which leads to more and more immorality. That's the cycle we see in Romans 1.

Amorality is the failure to conform to God's standards and principles of morality. Any violation of God's principles of morality is immoral. We realize the world does not think that way and the reason is because they *are* immoral. The truth is any violation of God's standard of purity, which is husband and wife, is immorality. Amorality is a lack of moral sense and understanding of morals. There's a big difference. For example, someone can commit an act of immorality, and immediately feel guilty, feel dirty. They confess and say, "Lord, forgive me." They've committed immorality and they feel this guilt. An amoral person doesn't see anything wrong with it to begin with. That's a big difference. They have no moral compass. That's where we are today.

How did we get there? The same way any society gets there is a continuance in immorality. You continue long

enough, you become hardened to it. It becomes the norm, the custom. "It's what everybody's doing. Everybody does it. There's nothing wrong with it." That's an amoral society. That's why you can sit down with people today, and show them, "This is wrong." They don't see it. They have no understanding of God's standards. What is that going to lead to? It's going to lead to more immorality and more immorality leads to more amorality. It's a horrible cycle for a nation or society to be caught in.

Amorality is basically having no moral standards or very, very few; having no moral restraints or principles; no moral restraints whatsoever. People think, "This is my right to live in adultery and fornication." It's unawareness of, an indifference towards God's principles. You can show someone, "This is wrong," and they say, "I don't see anything wrong with it." They're amoral. They're in serious trouble. It's apathy concerning questions of right or wrong. If you're in amorality long enough pretty soon there is no right or wrong. There's no "compass", no standard.

Amorality is worse than immorality in the sense that it is the advanced stage of immorality and the result of prolonged and persistent immorality. It is where we are as a society and what Romans 1:24 is talking about. Society is in an advanced stage of immorality.

Immorality and amorality have existed since the fall. It's not like we're the first society that has reached amorality. Many societies throughout history have become amoral. But we're dealing with something even greater because we're in the last days when things get worse and worse. Amorality just gets worse.

I just can't stress it enough, people have no moral compass. "I don't think it's wrong. Therefore, it's not wrong. You may think it's wrong. That makes it wrong for you, but I don't see it as wrong, therefore, it's not wrong for me." That's where we are today, in an amoral society, which is the result of God turning a people over to their own fleshly desires. Then, when they commit more immorality, which brings more amorality, that leads to further reason for God's

judgment. We are in this cycle that is going to lead to ruin.

A good example of amorality is Judges 21:25, "*In those days [there was] no king in Israel: [That is there was no authority. What was the result?] every man did [that which was] right in his own eyes.*"

Today people will violate the marriage bed and see nothing wrong with it. They will violate the marriage bed during marriage. That's adultery. They will do it before marriage. That's fornication. And they see nothing wrong with it. Nothing whatsoever. There are parents who see nothing wrong with it in their children or their grandchildren. Oh, they might give it some lip service, and say, "Well, we don't approve," but they help them out in every way possible. Don't misunderstand me, I'm not saying that we're not to help people. But, you better be careful that your help is not taken as an approval of what they've done. You better be careful that your help does not feed the problem.

(Going off subject a little, I'd like to point out that a lot of the problems that are being fed today are with a lot of the millennial's. The situation has been created by parents or siblings. People say, "Can you believe these millennial's and this X generation? Can you believe it?" Parents, look in the mirror, because a lot of it's been fed and created by you and continues to be fed. You've got a son or a daughter who is 30 years old, and you're still paying their phone bill. You are feeding the problem. You're creating a problem. "I just wish they would grow up." Get out of the way and they might. They might not, but get out of the way.)

An amoral society and culture is one in which right and wrong are categories with no real meaning. People even say, "Well, what's right? What's wrong?" Those two words mean nothing to them. That is an amoral Society. In an amoral society and culture biblical absolutes are done away with. Today, people can't stand to hear the Bible quoted. "The Bible says that's wrong." However, in their mind biblical absolutes mean absolutely nothing. There is no such thing as absolutes because they have been done away with, and people just do what's right in their own eyes, and

establish their own standards. You have immorality leading to amorality and amorality begins to establish its own standards, which are no standards.

Remember we spent a lot of time on humanism. An amoral society and culture is the result of humanism. Humanism is atheistic, evolutional in its thinking; leads to individualism, which feeds this amoral society. In an amoral society or culture people have lost sight of or they are completely ignorant of biblical absolutes. The result is the mind is polluted with perverted and anti-god philosophies and ideas, and everything is relative or subjective. That brings us to relativity and subjectivity.

Relativity is the absence of standards. Subjectivity means that standards are based upon personal feelings, personal opinions, personal circumstances. Circumstances determine what is sexually pure and what is not. Someone says, "My wife doesn't treat me right or my husband doesn't treat me right, therefore I have the right to go beyond the marriage bed." That's subjectivity. It's an excuse. The cycle continues as long as you excuse behavior, whatever the behavior is, goes into a cycle and that cycle is hard to break.

When immorality is practiced for an extended period of time, the result is "comfort" is developed with such and becomes the norm. With a lot of people today, there has been a comfort developed with the sexual impurity described in Romans 1:24 and it has become the norm. It is not the norm today for husband and wife to be faithful to one another throughout marriage. That's not the norm. That's sad. It's not the norm to abstain until you're married. That's not the norm today. You get in this cycle and pretty soon sin, whatever the sin is; in this case, we're dealing with sexual impurity; it becomes normal.

In the minds of many, we're getting to that stage with homosexuality, if we haven't already. You're in a lot of trouble when sin becomes the norm, whatever the sin is. It becomes the norm so much so that one has no conviction or guilt concerning it. I've had people tell me, "Well, Brother Dan, the Holy Spirit hasn't convicted me that's wrong." It's

shameful, but it doesn't really surprise me. When they say that, they've said a mouthful. They basically admitted that they're not saved and have a lot more problems.

Society and culture are inundated with the message of sexual immorality. Hollywood and advertisers see nothing wrong with it because we're in an amoral society. That's illustrated here in Romans 1.

Continual rejection of God leads to amorality. Amorality leaves a society in ruins. There aren't any examples, in the word of God, that I can recall, where they recover. You get to a point of no return. What you have in an amoral society is a society filled with broken marriages. You tell people today that you've been married 25 years, 30 years, 40 years, 50 years, 60 years. They are shocked, absolutely floored. Some might even ask why. We're in an amoral society. These things are not the norm.

When you have a society filled with broken marriages, you have the disintegration of family. Where you have the disintegration of family, you have a society that is filled with troubled children. You have an epidemic of mental and emotional problems. We hear more today about mental and emotional problems than we've ever heard in our entire life. People say, "Well we're just becoming more understanding." Perhaps that is a small part. The truth is there are more emotional and mental problems than in the past because of amorality, because of sin. When a child doesn't even really know who the parent is because they have so many parents along with so many other problems, as they grow, there's going to be some emotional problems. What's really sad is most of the population is living the same way. Who do these people go to? They have all these emotional problems and they go to someone who's got just as many problems as they do or more. How does it get fixed? Society can't fix it. Only God can fix it. This is where we are today.

There's emotional and mental problems everywhere today. It's going to get worse and worse and worse because it is the result of the dysfunction of an amoral society. Don't

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be so ignorant as to say, “Well, you know, I committed adultery and fornication, but my children aren't affected by it.” Don't be a fool. There's going to be problems, emotionally, all sorts of problems. We have problems that we've never had before. There's going to be problems that we don't even know about yet. It all goes back to sin.

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We have come to verses 26 and 27 of Romans 1, in our study. In verse 24 we see, *“God also gave them up.”* Paul goes on to mention sexual impurity, which we've looked at in the last couple lessons. Then in verse 26, *“For this cause.”* Because of sexual impurity and the fact that they changed the truth of God into a lie and began to live for the temporal, *“For this cause God gave them up,”* for the second time. This is more of God's abandoning wrath. *“God gave them up unto vile affections,”* and goes on to explain, *“... for even.”* Even is a point of emphasis, to emphasize *“... their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature. 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.”* or which was fitting.

Verse 26 shows one of the results of God's abandoning wrath (allowing men to follow the lust of the hearts,) brings us to degradation. *“For this cause,”* because of what was said in verses 24 and 25, *God gave them up.* God's abandoning wrath is what we as a nation, and pretty much the whole world, is under today. God, no longer restrains man. We see that's what he did back in Genesis 6, just prior to the flood, God just let man go. The result was the cataclysmic wrath of God.

Sin is the reason for this aspect of God's wrath. More sin is the result. That's where we are today. We see the abandoning wrath of God upon a society. The reason is sin, and the result of that abandoning wrath is more sin. More sin becomes the next cause of God's wrath. Sin is the consequence of more and more and more sin. What Romans 1 is teaching us is the results of the abandoning wrath of God, which is God just simply leaving man to follow his depraved heart.

Paul goes on to describe lesbianism and homosexuality. These are the result of the wrath of God. People will say, *“God is going to judge homosexuality.”* Yes, he is! Let there be no doubt. God will judge a nation

for that sin. He always has. I think something Christianity misses is ***homosexuality and lesbianism is the wrath of God***. That's what Romans 1, is teaching us. God gave them up. That's the abandoning wrath of God. The result is homosexuality and lesbianism. Homosexuality and lesbianism are not merely alternative lifestyles. Only fools will believe that these are alternative lifestyles.

Let's look at Paul's description of this sin. First of all, it is referred to as depraved feelings and a depraved disposition. Notice verse 26 says, "*God gave them up unto vile affections.*" God didn't put the vile affections there, God gave them up to their own vile affections. He removed the restraints. It is referred to as vile affections. They can call it "gay". God says it's vile affections.

The word vile means corrupt, depraved. Vile affections are corrupt, depraved affections. Vile is that which is twisted, something that is gross, vulgar, and obscene. It's something that normal people would refer to as disgusting. Only fools professing themselves to be wise call it something else. Vile affections is that which is abhorrent, that which is repulsive and revolting. Homosexuality and lesbianism are the exercise of vile affections. It is the manifestation of vile affections. Again, only those who have become fools, professing themselves to be wise, will think that this is appropriate, will accommodate it, exalt and celebrate it. Professing themselves to be wise they became fools and began to celebrate and exalt vile affections. That's where we are today. Those who are against homosexuality are scared to death to say anything, because they don't want to be labeled as a hate monger or many other things. First of all it's referred to as vile affections. "Well, I have such strong feelings toward this person." Well that would fall under the category of affections. But it's vile. I'm not denying that a man may have affections for another man or woman for woman, but it's vile. It's vile affections.

Paul spends time telling us that it is unnatural. This is what the world needs to understand today. It's unnatural. It is an exchange for the natural. Notice again verse 26,

where we see "... *women did change the natural use.*" There is something that's natural, but it's not lesbianism. "*Women did change the natural use.*" Then in verse 27, "... *and likewise also the men.*" Then notice what it says, "... *leaving the natural.*" There is a change of the natural use, and a leaving of the natural. Notice two verbs in verse 26, "*change*", and in verse 27, "*leaving*". You say, "Well, what's the point?" **It describes a voluntary act.** In verse 26 the women did voluntarily change the natural use. It's a verb. A verb is a voluntary act. We see in verse 27 the men leaving. They choose to do so. This nonsense about "They can't help it," is a lie, because they change. That's something you do on purpose, you change something. They leave. That's something you do on purpose. The words "change" and "leaving" describe a voluntary act. They move from what is natural to what is unnatural. Change the natural use, leaving the natural. Those are descriptive of homosexuality. Change the natural use, leaving the natural.

We say this is vile affections and it is unnatural. It is changing the natural, it is leaving the natural. It's not the norm. It's never to be considered the norm. I don't care who it is, it's not to be considered the norm.

Paul goes on in verse 26. Notice the last two words of verse 26, "*against nature.*" It is against nature or against the natural. It is an exchange for the natural, "*For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is **against nature:** And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman,*" In Jude verse 7 notice, "*Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner; giving themselves over to fornication, [That's a natural sin.] and going after strange flesh, ...*" That's referring to homosexuality. That which is strange is not normal. Going after strange flesh is not normal. Notice, also, he puts a difference here between fornication and strange flesh. He mentions them as separate. Fornication and then going after strange flesh. "... *are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.*"

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From these verses in Romans 1:26-27, and Jude verse 7, it is clearly stated that homosexuality is not natural. God's inspired word takes homosexuality and lesbianism out of the realm of the natural. Don't compare it with the natural. Don't compare it with natural sins. God takes it out of the realm of the natural or the norm. Homosexuality and lesbianism are not natural.

There is a great push today to get people to buy into that homosexuality and lesbianism is natural. Many of God's people have bought into it. I'm not saying that many of God's people have accepted homosexuality. Not yet, but it's coming. They have bought into, to a large degree, and I will show this, that it is natural. They bought into it without even knowing it.

God takes it out of the realm of the natural. Only those who have become fools will call this natural. There's nothing natural about it. There's nothing normal about it. I've heard many of God's people and even Pastors say, "Well, homosexuality, if you think about it, it is really is no different than adultery and fornication." This is what homosexuals say! It's them speaking! You bought into a lie. You realize the danger of that statement? You're making it natural, you're saying it's no different. You're comparing apples and oranges. I've heard people, I've heard a couple pastors say, "Well, we receive people who have been guilty of adultery and fornication and homosexuality is no different." They stop short of coming right out and saying, "We should receive the homosexual," but it's coming. Is that what they're saying? That's exactly what they're saying. "We receive the adulterer and the fornicator, those who've been guilty of those sins and they have been forgiven and we receive them. Homosexuality is no different." Oh, but it is different.

Fornication is a natural sin. It's in the realm of things that are "natural". That doesn't lessen the fact that it's a sin. Homosexuality is taken out of the realm of natural. You're dealing with something completely different here. You have natural, you have unnatural. Don't put them in the same

category. That's where many of God's people, the Lord's churches, are in great error today. It's going to lead to an acceptance of it.

Such a statement, "It's no different," is grievously and dangerously erroneous. Paul makes clear verse 26 and 27, and Jude makes clear **the fact** that homosexuality and lesbianism are an exchange. It is an exchange of the natural for the unnatural and puts them in a different class of sin. I've heard people say, "Well you can't classify sin. All sin is sin." Yes, it is. I'm not denying that. I believe the Bible does classify sin. Not all sin is the same. Someone who says, "All sin is the same," hasn't really thought that through. They're saying that telling a lie is the same as murdering someone. I don't think so. Does that make telling a lie not sin? NO! But it's not the same. All sin is sin, but not all sin is the same. To think that all sin is the same is a dangerous place to fall into. That presents so many problems that it's just almost beyond belief.

A common question is, "Is homosexuality natural?" Many will answer that question, a liberal will say, "Well define natural." My reply is, "I'm glad you said that." In the context of what we're talking about (homosexuality), God defines natural. Romans 1:27 says, "*men leaving the **natural** use of the woman.*" What is natural? Men and women. That's natural. To leave that is what? Unnatural. This is very simple, but it's not what people want to hear. God defines **natural** as "*men ... the natural use of the woman.*" (And you have to keep stressing nowadays that "men" means male as God created them.) Adultery and fornication are terrible sins and we've studied that in the past few lessons. But they are natural sins. Homosexuality is something in a different realm. Don't make adultery and fornication the same as homosexuality. God doesn't.

When you get on this subject, people will say, "Well that's the Old Testament." Yes it is and it's still God's word. We just read very plainly what is stated in the New Testament. In Leviticus 18:22, "*Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: ...*" There's the natural.

Mankind with womankind. *“Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind,”* [Meaning in the same way.] *it is abomination.* In Leviticus 20:13 it says, *“If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman,”* As he lieth with a woman is natural. We're defining natural here, which is man and woman. *“... both of them have committed an abomination:”* They haven't committed fornication. Fornication is between man and woman. They have committed an abomination. *“... they shall surely be put to death; their blood [shall be] upon them.”* What is natural? Mankind with womankind is natural. If someone tries to defend homosexuality by saying it's natural, they're sick individuals. It's not natural.

Natural can be defined by design. What is God's design? Man and woman. It's got some bounds. A man with his own wife, a wife with her own husband. Homosexuality and lesbianism are not natural. They are in the class of unnatural sins.

I had a discussion at the Thanksgiving conference in Paducah. We got onto this subject because there was an individual whom I overheard. I was not part of the conversation, but he was making homosexuality the same sin as fornication and adultery. I said, “Brother you're wrong and you are dangerously wrong.” Then we got into the subject of it being a different class of sin. It's an unnatural sin. It is true that all sin is sin. We believe that whole heartedly. But not all sin is the same. It is true that all sin is sin in God's eyes. But not all sin is the same in God's eyes. We will look into some verses about that in the next lesson.

I'm telling you it's scary. You talk to most young people and it's scary. I listened to pastors, church members, and they've fallen into this trap. Where does it stop? You know where it stops. It's going to be accepted. That's what I want to establish in this lesson. I'm not saying everybody's going to accept it, I'm not saying all the Lord's churches are going to accept it. I believe something will and it's already starting because of these comments.

There's nothing natural about homosexuality.

We see the advancement of sin throughout Romans 1. While it can be applied to individuals, I believe it mostly applies to what becomes of a society, a nation once God just lifts his restraining hand.

We began studying Romans 1:26-27 in the last lesson. The subject, of course, is homosexuality. There's a lot said today on the subject of homosexuality. A lot of lies are being told in order to sell it to the public. Sadly *many* have bought it. Thankfully, it's not yet to the point where *most* have bought into it. Those who have not bought into it are scared to death to say anything because they don't want to be labeled a bigot or whatever. Nevertheless, the scriptures are very clear on the subject. We're not to hate the sinner. We are to hate sin. We are to love them enough to pray for them that God would get a hold of them. There is a fine line there. It's an easy line to cross. We have to be careful in that regard.

In reviewing the previous lesson, Paul starts off in verse 26 with giving his description of homosexuality, calling it *vile affections*. That's where Paul begins, and a lot of them get upset. "Well, you're saying our love isn't real." That's not the issue. If it is real it's vile. Paul goes on to say that it's unnatural. There's nothing normal about it, nothing natural about it. It is unnatural and it is willful. It is an unnatural exchange for the natural. He expresses this a couple times in a couple different ways. In verse 26, "... *their women did change* [They did this, they did this willfully.] *the natural use* [There is a natural use.] *into that which is against nature*: [Against that which is natural.]" This is repeated in verse 27, this time applying to the man, "... *leaving* [Again that's willful] *the natural use of the woman*." Jude verse 7, speaking upon the same subject, says "... *going after strange flesh*." Strange flesh, means unnatural. It's not the norm.

When the unnatural becomes the norm in a society, or is accepted, or looked at as a norm, you've got a serious problem. That's where we are today. That's why there is such an effort made to get people to see this as natural. But

it's not natural. It doesn't matter who it is. It could be your child, your grandchild, whatever. It doesn't matter. It's unnatural and it's vile.

The question is, what is natural? Leviticus 18:22 says, “*mankind with womankind.*” That's natural. Leviticus 20:13 says, “*mankind with a woman.*” That's natural. Homosexuality is unnatural. If that foundation is removed, that foundation is weakened in someone's mind, they're well on their way to accepting it. Because, if it's natural, why wouldn't you accept it? It's not natural. There's nothing about it that is natural.

Then we ended the last lesson with another danger; that all sin is the same. No, it's not. Our courts don't believe and never have believed, that all transgressions are the same. That's why you have varying degrees of sentencing, because they're not all the same. Murder and stealing are not the same thing. How foolish it is to say homosexuality is just the same as any other sin? What that does is creates a tolerance. These people have an agenda, which they are accomplishing; to accept, to tolerate, to look at homosexuality as normal. “We're no different than you.” I find that quite offensive.

If all sin was the same to God, why does he differentiate it in Scripture? Why does he mention adultery, fornication, stealing? Why is sin characterized all through scripture? There is a list of sins in Romans 1:29-31. If it's all the same, why not just say “*sin*” and leave it at that? Because it is not all the same. Sin has many different characterizations.

All sins are not equal in God's eyes. That in no way means or implies there is such a thing as a little sin. No sin can be little in the eyes of an all holy God. It's not a matter of little sins, big sins. There are no little sins. All sin is big in God's eyes. But it's not all the same and it's not all equal.

In Genesis 13:13, we find there are varying degrees of sin, also. “*But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord, exceedingly.*” Here, sin was *exceedingly*. Not all sin is to the same degree. In Ezekiel 16:51-52,

*“Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy sins; [There are degrees.] but thou hast **multiplied thine abominations more than they, and hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations which thou hast done. Thou also, which hast judged thy sisters, bear thine own shame for thy sins that thou hast committed more abominable than they: they are more righteous than thou: yea, be thou confounded also, and bear thy shame, in that thou hast justified thy sisters.** There's a lot in those verses.*

In Matthew 11:21-24, Jesus is doing the speaking, *“Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.”* He's telling them that the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida are more wicked than Tyre and Sidon. He goes further, *“But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, [That is, they've been blessed beyond measure.] shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, [Speaking of all the works of Christ done in Capernaum.] had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. [In other words, they were more wicked.] But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.”* Based on scripture, you cannot say that all sin is the same. It's not. Not all sin is equal in God's eyes.

John chapter 19:11, speaking to Pilot, *“Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power [at all] against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.”* If all sin is the same, how can one sin be greater than another? It's not all the same. When we come to homosexuality, it's not the same. It has been classified by scripture as an unnatural sin. We have to understand homosexuality is not equal. It's not natural. You also have to understand homosexuality and lesbianism is not a race of people, because this is the push. It's behavior. There's a big difference. It is an all-out push

today that the public be convinced that homosexuality and lesbianism is the result of birth. If that is so, then it's a race of people. That leads to, as far as the government is concerned, if it's a race, they have certain entitlements. That's why you're put in the classification of a bigot. We're racist. It has nothing to do with race. It's behavior. It's a behavior that affects all races.

This is how Paul presents it. He presents it as a behavior. "I can't help it." But you can. Again in Romans 1:26 and 27, you have the word *change*. That's a behavior. *Leaving*. In Jude verse 7, it's *going after*. All of those words, *change*, *leaving*, *going after*, that's not a race of people. That's a behavior. It's a vile behavior and it's an unnatural behavior. They are willful behaviors. Everywhere you see it in scripture, it's willful behavior.

When God's people think of homosexuality, our minds go to Sodom. Sodom of course was guilty of that behavior. That wasn't the only wicked behavior going on inside them. There were a lot of wicked behaviors going on inside them and homosexuality was one of them and it was very willful. They were extremely bold. You don't have to go back very far in our history where the homosexual movement, as I'll call it, had not a boldness about it. That's why you hear "coming out of the closet". It was something that people hid, but now they are very bold. This is how it was in Sodom, which we're going to see. That's why today you can see it in public. It's probably been a few months ago, I saw two women kiss in the grocery store, right in the aisle. They're very bold. Why do they do that? Because they're hoping that somebody like me, (and it almost worked), is going to say something.

We have to be careful. I'm speaking to myself, as well, because you can become so disgusted with the behavior that you find yourself hating the individual and we're not to do that. It's hard not to sometimes. But we can't cross that line. We just need to pray, "Lord, help them."

Beginning in Genesis 19:4, we read, "*But before they lay down, the men of the city, [even] the men of Sodom,*

compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter: And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where [are] the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.” That's not speaking of just getting acquainted. They almost beat down the door of Lot. That's how aggressive they were. *“And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him,”* You know how you do? You step out the door and you shut the door. That's what he did because these people were aggressive. *“And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man;”* This I can't grasp, I'll never grasp, but it tells us something about the unnatural and the natural. *“... let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes:”* I can't imagine saying something like that, but I believe the purpose of this is to show natural and unnatural. *“... only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof. And they said, Stand back. And they said [again], This one [fellow] came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them.”* They're upset with Lot because he's standing in their way. Sound familiar? *“And they pressed sore upon the man, [even] Lot, and came near to break the door.”* There's strong aggressive desire. *“But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. And they smote the men that [were] at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door. And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring [them] out of this place: For we will destroy this place,”* The following verses go on into the Judgment that was coming. What we learn from that passage of scripture is once this sin grows, how aggressive people become, how very bold they become.

They dare you to say something. They're hoping you will. The result is, we become a bit intimidated by it. I'm

just mentioning this briefly. A couple years ago, in Chicago at a fourth of July parade my son said we're going to go to the parade. I said, "Well, that's fine. If they have homosexual floats just know this, I'm not going to keep silent." Sure enough there were three church groups that had these floats. They were at the end of the parade. Here they come. People start clapping. I started quoting scripture loud enough for them to hear me saying repent. There was a policeman, he came walking towards me. I just kept on and all he did was just stand in front of me. That's all he did. Didn't say a word to me about what I was saying. I wasn't being rude or unkind. I was just quoting scripture. What got me that day was all the people that applauded. "Isn't this wonderful." When I started quoting scripture, it was like the Red Sea parting. And people hurried away from me. It would have been wrong for me to throw something at them, but there's nothing wrong with quoting scripture. That's what they need to hear. I believe God can take His word and convict them.

God help us not to be intimidated by the sins of our times. I believe we all probably are to some degree. When it's time, we have to speak out and do it in the right way. They have to know. God help us to do that.

Chapter 7 - God Gave Them Up - Part 6

The last two lessons were on the subject of homosexuality, which I will continue. We have stressed, and it needs to be stressed, that homosexuality is not a natural sin. While it is true that all sin is sin, not all sin is the same. If it was, God would not differentiate it in His word. He wouldn't mention adultery, fornication, or theft, if it's all the same. He would just say sin. Sin is not all the same.

There are categories of sin, two of which are natural and unnatural sins. Homosexuality is an unnatural sin. We have stressed that in the last two lessons. It is important that God's people understand that. All sin is sin, but not all sin is the same, nor is all sin the same in degree. All sin is bad and worse than you and I can even begin to imagine. There's no such thing as a little sin, because all sin is against a Great God. That being said, not all sin is to the same degree. Some sin is worse than others. The Bible makes this very clear.

In the last lesson I began to point out the fact that homosexuality is a behavior. It's unnatural and is not the result of birth. No one is born a homosexual. It's a behavior. If society can convince you that homosexuality is a result of birth, that's more argument to accept it. That would make them a race rather than having a behavior. In our society, race means entitlements. Homosexuality is not a race, it's a willful behavior. Not only is it a behavior, but as it goes on to where the individuals involved in these things become very bold, very aggressive. In Genesis 19, the men of Sodom and Gomorrah were ready to knock down the door of Lot's house. They were very aggressive in their sin. We're there today, and it's going to become more so.

Beginning in Judges 19:17, referring back to Sodom and Gomorrah, it says, *“And when he had lifted up his eyes, he saw a wayfaring man in the street of the city: and the old man said, Whither goest thou? and whence comest thou? And he said unto him, We [are] passing from Bethlehemjudah toward the side of mount Ephraim; from thence [am] I: [That's where he was from.] and I went to Bethlehemjudah, but I [am now] going to the house of the*

LORD; and there [is] no man that receiveth me to house. Yet there is both straw and provender for our asses; and there is bread and wine also for me, and for thy handmaid, and for the young man [which is] with thy servants: [there is] no want of any thing. And the old man said, Peace [be] with thee; howsoever [let] all thy wants [lie] upon me; only lodge not in the street. So he brought him into his house, and gave provender unto the asses: and they washed their feet, and did eat and drink.

[Now] as they were making their hearts merry, behold, the men of the city, certain sons of Belial,” Certain sons of Belial is an identification with the sin that's about to be mentioned. “... beset the house round about, [and] beat at the door, and spake to the master of the house, the old man, saying, Bring forth the man that came into thine house, that we may know him. And the man, the master of the house, went out unto them, and said unto them, Nay, my brethren, [nay], I pray you, do not [so] wickedly; seeing that this man is come into mine house, do not this folly.

Three things you learn; it's wicked, foolish, and it is the act of the sons of Belial. People say, “Well, I know this man who's guilty of this sin and he's a Christian.” No, he isn't. He's a son of Belial. He's not Christian. He's not following Christ. I've heard some say, “Well, they're just as much a Christians as I am.” Well, that may be so. Both of you are not Christian. They are not Christian, they are sons of Belial.

This sin is referred to as shameful and perverse. In Romans 1:27, you read, “*working that which is unseemly.*” What does that mean? It means that which is shameful. They might say, “Well, I don't feel any shame at all.” Maybe you don't, but that doesn't change what the Bible says about it. It's unseemly. It's unnatural, shameful. The word unseemly also means repulsive. It's sickening. It ought to make us sick. I'm not ashamed to say that it's sickening. That is what it is. It's inappropriate.

Unseemly means it's not in accord with established standards. That's why they're trying to re-establish the

standards, so that it will be in accord with the standards. There needs to be a group of people who are not buying into the new standards. That needs to be us.

It is that which is perverse. Only those who have become fools would think there's no shame in this sin. When homosexuality and lesbianism are accepted, applauded, and rampant in a society, something is wrong. When someone, male and female, has been married for 60 years, it's no big deal. But a man and man just got married and everybody's applauding, and their heroes. That is a sick society. That is a society already under the judgment of God. When homosexuality is accepted, applauded, and rampant, it is a sure sign of the wrath of God. In every case in the Old Testament, this sin results in the cataclysmic wrath of God as well.

Homosexuality is an unnatural behavior. The scriptures teach that NOWHERE is ANY sin approved and nowhere is THIS SIN approved. It's always condemned. Same-sex relationships in the Bible were always, without exception, condemned. Read Leviticus 18:22, and Leviticus 20:13. It is wicked. It is sinful. In Genesis 13:13 and Genesis 18:20, both those scriptures referring to Sodom and Gomorrah, say the same thing.

People will be quick to point out today that, "You do know that homosexuality wasn't the only sin of Sodom and Gomorrah." Yes, we're very well aware of that. There were other sins, but don't put those other sins on the same level. There was one sin that led to the destroying wrath of God.

It's wicked and it's sinful, but it's not *just* wicked and sinful. In Genesis 13:13, "*But the men of Sodom [were] wicked and sinners before the LORD,*" You could put a period there and you would have a complete thought, a complete sentence. But that's not where the period is, that's not where the sentence ends. There is another word, "*exceedingly.*" That word tells us that there are degrees. They were wicked and sinners, *exceedingly.* *Exceeding* something else.

In Genesis 18:20, it says, "*And the LORD said,*

Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;” The word **very** implies there is a degree being spoken of, there's a comparison, and it is *very* grievous. All sin is grievous, more grievous than any of us realize. This sin, however, is said to be **very** *grievous*. It's even worse! There are no little sins, but there is a degree. It's very grievous, very evil, offensive, disgusting, vile, despicable.

Someone may say, “Well you're talking about my grandson or granddaughter.” “You're talking about my son.” It doesn't matter! God's people had better wake up. It does not matter that it may be a family member. It's *very* grievous. It's beyond reason.

You may, and most of us probably do, know people that are involved in this sin. Don't fall into the trap, “Well, you know, I go back to when they were 8 years old and you know things happen.” No! You're starting to make excuses. You're starting to try to lessen the degree of the abomination. You're heading down the wrong path. Nothing good can come out of it. Don't go there. I don't care who it is that's involved in the sin. It's extreme. It's very grievous. It doesn't matter who it is. “Well, it's in our family.” It is probably in most families today. It's in my family. If you look in your family, it's there somewhere.

People think we've got to start making adjustments. No, you don't. You don't make adjustments. It's still the same sin. “Well, you know we'll get in trouble.” Oh well. “We'll hurt their feelings.” Oh well. It is still the same sin.

Reading again in Romans 1:26-27, “*For this cause [God is going to state a reason.] God gave them up [Turned them over to themselves.] unto vile affections: [Then result of God giving them up.] for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: 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. [Or fitting.]*”

In the last three lessons, we have been looking at this section of Romans 1, that addresses the subject of homosexuality. It's vividly described, in verse 26 as *vile affections*, that it is an unnatural sin. We've put much emphasis upon that because there are many today who are trying to make it natural. There's nothing natural about it. We have to understand in these days of this push to make it natural, that it is an unnatural sin.

It's important for you and I to understand this because it's not your ordinary sin. If it were then God would not address certain sins; murder, adultery, fornication, and stealing. He puts them in categories. Even our society does that. Not all crime is the same. They're different. All crime is against the law, but that doesn't make them the same.

There's this group of people that's out there today in Christendom, who want to tell us that all sin is the same. Well, it's not. All you have to do is read your Bible and you'll know that. All you have to do is look around at society and you know that all sin is not the same. Someone will say homosexuality is no different than any other sin. Oh, but it is. It's in the classification of an unnatural sin.

Homosexuality is referred to in the Bible as shameful and perverse. In verse Romans 1:27, it is referred to as unseemly. That means that it's shameful, repulsive, inappropriate, being against nature, not in accord with God's established standards. I don't mean man's standards, I mean God's standards. It's unseemly and it is erroneous, against God.

When the scriptures speak upon this subject, all

mention of same-sex relationships in the Bible are condemned all the time. They are condemned in a very strong and very plain way. Specifically, in Leviticus 18:22, Leviticus 20:13, it says homosexuality is wicked. Genesis 13:13, and Genesis 18:20, it says it is *exceedingly* wicked. It exceeds the normal wickedness of sin. Genesis 18:20 also says homosexuality is very grievous, meaning to a high degree. A society is in trouble when people do not look at it as offensive and disgusting. They want to tell us it's because we're not intelligent enough. This isn't a matter of intelligence. From these verses, it's clear that homosexuality, is evil, disgusting, vile, despicable, repulsive, contrary to God, contrary to nature. It is an abomination according to Leviticus 18:22, which says, "*Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it [is] abomination.*" Abomination is used several times in the word of God. It speaks of extreme disgust. God has disgust toward all sin, of course, but an abomination is extreme disgust and hatred for the sin. It's that which is detestable and regardless of the view and perception of society regarding homosexuality, it's an abomination in the sight of God.

I'm not so sure most of society is not disgusted by this sin. I think probably most of society still sees it as disgusting. But they are afraid to say so. They are scared to death to say so because they don't want to be labeled. Unless the Lord comes soon, as time passes and it's not spoken out against, it will be the norm. Pretty soon very, very few will be disgusted by it. I believe we're already seeing that we are a society with a lot of mental disorders. It's only going to increase. As a result of everything that's going on, you're going to have children raised in this kind of thing, you're looking at an epidemic of mental illness in our society. It is a result of sin.

Homosexuality is of the devil. It's satanic. To say that should not upset God's people. It is in a different classification. There is a sense in which all sin is of the devil, of course. In Judges 19:22, referring to Sodom and Gomorrah, it says, [*Now*] *as they were making their hearts*

merry, behold, the men of the city, certain sons of Belial,” They are identified. They are the sons of Belial. “... *beset the house round about, [and] beat at the door, and spake to the master of the house, the old man, saying, Bring forth the man that came into thine house, that we may know him.”*

The term, “the sons of Belial,” speaks of that which is very wicked, lawless, but also ungovernable. People will say, “I can’t help it.” Then they will advance the narrative by saying, “I was born this way.” That’s where they’re wrong. It is, however, perhaps true, that they cannot help it, because they are likely “the sons of Belial.” The sons of Belial were ungovernable. Demonic activity is ungovernable. What does that mean? It means that these individuals were under the influence and the direction of Satan. In 2nd Corinthians 6:15, the question is asked, “*And what concord [Meaning agreement, harmony, compatibility.] hath Christ with Belial?*” There is no compatibility between Christ and Belial. There is a group of homosexuals who claim to be Christian. Based on 2nd Corinthians 6:15, that can’t be. Christian has compatibility with Christ, agreement, harmony with Christ, but there is no concord between Belial and Christ.

Homosexuality is foolishness. In Judges 19:23, it says, “*And the man, the master of the house, went out unto them, and said unto them, Nay, my brethren, [nay], I pray you, do not [so] wickedly; seeing that this man is come into mine house, do not this folly.*” The word *folly* means do not this depravity, this which is senseless, disgraceful, immoral, and profane. Do not this folly.

Homosexuality is condemned by God. 2nd Peter 2:6, “*And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned [them] with an overthrow, making [them] an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;*” All sin is anti-God. So it is with homosexuality.

In 1st Timothy 1:9-10, it says that homosexuality is contrary to sound doctrine. What does that mean? It means that it is the opposite, it is against sound doctrine or valid teaching. It’s illogical. The reason it’s illogical is because

it's against nature.

In Romans 1, homosexuality is a sin that results from man's depravity. God gave them up to the lust of their own hearts. They are not born this way. Homosexuality is not a race. The Bible makes it very clear that it is a lifestyle, a behavior that all races have. It is in every race. It is a sinful behavior, a sinful lifestyle. It's not merely an alternative lifestyle. It's much, much more.

We need to understand there is a fine line between hating a sin and hating the individual. We as God's people have to be careful that we don't cross that line. We're not to hate the individual. We are to pray for them that God would deliver them. We are to be a testimony to them. That line between hating the sin and hating the individuals involved in sin is easily crossed. That's why we have to guard our own hearts so that we do not cross that line. For those who are caught up in this sin, we ought to want the Lord to save their soul. That will fix the problem. That's what we ought to pray. I know people who prayed, "Lord strike them dead." Aren't you glad God didn't do that to you? He could do it to any one of us because all sin is sin. We need to pray for the Lord to be merciful. "Deliver them from this sin."

Know this, that homosexuality is the result of the judgment of God, and it's going to lead to a greater judgment from God.

Chapter 8

A Reprobate Mind

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Once again, turn to Romans 1:28, where it says, “*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;*” In this series of lessons, we have been following this cycle of sin and the cycle of God's wrath, throughout Romans 1. In verse 28, we have come to “*a reprobate mind*”. God gave those discussed in the previous verses over to a reprobate mind. The root cause is they did not like to retain God in their knowledge. In verse 21 it says, “*Because that, when they knew God.*” I believe everyone is born with an innate knowledge of God, they know there is a higher being, they know that God exists. What we do with that is we glorify him not as God. This leads to unthankfulness. “*... neither were thankful.*”

Then it says they became vain in their imaginations, which is referring to the “thoughts”, to the mind. Next, their foolish heart was darkened. Their heart is foolish because when they know God, they glorify him not as God, the result is God allowed them to go their way, and they become vain, they become empty in their imaginations. That brings us to verse 28, which is the result of a continual, ongoing oblivion of God, a rejection of the general revelation of God. It is a further degree of, “*but became vain in their imaginations,*” and leads to a reprobate mind.

The reprobate in mind is a much further degree of vain imaginations, telling us something about the nature of sin. Sin does not get better, because the nature of sin is to get worse. The degree of sin gets greater. That's what is happening here. By the time you get to verse 28, they're reprobate in mind.

They became vain in their imaginations in verse 21, which simply means they became futile, they became wasteful in their thought process. The result of that was their foolish heart was darkened. They became undiscerning, senseless. Vain imaginations cause one to be undiscerning and senseless. This resulted in self-deception. In verse 22, you read, “*Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,*” Vain imaginations and self-deception, leads to verse

23, which says, “*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.*” They bring God down to the level of creation. That results in verse 24, “*Wherefore God also gave them up [That is he lets them go their way.] to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:*” They’ve gone from vain imaginations to sexual immorality. Things are getting worse. In verse 25, it says, “*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.*” They put the temporal in place of God. What you have here is a picture of disorder. A picture of chaos. In verses 26 and 27 there is the degradation to homosexuality and lesbianism. It all goes back to verse 21, “*Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations*”. Everything to this point is a consequence of the previous. When we come to verse 28, we see the consequence of all of it as it grows, and more directly, the consequence of the last thing mentioned, homosexuality. God gave them over and their mind became reprobate. God basically said, “Go ahead. Follow your reprobate mind.”

The word reprobate is a very strong unpleasant word. It is a word of hopelessness. The Greek word for reprobate is *adokimos* [ad-ok’-ee-mos]. It means rejected, abandoned. God gave them over to a rejected mind, to an abandoned mind. The scriptures use that term to say that God has rejected them, abandoned them, left them. *Adokimos* [ad-ok’-ee-mos] is translated as *reprobate* in our text. It’s translated differently in various scriptures, which gives a better idea, a better understanding of what the word *reprobate* entails.

Beginning in 1st Corinthians 9:27, Paul is doing the writing and pens, “*But I keep under my body, and bring [it] into subjection: lest [The word lest means a danger is going to be introduced.] that by any means, when I have preached*

to others, I myself should be a castaway.” *Castaway* is the same Greek word that was translated as reprobate in Romans 1:28. A reprobate mind is a mind that has been cast away by God. That's very serious.

2nd Timothy 3:7-8 says, *“Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”* If that doesn't describe today, I don't know what does. *“Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.”* Jannes and Jambres are *reprobate* concerning the faith, *reprobate* concerning the truth, meaning they've been cast away as far as truth is concerned. They're not going to come to truth, to the faith because they have been cast away.

In Titus 1:16, *“They profess that they know God; but in works they deny [him], being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”* Here the word reprobate is connected with good work. They're unable to do a good work. They've been cast away.

Hebrews 6:8, *“But that which beareth thorns and briers [is] rejected, [‘Rejected’ is the same Greek word translated reprobate.] and [is] nigh unto cursing; [Here we see a rejection that's going to lead to a curse or condemnation.] whose end [is] to be burned.”* There's not much hope for the reprobate. God has already given them over to a reprobate mind.

What is a reprobate mind? It is a mind destitute of judgment, that has been abandoned by God. There are individuals who do not know the Lord, but they think along biblical principles and they would be considered moral people. You would say of such an individual, “He's a good man. He's a good person.” We know by strict Bible terms, no man is good. We know that's not the point. You look at these individuals and they try to live their life by biblical principles. That makes them good citizens. They think they have some compass in their thought process. In fact, if you sat down and talked with them about some things, not necessarily biblical things, but you would find that they have wisdom in certain areas. However, a reprobate mind is a

mind that has been abandoned by God. God is not in that mind and we are witnessing everyday what comes from that mind. Politicians get up and talk and they give evidence that they are of a reprobate mind. It is a mind devoid of God.

That which is reprobate, again, is rejected. It's something that's useless. A reprobate mind is a useless mind. Whatever is produced in that mind has no use. It is a mind that has lost its ability to think. Try to use logic, just basic logic with someone who is of a reprobate mind. It doesn't work. Their mind does not work that way. When God gives a people over to a reprobate mind, they've lost their ability to think, to reason, to comprehend. Sadly, it's to the point where God has given many, including our nation's leaders over to a reprobate mind. They no longer have the ability to think logically, morally, or to reason. Try to reason with somebody who's of a reprobate mind and it doesn't work. Their "natural mind" is reprobate. This is a progression of God's Wrath.

Who are those given over to a reprobate mind? It refers back to verse 21, "... *they ... became vain in their imaginations*", and verse 22, "*Professing themselves to be wise they became fools.*" A reprobate mind is a further degree of the mind that is devoid of true knowledge. One can be ignorant of truth and not be of a reprobate mind. A reprobate mind is the farthest degree of ignorance. It is a mind with a greater degree of being incapable of approving what is good and disapproving what is evil, because the reprobate mind doesn't know the difference between good and evil.

A reprobate mind is condemned. The word reprobate conveys the idea of condemnation. The reprobate mind cannot find its way back. It's in this cycle. (I believe you could make a point scripturally for those who would say there is absolutely no hope for one who was reprobate. I don't know if I'll go that far yet. It depends on how you look at it.) They can't find the way back. Everything that they do only causes them to sink further into the depths. Everything they do is a step downward in that pit. If you get enough

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people in a society of a reprobate mind, and these people are elected to office, everything they do just brings you further into the pit. That explains how we got where we are in this nation. Everything they do is just another step away from God. They have a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient, which are not proper but rather, shameful. God gave them over to a reprobate mind.

Chapter 9

Being Filled With

In the last lesson, we were looking at Romans 1:28, which says, *“And even as they did not like to retain God in [their] knowledge;”* That goes back to verse 21, which says, *“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful;”* So that first part of verse 28 goes back to verse 21. Continuing on in verse 28, God did something, *“God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;”*

A reprobate mind is rejected by God, abandoned by God. From verse 22, where it says, *“Professing themselves to be wise they became fools”*, you learn a mind abandoned by God loses its ability to think properly, its ability to reason, its ability to comprehend. This is a progression of man's practice and sin which results in a progression of God's wrath upon sin. A reprobate mind is a part of that progression of God's wrath where people no longer have the ability to think reasonably. Then they elect people to office who cannot think or comprehend.

Continuing with Romans 1:29-32, it says, *“Being filled [This would be those who have been given over to a reprobate mind.] with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, [Meaning unappeasable.] unmerciful: 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.”*

This is a catalog of a variety of sins. In verse 29, notice the first word, *“Being.”* That is a continuous state. Whatever is happening here is a continuous state. It just continues on and on and on and on. Where does it stop? It doesn't. Then notice what it says, *“Being filled.”* That is continually immersed, saturated in. *“Being filled with all”*, meaning kinds and types. Paul then proceeds to make a long list of wickedness, a long list of sin and these things

continue.

As you look at that list, the sins contained in it have been since the fall of man. There has always been these things, since the fall of man, but the emphasis here is upon the degree of prevalence of sin. "*Being filled with all unrighteousness*". When man or a society follows this cycle of Romans 1, the end result is, *being filled with all*, this list of sins. In other words, these things increase, they grow, they continue. In Genesis 6:5, just prior to God sending the flood, He had this to say, "*And GOD saw that the wickedness of man [was] great in the earth, [That speaks of the degree of wickedness.] and [that] every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] only evil continually.*" **Continually!** *Being filled with all unrighteousness.* If you follow the biblical pattern, beginning with the flood, through the Kingdom of Israel and Judah, through the New Testament, the biblical pattern is things get almost as bad as they can possibly get, then God's cataclysmic judgment falls. That's the pattern and I believe that's still the pattern today. That's why it's important that we understand this pattern. Once the cycle begins, people think if we just elect the right senator, if we just elect the right president, we will fix all this. You don't understand the cycle. You don't understand the pattern. It grows. This pattern is throughout the Bible and we're seeing it today as well.

Being filled is also illustrated in 2nd Timothy 3, beginning with verse 1, "*This know also, [Is important that we know this] that in the last days perilous [Or troublesome.] times shall come. For [Meaning 'for these reasons' he is about to state. This is what leads to perilous times.] men shall be lovers of their own selves,*" That is everywhere today. People are in love with themselves. Nobody else matters. You'll notice that a lot of things here follow the list of Romans 1 as well. "... *covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection,*" People have a tendency to make "*Without natural affection*" apply merely to homosexuality. It certainly applies, but a mother or father

who puts their baby in a dumpster does not have natural affection. This goes on and on. "... *trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,*" This is not **tolerance**, these are **despisers** of those that are good. "*Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, [Means Christianity in general.] but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort [That is those who have this form of godliness, but not the power.] are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,*" How many TV preachers rob widows and old men, doing it in the name of the Lord. "*Ever learning,*" [Always learning.] *and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*" That seems to me like a big waste of time. Always learning but not knowing anything. I believe that pretty much describes our society today. Supposedly we're more educated than we've ever been, yet stupidity is at an all-time high. "*Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, [Notice what it says.] **reprobate concerning the faith.***" [Here's the encouragement for you and I.] *But they shall proceed no further:"*

You see you get in this cycle; society gets in this cycle, we're in it today, way into it; but God has a stopping point. God lets them go and they follow their own sinful ways and make a mess of everything, but God has already determined you're going to go this far, and that's it. You're not going any further. I'm thankful because I don't know where this cycle is going to end, as far as the peril that it brings about. I do know that there is a stopping point. It's God's stopping point. "*But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all [men], as theirs also was.*"

Then in 2nd Timothy 3:13, "*But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*" The encouragement for you and I is in verse 14, "But continue". In spite of all these things, continue on.

What we read in Romans 1, is really illustrated in 2nd

Timothy 3. When man is left to himself, this is the result. They are filled, they are saturated with sin. Perilous times come. It's illustrated in the book of Joel as well. In Joel 1, there is a severe plague of locusts. This was due to the prevailing sin of Judah. Reading through chapter 1, as this locust plague was taking place, Joel sees it as the judgment of God, a warning of more severe judgment to come. That's the day in which we live. When you see what's going on in society, according to Romans 1, it is the judgment of God. It is also a warning that greater judgment is coming. This is the judgment of God, because God has allowed man to just go his own way. But it's also a warning because man will continue in that way. There is a greater judgment, a more severe judgment to come.

The message that Joel received from God was for a people who were really in a very traumatic time, being under the judgment of God. In verse four, he mentions four species of locust. He speaks of various stages. There is a rapid succession of devastation all due to sin. That's the cycle when sin prevails. There is going to be a rapid succession of devastation. In verse 4, there were successive swarms of these locusts that came upon Judah. What one swarm did not destroy the other one did and so on and so on. It was a rapid succession of ruin. In verse 5, the grapes have been devoured. In verse 7, the vineyards have been destroyed and the fig tree has been stripped of its bark. Then in verse 10 the field and the land is wasted. In verse 11 the wheat and barley harvest is all destroyed. In verse 12, all the vines and the trees are withered of their leaves and their fruits. All the sap is gone out of the trees, all the moisture. The joy and rejoicing of the husbandman is no longer. It's all vanished. In verse 17, the seeds for the next harvest were all lost; the store houses were empty; the barns were in disrepair; that which did grow withered away. It was destruction upon destruction. In verse 18, the herds are suffering and confused because where they once ate grass there is no grass. There's confusion everywhere. The flocks of sheep are abandoned. As you read of this scene it's all a picture of the

judgment of God. Today the United States, our society, and the world is not dealing with a literal swarm of locusts. What swarms of locusts in Joel 1 picture is destruction upon destruction, and that is what we're dealing with. There was widespread devastation, destitution, chaos, and shock. People are shocked today. There was sorrow, anxiety, distress, and death. The root cause of it all was the prevalence of sin. This was all on an unprecedented scale for that day.

Paraphrasing verse 2, Joel asked the old men and the inhabitants of the land, "Have you ever seen anything like this?" How often is that question asked today? "Have you ever seen anything like this? Who would have thought that we would be where we are today. Can you ever remember a time like this?" The old men would say, "We've never seen anything like it." That's where we are today. You ask people that have been around awhile, "Have you ever seen anything like this before?" "No, I haven't." All you have to do is watch the news. Have you ever seen anything like it? It continues to get worse and worse and worse. *Being filled with all unrighteousness.*

Much like in Joel's day, we find ourselves today, except it's worse because we're not dealing with physical literal locusts, but rather with Satan and the forces of hell, the enemies of God, the deniers of God. Like a plague of locusts, they have relentlessly, swarm after swarm, come upon the land, come upon the government, the judicial system, upon the school's, upon families, upon marriages, upon homes, and have stripped them. We've been stripped of respect, faith, dependence upon God, values, morality, stripped of justice, stripped of integrity. We that are old enough can remember a day, a time when someone said they were good for it. Just their word was good enough. Integrity! It's almost non-existent today in society. We have been stripped of that which is good and decent. I get a little tired of hearing people talk about how bad the good is and how bad the descent is. We've been stripped of those things. We have been stripped of sanity. Sin is an act of insanity.

Being filled with sin, people become insane, stripped of common sense.

These things are far more precious than what we read of in Joel chapter 1. Those things just illustrate Romans 1. Due to the prevalence of sin and the judgement of God, the plague of “locusts” of our day are far more horrific, monstrous, widespread, opposing to the good of man, destructive, more troublesome, destabilizing, crippling, and degrading than the locusts of Joel's day. It's the cycle. As we've repeated over and over, Romans 1 is a cycle of “*Being filled with all*” followed with a long list of wickedness.

When the things mentioned in Romans 1:29-32, become so prevalent that they become the norm, that's when you're in trouble. When sin becomes so prevalent that you think it's normal, and because it's normal it's no longer wrong, you're in trouble. That's the way people think. “Well, that's just the way it is today.” That may be so but that doesn't make it right. These things must never become normal to you and I, even though we live in a society where these things are normal. We live in a society where these things mentioned in Romans 1 and 2nd Timothy 3 are all they've ever known. All they have ever known is fornication, adultery, and murder. It has become the norm of their life. That is the judgment of God, and it leads to even a greater judgment.

“*Being filled with*”. Our society today is saturated with sin.

In Romans 1:28, we have seen that man has, at this point, been given over to a reprobate mind. Beginning with verse 29 you find the results of this, “*Being*” [Present tense, ongoing.] *filled* [Immerse and saturated.] *with*,” followed by a long list of a variety of sins. As we saw in the last lesson, this is ongoing. It is increasing in degree. “*Being filled with all unrighteousness.*” Unrighteousness, the first thing mentioned in the list of sins, depicts sin, in general. It is a general term which covers everything listed from that point on. It includes all manner of sin being. “*Being filled with all unrighteousness.*”

We see the word in several places in the word of God. In 2nd Corinthians 6:14, it says, “... *what fellowship* [Or concord.] *hath righteousness with unrighteousness?*” There's no agreement between that which is right and that which isn't. They are polar opposites. In 2nd Thessalonians 2:10, we read, “*And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.*” Unrighteousness is deceiving because it leads to more unrighteousness. Then in verse 12, “*That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*” There is a pleasure to be had in unrighteousness. It, like the pleasure of sin, is but for a season. You have to be deceived in order to take pleasure in unrighteousness or that which is not right. You think about, “*pleasure in unrighteousness.*” Think about the things that the world takes pleasure in, the things that they call, “a good time.” Many times it's that which is not right. In 2nd Peter 2:13, the Bible says, “*And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness,* [There's a payment for unrighteous.] *[as] they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time.*” Then in verse 15, “*Which have forsaken the right way,*” That's unrighteousness. It is to turn away from *the right way*. So, unrighteousness is a general term describing all sin.

Unrighteousness is that which is anti-right, against right. In plain terms, it's whatever is wrong. But *unrighteousness* declares that there has to be a standard by which we measure that which is right. You cannot have unrighteousness, you cannot have right and wrong, unless

there is some standard by which we measure, “This is right, this is wrong.”

The standard is God and His word. Whatever is against God, contrary to God and His word is unrighteous, is wrong. The world will say, “Well that's too simplistic.” That is a fact. God is a standard, God's word is the standard.

In 1st Thessalonians 5:21, Paul says, “*Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.*” *Prove all things*, means to subject everything submitted to you to a proper test. How do we test it? God. Does it go against God? That's how you test it. Is it contrary to God's word? That's the standard. The standard is not what everybody else is doing. The standard is God, and God's word.

In Acts 17:11-12, talking about those of Berea, “*These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, [Here's how.] in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, [Notice what is next.] and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.* What are they doing? They're testing what they have heard, using the word of God, because that's the standard. Continuing in verse 12, “*Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.*”

There is a fixed pattern for values. Everybody gets their so-called values from somewhere. There's something that determines a person's values. There is a fixed standard for morals. It is God and God's word. There is a fixed standard for ethics. There is a fixed standard for conduct; it's God and His word. God, and his word are right. In Psalm 119:128, “*Therefore I esteem all [thy] precepts [concerning] all [things to be] right;*” God's precepts concerning all things, the Psalmist “esteems” them to be right, “*and I hate every false way*” You have right, that which is not right, false, truth, lie which is error. It's God's word that is right.

God's word is fixed and unchangeable; unaffected by circumstances or events; inflexible. God's word is right and it's ***the standard***. It may not be everyone's standard, but it is the standard of determining what is right. It will be the standard by which you are judged. People may adopt their

own standard, but your own standard is not what you'll be judged by. You'll be judged by God's standard. Whatever is contrary to God's standard is wrong or unrighteous, anti right.

God and His word draw very distinct lines. We live in a world that lives in the gray area. That's where many people live their whole life. Nothing's really right, nothing's really wrong, just this gray area. The standard, God Himself and His word, is not gray. It's black and white and draws very distinct lines.

We of course are a postmodern society of which there is no doubt. I would say it began back in the 60's, which some would argue otherwise; it doesn't matter, ... put whatever date you want on it. Postmodernism simply declares that truth does not exist in any objective sense. What does that mean? Truth, first of all is objective and not subjective. That which is objective is a fact. That which is subjective is the representation of the fact. For example; gravity is a fact. It is objective, it is a fact. If I or someone else gives a talk about gravity, that is a representation of the fact. That is subjective. A person that gives this talk on gravity may say some things about gravity that are absolutely false. That doesn't change the fact of gravity because gravity is objective. People today can give their opinion on anything, but your opinion, my opinion does not change the facts. People can give their opinion on what this book says. Their opinion does not change, has no bearing upon the fact. This is very big when a society says truth does not exist in an objective sense. In other words, there are no absolutes. If that is so, then one cannot dogmatically say that anything is right or wrong. That's where we are today. People will say "Who am I to say what's right or wrong?" God's already said what's right and what's wrong.

There must be an absolute to base morals upon, to base real values upon. If there are no absolutes, then all you have is conflicting opinions. No one is right, no one is wrong, we just have a difference of opinion. A postmodern society declares, since truth does not exist in any objective

sense, there is no absolute moral standard. If you think this or that is right, then it's right to you. But if you think it's wrong, it's only wrong to you, but not wrong for someone else. There is no absolute moral standard.

The agenda of postmodernism is to make all beliefs and all opinions valid, encouraging individuals to view all other beliefs as valid. In other words this group over here, they go against the word of God, but who am I to say they're wrong? That's the result of a postmodern society. It gets back to, "Little Johnny over here says two plus two is five. Is he wrong? Well, no not really. To him it's five." It's nonsense and society falls apart. Every individual's beliefs, values, lifestyles, and perceptions of truth are equal in a postmodern society. All truth is relative or subjective, and therefore we need to respect all beliefs. ***The Bible makes it clear that not all beliefs are equal and all claims are not equal.***

Since there is no absolute standard in a postmodern society and their way of thinking, they stress tolerance. We hear much about tolerance today. People have to constantly go to sensitivity training because you don't want to hurt anyone's feelings. You must agree that another person's position is just as valid as yours. This isn't about "our position", it's about God and His word. Any person's position is not equal to God's word.

While postmodernism stresses tolerance, they at the same time, reject dogmatism and absolutism. Those who preach tolerance are the most intolerant, when it comes to absolute truth. The question is always asked how they would explain that. This is how the postmodern brain works; if you believe that some beliefs and behaviors are right, and other beliefs and behaviors are wrong, you are intolerant. Being intolerant, you are evil and a hate monger. Because you are evil and a hate monger, we can't tolerate you. That's why they cannot tolerate Christianity. There is this thing called unrighteousness, so there has to be a standard of right.

Postmodern philosophy and thinking is everywhere. The public schools are filled with it, universities are overrun

with it, textbooks and classrooms are saturated with it, and the media has bought into it wholeheartedly. Politicians are constantly pushing postmodern thinking. They become cowards because they don't want to be labeled as intolerant. They will be asked a point-blank question. "Do you believe it's a woman's right to terminate a pregnancy?" They will spend five minutes answering that question, never really answering because they're scared to. That is a "yes" or "no" question. That doesn't take five minutes. "Yes, I do." "No, I don't" It's very simple. They're scared because they don't want to be labeled as a bigot or a hate monger. They dodge the issue. Politicians are experts at it.

The philosophy of postmodernism is revealed in a lot of sayings. Someone says, "No one has the right to tell me what's right or wrong." That's a postmodern person speaking. Another individual may sit down with their children and say, "Now, I can't tell you what's right or wrong. You must decide that for yourself." How ignorant that someone would tell a child they can't tell them what's right or wrong, that they have to decide that for themselves. Or they will say, "It would be wrong for me to impose my morals upon another person." It's not about your morals, it's about God and His standard of morality. Still, another person may say, "I have the right to do whatever I want as long as I'm not hurting anyone." That's postmodernism. Or, "You have to do what you think is right. What you're doing is wrong, but you have to do what you think is right. If you think doing wrong is right then that's what you have to do."

Unrighteousness! Society is overflowing with it! It's saturated with it. When an individual or a society is given over to a reprobate mind, there is an overwhelming flood of that which is not right. Our society is drowning in that which is not right. It's contrary to God. This first term, *unrighteousness*, describes all sin in a general term. It's anti-right.

Chapter 9 - Being Filled With - Part 3

In Romans 1:29-32, Paul tells the result of the Lord giving people over to a reprobate mind. In verse 29, "*Being filled ...*" is the result, and notice it's present tense, *being*. These things continue and they grow, which is the nature of sin. "*Being filled with all unrighteousness,*" where "unrighteousness" is a term that depicts sin in general. Paul then begins to list specific sins. If all sin was the same in the eyes of God, Paul would have just used the term unrighteousness, the general term. But he mentioned specific things. These things fill a society or an individual that's been given over to a reprobate mind. A reprobate mind is a mind that cannot find its way back. Talking about being lost, a reprobate mind does not find it's way back.

The next thing Paul mentions is fornication. This sin was covered at length in a previous lesson, when we were looking at verse 24, which says, "*Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:*" Fornication is sexual relations between unmarried persons. "Being filled with". Society becomes saturated with this, so much so, that it becomes commonplace, that it becomes an epidemic. According to statistics, since 1966 male and female cohabiting together outside of marriage has risen nine hundred percent. That is staggering. Nine hundred percent! "Being filled." Now, even those who profess to be God's people do it and see nothing wrong with it, and even if they see something wrong with it, they've learned to accept it because it's so commonplace. It's very dangerous when any sin becomes commonplace, because then it's accepted. Society becomes sex-obsessed, sex-crazed, sex-saturated in advertisements, on and on it goes. It's everywhere. It's blatant. Children are introduced to it at a young age, because parents don't have enough sense to shield them from it and it's so commonplace. There's the constant bombardment of inappropriate sexuality. Anything outside of the marriage bed is inappropriate.

The next thing mentioned is wickedness. That also is a sort of a general word that emphasizes a particular aspect

of the nature of sin. Wickedness in the Bible usually denotes depravity and the expression of depravity; corruption, destitution of moral principles; that which is worthless, morally and spiritually wrong. When the Bible uses the word wickedness, it's usually emphasizing the depravity of such.

You can't turn on the news or read a paper without seeing that society is filled, overrun with wickedness, which is a manifestation of depravity. Wickedness appears, I believe, about 127 times and our Bibles. A couple verses that give us the nature of wickedness and being filled with wickedness; Psalm 28:4, "*Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours.*" Their endeavors, that's what they do. The wickedness of their endeavors. Society is filled with wickedness. *Their endeavors*; what they do in the course of a day is characterized by wickedness, depravity. "... *give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.*" There are consequences of wickedness when a society is filled with wickedness. In Psalm 55:11, "*Wickedness [is] in the midst thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her streets.*" We see wickedness is associated with deceit and guile in the streets. It shall not depart from her streets because it is the result or the consequence of wickedness. Then in verse 15, the last part of the verse, "*wickedness [is] in their dwellings, [and] among them.*" When a society is filled with wickedness, wickedness is in their dwellings. It's everywhere they go. It is in their dwellings and among them.

Soon society is identified with wickedness. Here's the problem. When wickedness becomes so commonplace it begins to be redefined. What people considered wicked 10 years ago, is no longer wicked today, because so and so's doing it, and so and so's a good guy or whatever, or it's just so common we can no longer call this wicked. Our society is very good, in a bad way, of redefining language.

Psalm 107:34, says, "*A fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.*" We see

fruitfulness turns into bareness due to wickedness. Once a society is given over to a reprobate mind and filled with wickedness, which they will be, then there's barrenness, there's emptiness.

Remember back in 1967, 1968, when Lyndon Johnson said, "We're going to end the war on poverty." If he would have read his Bible, he would have known you can't do that. There's always going to be poverty. Since that time more and more government programs have been put into effect. Has poverty decreased? No. It's increased. It's increased worldwide because it's associated with wickedness. Don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying that everybody who's poor is wicked. There is an association between the two, because when society is filled with wickedness there's going to be emptiness. People find life to be empty. Sit at a mall and just watch people. People are miserable, people are not happy because there's an emptiness about life in general.

In Proverbs 10:2, "*Treasures of wickedness* [That seems to speak of an abundance of wickedness, being filled with wickedness.] *profit nothing:*" There's no profit in wickedness. In fact, it leads to emptiness. Then in Proverbs 11:5, in the latter part of the verse, "... *but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.*" Wickedness leads to a fall. In Proverbs 13:6, again the latter part of the verse, "... *wickedness overthroweth the sinner.*" There is defeat in wickedness. Nothing good comes from this wickedness.

When a society is filled with wickedness, you have a sunken society. In Jeremiah 12:4, we read, "*How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither; [There is that emptiness, fruitfulness becoming bareness.] for the wickedness of them that dwell therein? the beasts are consumed, and the birds; because they said, He shall not see our last end.*" Wickedness leads to barrenness, destruction, things being consumed. It's somewhat discouraging but it's the truth that there are things that we as a nation will never get back, because they've been consumed by wickedness. That's the nature of wickedness as a consuming power. Then in Jeremiah 22:22, "*The wind shall eat up all thy pastors,*

and thy lovers shall go into captivity: surely then shalt thou be ashamed and confounded for all thy wickedness.” Wickedness eats up, it consumes. Then in Jeremiah 33:5, in the latter part of the verse He speaks of, “... *whom I have slain in mine anger and in my fury, and for all whose wickedness I have hid my face from this city.”* Society is filled with wickedness and God hides his face from that place, which goes along with being given over to a reprobate mind. Keep in mind, “were being filled with wickedness,” then in Luke 11:39, it says what wickedness is linked to, “*And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.”*”

Wickedness and ravening. Ravenous is that which is furious and devouring. We are a society where not everyone, but in general people have been given over to a reprobate mind, and wickedness is devouring us. You can raise taxes, you can do whatever you want, it does not slow down, it does not fix the problem. These are problems that money cannot fix. These are problems men cannot fix. These are spiritual problems.

1st Corinthians 5:8, talks about wickedness and leaven, showing the growing nature of wickedness. Isaiah 57:20, says the wicked are like the troubled sea, they cannot rest. We live in a very restless society. That is a consequence of wickedness.

The same word translated wickedness, throughout the scriptures, is also translated as iniquities. Iniquities show another part of the nature of sin. Iniquities means that which is twisted, that which is perverted. It's a misuse of what God has done, what God has said. *Being filled with all wickedness* or being filled with iniquities, that which is twisted and perverted. Listen to some of the so-called experts, whatever they might be an expert in, and they're minds are twisted and what they say makes no sense to people other than those whose minds are just as twisted and perverted. Society is being filled with that which is twisted, that which is perverted. It's amazing how someone can take

the word of God, take what it says in black and white, and twist it completely around.

When the people are turned over to themselves, to follow the course of their own depraved heart, there will be a saturation with that which is twisted and perverted. The sad thing is there will be plenty of people that will believe the twisted and perverted. If someone says something that is the most insane thing you can think of, I guarantee you there will be people that will say, "That makes sense. That makes a lot of sense." Then you tell them the truth, they say, "I don't believe that."

We are a society that has sown wickedness, therefore, we reap wickedness. This is a continuous cycle. In Job 4:8, it says, "*Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.*" You plant tomatoes and green beans, you reap tomatoes and green beans. Only a fool believes that you can plant beans and carrots will come up. That's twisted. "You reap what you sow" is the basic law of reaping and sowing. That is also true spiritually. In Proverbs 22:8 says, "*He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity:*" You read Hosea 8:7, Hosea 10:13, Galatians 6:7-8; they all teach us the same thing. What you sow, you reap. Because of that basic law, we find ourselves in Romans 1, caught in a terrible cycle of degradation. It's reaping in kind to what you sow. This is something people don't seem to understand when it comes to behavior issues.

Furthermore, reaping is in a different season than sowing. You don't plant something and reap from it in five minutes. You sow in one season, you reap in another. God's people often say, "If what I'm doing is wrong, God would show me." They don't understand the basic law that sowing and reaping are in different seasons. Reaping season is coming. It may not even be in your life. It may be in the life of your grandchildren.

Reaping results in more than what was sown. It is the same spiritually. When we are **filled** with these things, it's because we reap more than we sow. Being filled with wickedness or iniquities.

In Romans 1:29, we've been looking at the result of a people, a society being given over by God to a reprobate mind. The reprobate mind, *Being filled with*, brings a saturation. Paul mentions several things, beginning with unrighteousness. Unrighteousness is just the summation, a generality of all sin. It declares the character of all sin. He then mentions fornication and wickedness.

Then we come to the word *covetousness*. We all covet by nature. It's in us. We are born with it. What Paul means here in verse 29 is a society or people given over to a reprobate mind that is filled with covetousness. Most people when they think of covetousness, think of money or wealth. Of course, covetousness is not limited to that. Covetousness means excessive, that which is beyond excessive. Now, think about *being filled with* that which is excessive. That is what happens to society. As it's used in the word of God, covetousness is excessive, undo, unnecessary desire without due regard for God, for the matters of God.

In reality, perhaps the most basic definition of covetousness would be selfish ambition. We teach our children to be ambitious. There is nothing wrong with being ambitious. I wish society was more ambitious about some things and less ambitious about some others. Self is always behind covetousness, which has its root in selfishness and selfishness has its root in pride. It's pretty hard to separate selfishness and pride. Where there is one, there is the other.

Another definition is ravenous or an avid hunger, a craving, a longing. From that definition we see it's not limited to material wealth. The list is endless as to what could be the object of what we covet. Usually, somewhere along the line covetousness is linked to wealth. The problem is everybody has a different definition of wealth. Most of us would think that if you have a million dollars, you're wealthy, but a millionaire doesn't think that, though.

Covetousness is approved by the world. In fact, if we think about it, we were raised to be covetous. Our parents didn't sit us down and say, "We're going to teach you how to be covetous now." You think about a lot of life's lessons as

a child. There's nothing wrong with those lessons. There are some good in them. But in a lot of ways, it's just another word for covetousness. When a parent says, "I want my children to have it better than me," that's covetousness. It's covetousness for them. You can be covetous for another person. Covetousness is approved by all of us in some way, to some degree, but it's hated by God. In Psalm 10:3, it says, "*For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, [whom] the LORD abhorreth.*"

It is also an object of His anger. It has been throughout history. In Isaiah 57:17, "*For the iniquity of his covetousness*". The word iniquity refers to that which is twisted. Every sin has iniquities within that sin. That's why sometimes you see them listed separately, "Forgive me my sins and iniquities." There are sins and then there are iniquities within those sins. "*For the iniquity of his covetousness.*" Covetousness, just like any other sin, does not stand alone. There's iniquities within, that which is twisted within. "... *was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart*", which would have been a covetous heart.

The covetous are described in Proverbs 15:27, as those who are greedy of gain of self. Is all gain covetousness? Of course not. It's a greed with an undue respect or acknowledgement of God. We all have had gain throughout our lives. Our furniture today is much better than it was when we first got married. The place we live is probably much better than the place we had when we first got married. Does that mean we were greedy of gain? No, it doesn't mean that at all. There are those who are greedy of gain, meaning it becomes their life. When you want to buy whatever, a new sofa or new house, and you just about starve your kids to death to get there, that's greedy of gain. That's covetousness. Or you put the Lord's house behind those things and spiritual things. Greediness of gain has overtaken other things. Proverbs 23:4-5, says, "*Labour not.*" There are some people today who would put a period right there and stop reading. There's no period there. "*Labor not to be*

rich:” In other words, we are to labor. There is a proper purpose for labor. It's not to be rich. The problem is, different people have different ideas of what is *rich*. It's relative. “... *cease from thine own wisdom.*” In the strict context, our own wisdom teaches us to labor to be rich. The Bible says labor not to be rich. “*Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?*” When a person is covetous, they've set their eyes on a material goal and are laboring to achieve it, but when it comes right down to it, what they're trying to achieve doesn't really matter. “... *for [riches] certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.*” We are to labor, but not labor to be rich.

Proverbs 28:22, is pretty much along those same lines. “*He that hasteth to be rich [hath] an evil eye,*” The sin is not being rich. The sin is *hasteth to be rich*. The sin is the desire, which brings us to covetousness. “... *and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.*” People say, “Well, that's not so. I know people who have labored to be rich and they still have nice things.” That's not what that verse means. Spiritual poverty will come upon him and that is a poverty worse than material poverty. I have known of people who have spiritually bankrupted themselves and their family, by working for gain of material things. It happens all the time. It is covetousness.

In 1st Timothy 6:6, is a passage that is often misapplied by taking it out of context. People don't pay attention to what it says. A good truth to learn is godliness with contentment is great gain. We all need more contentment. We brought nothing into this world and it is certain we can carry nothing out. I have preached a lot of funerals and I have yet to see a U-Haul at the cemetery. You don't take it with you. 1st Timothy 6:8, “*And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.*” Here's where people misinterpret scripture, “*But they that will be rich fall into temptation*”. It does not say, *they that are rich fall into temptation*. He is talking about the desire here. “*They that will be rich*”, it is their determination to be rich. They are covetous individuals. They fall into temptation. They bring

temptations into their lives that they normally would not have. "... *and a snare,*" meaning there are traps for all those who desire, "I have to get more" There's all kinds of traps for you to fall into, and sadly many have fallen into those traps and that's where they lived the rest of their life. "... *and [into] many foolish and hurtful lusts,*" or desires, foolish, always chasing for more, always wanting more. These foolish and hurtful lusts, which stem from the desire to be rich, "... *drown men in destruction and perdition.*" He's not condemning wealth. God blesses some people with wealth. That's just the way it is. Someone having more money than you doesn't mean they're covetous. The truth is the poor can be more covetous than the rich. Wealth or poverty has really nothing to do with covetousness. It's the desire. 1st Timothy 6:10, says, "*For the love of money is the root of all evil: ...*" It does not say money is the root of all evil. It is **the love of** money. That's covetousness. "... *which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith,*" I could make a list of people that I have seen that happen to. For the love of money, they have erred from the faith.

I know a man, he is an elderly man now, that I pastored 35 years ago. He was a covetous individual who worked all the time to get more. Within the last couple of years he has called me and said "Brother Dan, I wish I could live my life over. I wish I would have listened." He has erred from the faith. It happens. Covetousness is a serious thing. Then he addresses the preacher. In 1st Timothy 6:11, it says, "*But thou o man of God flee these things;*" Flee what things? The love of money. Flee them and instead of pursuing money, "*follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.*"

We have a society today that overflows with covetousness. It's not just the rich. There are poor people as well that are covetous. "Oh, I wish I had what they had."

Continuing our study in Romans 1, verse 28 says God gave them over to a reprobate mind. The result of that is stated in verse 29, where we read, “*Being filled* [That's an overflow.] *with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness,*” In the last lesson, we were looking at “*covetousness*”. Contrary to popular belief, covetousness is not a sin that is by no means limited to the wealthy. You can be poverty-stricken and still be very covetous. We need to make that clear, because people tend to believe, someone that's poor is not covetous. That's not true at all.

Also in the last lesson, we began looking at biblical definitions of covetousness. In Proverbs 15:27, it is described by the words “... *greedy of gain* ...”. Proverbs 23:4-5, “*Labor not to be rich*”. The purpose of labor is not to get rich. Proverbs 28:22, “... *hasteth to be rich* ...” and in 1st Timothy 6:9-10, we read of those “... *that will be rich.*” That would be covetousness.

God warned Israel of the dangers of covetousness when they entered the land of Canaan. Remember, we're studying about a society that is continually being filled, it's overflowed with covetousness. In Deuteronomy 8:10-11, the people are warned, “*When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God,*” When everything's going well; you're experiencing abundance; beware lest you forget the Lord thy God. Most of us are in more danger of forgetting the Lord when things are going well than we are when we're in the midst of the storm. “... *in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: Lest [when] thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt [therein];*” He goes on and says how God would bless, but the warning is not to forget.

The root of covetousness is a forgetfulness of the Lord. Christ warned of this forgetfulness in Luke 12:15. “*And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: [And here's why.] for a man's life consisteth*

not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” He starts with a warning, which leads into the parable of the rich fool.

Being filled with covetousness, a society is overrun with what we read here in this parable of the rich fool. It doesn't have to be a rich person, it can be the parable of the poor fool. It's a fool either way. Luke 12:16, it says, *“And he spake a parable unto them ...”* Remember, this is in the context of this warning about covetousness. (You need to always look for context, perhaps more so in parables than anything else. 99% of the time, when someone preaches upon a parable, they take it out of context.) *“... saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying,”* Here is his attitude, and this is the sin. *“What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, [and] be merry. But God said unto him, [This would be the application.] [Thou] fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?”* God said the man in the parable is a fool, not because he's rich, but because he is completely self-absorbed.

You would have to walk around with blinders not to see that we live in a society that is overflowing with an absorption of self. This man of the parable is completely self-absorbed. In the “conversation” he has with himself, in his mind, he uses the pronouns *I* and *my*, 11 times in verses 17 through 19. *I, I, I, my, my, my.* He is completely self-absorbed. That is why he's a fool. He is the center of his universe. The ruling spirit of his life is self.

Society overflows with self and it is the result of a reprobate mind. By way of a reminder, a reprobate mind *cannot* find its way back. People and society in general is absorbed with self. Psychiatrists and psychologists have

written many books and articles on narcissism and this absorption with self. The problem is, you can not get back, because it is the result of a reprobate mind.

The man in the parable is pursuing his own will, his own glory, his own ends, his own lust. Jesus says, “Thou fool,” not because he has wealth, barns, and goods. This man really believes that life has no other purpose than him, than himself. Society overflows with this attitude. His life consists of self-will, self-indulgence, self-seeking, self-glory, self-important, self-love; and Jesus says “thou fool”.

This man of the parable was also a fool because he did not acknowledge God. You'll notice he refers to *my* fruits, *my* barns, and *my* goods. Listening to him you would think that he is the absolute proprietor, that all these things are the result of him. He attributes all of his success to his own efforts. Much in keeping with our American tradition of self-reliance, there is no acknowledgement of God. Jesus said thou fool. There was no consideration of God. He is not beholden to God for anything, nothing at all. That overflows in our society today. It was God who gave the seed and soil life in which this man planted. It was God who sent the right amount of rain. It was God who sent the right amount of sunshine. But there is no thanksgiving. There is no praise given to God, but instead he takes all the credit to himself. Jesus says, “Thou fool”.

He's a fool not because he possesses things. He's a fool because things possess him. That's quite a difference. “My barns, my fruits, my goods.” He looked at everything as his own with no thought of the One who gave it to him. No thought of glorifying God with his abundance. No thought of accountability to God. The Lord says, “Thou fool.”

This man in the parable never consults with God. He says, “I will do this. I will do that.” He makes plans. You're not a fool for making plans, your fool for making plans without God. He did not consult the Lord. He made plans for his future without ever considering the will of God,

without considering what God would have him to do. Jesus says, "Thou fool."

In all his receiving, his calculating, his resolving, and his anticipating, there was a complete neglect of the Lord. Society is overrun with this attitude today, and it's covetousness. "Thou fool." There's no dependence upon God. *Read the parable!* There is no recognition of God's authority, of God's rule in his life. "This is what I'm going to do." There is no recognition of God whatsoever, no dependence upon God, no thought of obligation to God. Jesus said, "Thou fool."

This man is a fool because he looks to things for happiness. Those who are poor do that. They will say, "Well, if I had such and such I could be happy." No, that has nothing to do with that happiness. It is not a matter of having or not having. The issue is what has us. He looked for material things for happiness, pleasure, satisfaction, and security, and Jesus said "Thou fool."

If the world looked at this man, they would say, "There is a successful man. There is a wise man. You ought to go to him for advice." They would say, "Wow! I wish I was like him. There's a happy individual." But Jesus said, "Thou fool." If you read the life stories of many of the people society puts on a pedestal as successful and happy, you'll find they're miserable individuals. They're not miserable because they possess, they are miserable because there's a hole in their life. That hole is because God is missing, and they are miserable. "Thou fool."

Here's a man who manifests covetousness. Covetousness is a manifestation of wrong values; you put the wrong value upon the material and don't value the spiritual enough, you can ruin your life. Wrong values.

It's a manifestation of wrong loyalties. This is what Jesus was referring to in "The Sermon on the Mount" in Matthew 6. Wrong concerns, wrong pursuits, wrong priorities. That's why we read in Proverbs 15:27, "*He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth*

gifts shall live.”

Being filled with all covetousness is our society today. It is not going to get better because it is the result of a reprobate mind which cannot find its way back. The truth is a reprobate mind and its attempt to get back, looks to the wrong things and just continues further into the cycle of destruction. That is our society.

In a society that is overflowing with covetousness, in a society that is overflowing with the attitude of self, that's where you and I are called to live for the Lord. We need to beware that we do not fall into, that we do not emulate that characteristic of our society.

Continuing with our study of Romans 1, we are looking at the results of a reprobate mind. Starting with verse 29, we read, “*Being filled [Overflowing and ongoing.] with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; [Then again, he says ‘full’.] full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, [Or unappeasable.] unmerciful.*” Verse 32 then says, “*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.*” Not only are people being filled with these things so much so that they become so common, but they take pleasure in them as well.

The next word in Romans 1:29 after *covetousness* is the word *maliciousness*. That's a word that pretty much describes our society. It's everywhere. There is hardly any place you can go where this is not present. These things prevail in society, and they have an impact upon God's people as well. Therefore you will find these things mentioned in verse 29 in the Lord's churches as well, not all of these things, of course and not to the same degree that you find them in society, because society is being filled with them.

Maliciousness is something that I believe God's people are very guilty of. Facebook doesn't help. In fact it feeds it. The Greek word is *kakia* [*kak-ee'-ah*], and is translated as *malice* in the New Testament. It's a noun that is a thought or a disposition of ill will. It can be a verb, carried out in an action. There are a lot of people, sadly even some God's people, who would rejoice if something bad happened to you. They have ill will. Oh, they may not express it, but it's there. It's a thought or disposition of cruelty, of hatefulness. The country is overrun with hatefulness. I mean it's everywhere. We're just flooded with it. That's maliciousness, spite, vindictiveness. This is maliciousness, malice; the thought of disposition of vindictiveness. “I will

get back at you.” People keep score. “I will ruin you.” It's everywhere we turn; scornfulness, bitterness.

Someone with maliciousness, with malicious intent, will proclaim something false, defaming another. Or they will perhaps not proclaim it, but we'll gladly believe it when someone else proclaims it. It doesn't take much today to ruin a person and here's why; maliciousness. All you have to do is say something about somebody and people will believe it. There will be enough to believe it, they will not check the facts, they will just simply believe. That's maliciousness. 1st Corinthians 13, Paul writing of charity, of love, says, “[love] *thinketh no evil.*” Love has been removed because love doesn't believe the bad that it hears about others. Today people are quick to believe everything that someone says about brother so-and-so. Not only will they be quick to believe it, they will spread it as well. That's maliciousness. Then they will give a half apology by saying, “Well, I didn't know.” You should not have spoken then. If you don't know, then be quiet. Maliciousness is everywhere. This is part of the reprobate mind. Again, a reprobate mind, in and of itself, cannot find its way back to sanity. So it is with this maliciousness.

Maliciousness is basically what we read of in Jeremiah 18:18, “*Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah;*” There is a lot of sin in that statement, and maliciousness is one of them. “*for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.*” Here, maliciousness would do them harm, which it does. It's one of the characteristics of maliciousness. They are saying they will not give his word heed, they will not pay attention to what he says. All that does, of course, is hurt them.

Malice will control and govern the mind and that will cause people to have a distorted perspective. Whether it be proclaiming or believing something about somebody with malicious intent, it will give one a distorted perspective. You

hear something about somebody, and you perhaps may not wholeheartedly believe it, or may not even believe it at all, but your perspective begins to change. That's what maliciousness does. It changes perspective. Once perspective is changed, you've got a lot of real problems that are going to follow. There is a distorted view of reality. What a person thinks, now becomes real to them. It may not be the truth at all, but it's reality in their mind and it's a distorted reality. If your reality is distorted, there will be distorted assumptions as well. If our assumptions are distorted, there will be distorted judgment. If judgment is distorted, there is a distorted conclusion. All of these things feed malice, feed maliciousness.

Maliciousness is of a growing nature, as all sin is. In 1st Corinthians 5:8, "*Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness;*" The "leaven of malice" grows. Leaven releases gases causing expansion, if you will. The leaven of malice releases and it grows. It grows in the individual who has it, but it also grows among individuals as well. In 1st Corinthians 14:20, Paul's instruction is, "*Brethren, be not children in understanding: [When you read the word 'children', think of immaturity. He's saying, 'Brethren be not immature in understanding.'] howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.*" The phrase we're interested in, of course, is *in malice be children*. You think about that. For the most part children are not malicious. They can get over things pretty quick. That's not so with adults. That's what Paul says here, in malice be like children. Children can be mad at each other and thirty seconds later they're hugging each other. Nobody has made an apology or anything. That is just the way it is. They don't hold onto things. With adults, it's completely different. So, in malice, be ye children.

We get a better understanding of the sin of malice by looking at the other words translated with it throughout the New Testament. In Ephesians 4:31, "*Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, [discord] and evil speaking,*

be put away from you, with all malice:” Bitterness is a root sin. Wrath is anger, but it's not just anger, it's anger with a desire to do harm. Clamor is discord. Where you find malice, you will find bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking. Concerning evil speaking, someone says, “Well, what I'm saying is the truth.” That may be so, but what is your intent? What is your intent with speaking that truth? Is it to destroy? That's malice. You can cover it with the veil of truth all you want to, but it's malice. Malice is intent, it is a thought, a disposition.

In Colossians 3:8, *“But now ye also put off all these; [We see the same words with a couple added.] anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.”* In Titus 3:3, *“For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice [Living in malice became their life. It grows. Then notice the word connected with it.] and envy, hateful, [and] hating one another.”* People think today that they can cover their hatefulness with just some smooth words. That doesn't cover it. Where there's malice, if it's not from the get-go, hating one another will be there. Then in 1st Peter 2:1, *“Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, [Guile is connected to malice. Guile is cunningness, deceitfulness.] and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings.”*

Malice is a horrible thing. Malice is very destructive. It's connected with anger, although not all anger, of course, is sinful, but if it becomes malicious, it is. In Proverbs 22:24-25, it says, *“Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.”* The malicious individual has his ways. It will be a snare. Maliciousness is a trap that will snare our soul.

In our text in Romans, we see being filled with all malice. That is, when a people is given over to a reprobate mind, hatefulness, spite, and vindictiveness becomes widespread, it's the common thing. It's just what you do. You look at the political arena today, there is maliciousness

everywhere. I suppose that's always been true in politics, but not to the extent that it is today. This is part of this cycle.

After he says, being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, Paul says again, *full of*. He is stressing a degree of these sins, an overflowing, a saturation, so much so that it becomes commonplace, it becomes epidemic.

The next thing Paul mentions is envy. The order of these words here is very significant; maliciousness, envy, murder. You could put these things in any order, but the Holy Spirit put them in a specific order. I believe there was a teaching in this order.

Envy, of course, is a feeling. It is inward, but it shows itself outwardly. It is the feeling of displeasure, ill will, and malice. Where there's envy, there's malice and vice versa. It's the feeling of displeasure, ill will, and malice of seeing or hearing of the advantage or the prosperity of others. If things are going well for you, you're prospering materially, financially, you're prospering in every way; just because of that, you will have enemies. Why, you ask? "I didn't do anything." You don't have to. That's the way of envy. Society is where it's overflowed to; it affects God's people. God's people are impacted.

Envy is resentful, dissatisfied longing for what another person has. It could be over possessions, position, family, anything. I mean, there doesn't seem to be anything off limits to envy. It can be achievements or success.

If a person is envious of you, that person is dangerous. Envious people are dangerous people and can cause great harm, great destruction. You see it all through the scriptures. It has its root in selfishness, in pride. They will look at somebody who is prospering and their thought is that person is so proud. That may be so, but the fact is you envy them. You're proud. You think you should have it. That makes you proud. Envy has its root in selfishness, in pride, in dissatisfaction.

Look at what is associated with envy. In Titus 3:3 and 1st Peter 2:1, envy is associated with malice. In 1st

Timothy 6:4. *“He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings.”* Evil assumptions.

Envy caused Cain to kill his brother. Envy caused Sarah to mistreat Hagar. Envy caused Joseph's brothers to sell him into slavery. Envy is a dangerous thing. Society is overrun with it. It is the result of God turning a people over to a reprobate mind.

God help us not to be guilty, not to have our lives overflowed with these things that are happening in society. Full of, being filled with maliciousness, full of envy.

As we continue with our study of Romans 1, we are in verse 29 and looking at the results of the reprobate mind. As I have mentioned in previous lessons, a reprobate mind explains a lot of things, explains much of the foolishness, explains that which is so absurd, that goes on in our day. God gave them over to a reprobate mind and they cannot find the way back to, for lack of a better word, normal.

We now come to the next thing in the list of things in verse 29, which is murder. We have looked at being full of maliciousness, then envy, and the next thing is being full of murder. Human life of course is the crown of God's creation. It's the ultimate of the creation of God. The act of murder is a devaluation of the life of others. We are not going to take the time to go into what constitutes murder and what doesn't. I spent a lot of time on murder in the series on the Ten Commandments.

NOTE: "The Ten Commandments" audio series referred to is available at Home Missionary Baptist Church's website.

www.homebaptistchurch.org/Pages/SSlessons/tcindex.html

The teachings on "Thou Shalt Not Kill", begin in PART 5, Item 10 in the audio player there, then continue in PART 6.

To briefly review, in war and things of that nature, taking the life of another person is not murder. There are plenty of scriptures for all of that. What we are talking about is the devaluation of human life.

Murder has its roots in all the things that we have mentioned thus far. The Bible talks about all the different kinds of murder. One of the things that you can put under the heading of murder is a killing of someone that is premeditated. That, of course, is murder. The Bible teaches very strongly about capital punishment. Capital punishment is not murder. It is, or should be, the consequence of murder.

In Exodus 21:14, we find the law against premeditated murder, "*But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die.*" We must also say,

that in God's eyes, to kill someone to protect your family, yourself, or someone else, is not murder either. I am not going to spend time on that here. In 2nd Samuel 20:9-10, we read about an example of premeditated murder, where Joab murdered Amasa. Look at these verses in 2nd Samuel regarding Joab and Amasa. *“And Joab said to Amasa, [Art] thou in health, my brother? [Joab is asking Amasa how he is doing. How is it going?] And Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him. But Amasa took no heed to the sword that [was] in Joab’s hand: so he smote him therewith in the fifth [rib], and shed out his bowels to the ground, and struck him not again; and he died.”* That is premeditated murder.

Death which is due to criminal neglect is not the same as premeditated murder, but the Bible considers it murder. In Exodus 21:28-29, it says, *“If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die: then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox [shall be] quit. [Or released.]” But if the ox were wont [That is, the ox has done this in the past.] to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death.”* The owner was guilty because of criminal neglect. Our judicial system charges people with murder for criminal neglect.

There is an accessory to murder. If you hire somebody to kill another person that's murder. If you consent to it, you can be an accessory to murder. There are many examples of that in scripture. Remember David planning on the death of Uriah. Though David did not literally kill Uriah, God charge David with the murder of Uriah, as recorded 2nd Samuel 12:9. There is the account of Jezebel plotting the death of Nabal and causing him to be killed. She did not literally, did not physically kill Nabal but she was guilty of murder because she had him killed. The example of Christ in Acts 4:10, even though it was predestined and in the plan of God, we read that the Lord

charged the people with the murder or the killing, the crucifixion of Christ.

Then of course, there's no getting around the fact that abortion is murder. This isn't about abortion in Exodus 21:22-25, but it describes the killing of an infant. *"If men strive, and hurt a woman with child,"* "A woman with child", that's how the Bible describes pregnancy. It is not a fetus, not a blob of tissue, it says "a woman with child." *"... so that her fruit depart [from her], [That's that child.] and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges [determine]. And if [any] mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe."*

Abortion is simply the procedure to remove, a better word would be to eliminate, the child after conception. All different kinds of abortion is murder. We've mentioned those in the past in other messages. It's the murder of an unborn child. It is still a child, but it's an unborn child. In fact, abortion is no less murder than the killing of a child outside of the womb, or a child who has been born. Abortion is legal according to man's law, but that doesn't make it right. Those who have a reprobate mind have decided that it is not murder. I'm not totally convinced that some who believe in abortion, know it is murder, but they just don't care. Though it is legal, abortion is cold-blooded murder, according to God's law. I believe everyone who participates in it, whether it be the mother, the father, the hospital, the doctor, they are all accessory to murder. There are many who are accessories to this murder.

In this time, we know that Satan and his allies have conditioned the minds of many. The numbers are reversing according to polls, but Satan and his allies have conditioned the minds of many to accept the idea of an unborn baby as something less than human. How anyone can look at a modern-day ultrasound and deny that that baby is a human being has a reprobate mind. To condition the minds of the

populace, they refer to the unborn child again as a fetus. They just keep drilling that into people's minds, and people soon do not recognize it as a child. It is just a fetus or tissue of some kind. All through the Bible, when the Bible speaks of pregnancy, Eli's daughter-in-law in 1st Samuel 4:19, it says, "... *was with child*, ..." Bathsheba told David in 2nd Samuel 11:5, "*I [am] with child.*" I don't even like the term pregnant anymore. "I am with child." That's a good term. We read in 2nd Kings 8:12, of women "*with child*". The Bible makes it clear that that life is a child. In Isaiah 7:14, concerning Christ, "*Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, [Bear a male child]*" In Matthew 1:18, speaking of Mary and Christ, "*she was found with child*" In Luke 1:31, the angel said to Mary, "*thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son,*" Thou shalt conceive and bring forth a son.

It is said of the incarnation of Christ, "The word was made flesh.", that is Jesus Christ is the word, John 1:1. Where was the word made flesh? In Galatians 4:4, it says, "*But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman,*" Jesus Christ was made flesh in the womb of Mary. You read Psalm 139, you see that we were formed in the womb. Luke 1:36 the angel told Mary of Elizabeth, "*thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son*" She has conceived a son, conceived a male child. A conception is life, male or female. She hath conceived a son. He did not become a son when he was born. He was a son at conception.

You see, a woman with child is a mother of that child. It's not the birth of that child that makes a mother. They are with child, they are a mother of a child. The dad is a father of a child. That child is in the womb. The child is not in the world, but the child is in the womb. It's still a child.

"She has also conceived a son", so the unborn infant is a person from conception. In Psalm 51:5, David said, "*in sin did my mother conceive me.*" There are two important words there, *conceived* and *me*. When conception took place, that was me. We made reference to Psalm 139:13-16,

where it says, "*For thou hast possessed my reins: [my inward parts.] thou hast covered [Or woven.] me in my mother's womb. [It was me, in my mother's womb.] I will praise thee; for I am fearfully [and] wonderfully made: [You could add there again, 'in my mother's womb'.] marvellous [are] thy works; and [that] my soul knoweth right well. My substance [That is, my skeletal frame.] was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, [In the womb.] [and] curiously wrought [Embroidered with great precision.] in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all [my members] were written, [which] in continuance were fashioned, when [as yet there was] none of them.*" The Lord formed me from the womb.

In Isaiah 49-5 we read those words, "*the LORD that formed me from the womb.*" The Lord spoke of Jeremiah being formed in the womb, in Jeremiah 1:5, "*Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee;*" Before He even formed thee, before conception, God says, He knew thee. Paul said in Galatians 1-15, "*But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb,*" **Me**, my mother's womb. It's not just a fetus, it's a child, an infant boy, an infant girl. The unborn infant is a person from conception. Don't refer to it as an **it**. It's not an **it**. **It's a child!**

People have been brainwashed and duped into believing that the main issue is the woman's right. That's not the issue at all. The issue is not a woman's right to choose. Immediately they will say, "Well you're against women's rights." No I am not. It's not a woman's right to kill her child. Anytime they go there, you need to get them back on track. We're not talking about a woman's rights here. We're talking about that child in the womb. That's what we're talking about, and the murder of the helpless unborn. That is the issue, not a woman's right to choose.

It's sickening how so many politicians who are against abortion, will dance all around that issue, when they're questioned. They'll never come right out and say they are against it. Well I shouldn't say never, there are some that will. It's murder. "That's going to offend people." It

ought to offend people. It ought to be quite offensive, that we are a nation that has murdered millions of unborn children. That's what it is, murder. The Bible, the word of God in Exodus 21:22-23 warns against killing the unborn. If it's not alive, it can't be killed. You and I should be firmly settled about abortion and I'm sure we are.

There's no getting around that "abortion" is just a nice word for murder. Those who have of a reprobate mind have no problem with abortion. I mean if you just look at it logically, if you just take the Bible out of it and look at it logically, you can come to no other conclusion that it's a child inside that womb. We've come a long way in pictures of an infant in a womb. Anybody that has any morals at all, anybody that has an ounce of sense, can not look at that picture and say that's not a human life. They don't care. If it's okay to kill the unborn, logically it doesn't make sense that the very same people will charge someone with double homicide for killing a woman with child. Well if it's not a life, you would think a lawyer would have a field day with that. They're just so inconsistent.

To me, the logical conclusion is this; if you can kill an unborn child it's still murder, it doesn't make any difference if it's nine months or 14 days, or whatever. And, if you can kill a child right before it's born, then why can't you kill a child when he or she is 6 years old. What's the difference? And why can't we just put down the elderly and the handicapped and on and on we can go. It's a sad, sad commentary on a society that has no concern for its unborn.

When you see someone who's expecting, just remember, that's a woman with child. A woman with child is how we need to look at it.

In Romans chapter 1, we've been looking at verse 29, which is the results of a reprobate mind. One thing we need to understand about a reprobate mind is it doesn't get better. It just continually gets worse, therefore all the results become more commonplace as well. That's why Paul says *being filled*, meaning it's an ongoing, constant filling. "*Being filled with all unrighteousness*, [Unrighteousness is kind of a general term for all of these things that are mentioned] *fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable*, [It means they're unappeasable, unrelenting, remorseless] *unmerciful*: Then you read on, they take joy, they have pleasure in these things. Murder was the subject of the last lesson, focusing more on abortion and any other aspect. The next word in verse 29 is debate,

We live in a very angry society. People are angry about all kinds of different things. I think mostly they're angry with the lives that they live. We live in a very angry, very unhappy society. It just takes one little thing; they may have been cheated out of french fry or something at McDonald's; that's all it takes to set them off. There's just this anger everywhere. It's part of, it's a result of a reprobate mind and all these things that we've mentioned.

When you think of the word debate, you probably think of an organized debate. That, of course, is not the meaning here. It's a word that is connected with contention, strife, altercation, anger, heated zeal. It's commonplace and the spirit that people have. The Bible has much to say about this and in the New Testament it's almost always, if not always, related to church. However, in Romans 1:29, Paul is relating it more to society than to the Lord's churches. Still it does have a tendency to carry over into the Lord's churches as well. Everywhere there is debate, there is this anger, and hostility. In Romans 13:13, referring to God's people, "*Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering*

[That means lude, immodest behavior] *and wantonness, not in strife ...*” “Not in strife” describes this word debate. Strife is everywhere. You can follow it throughout Paul's epistles, where he would mention strife, contentions, and so forth. Being filled with debates or debate.

The next word is deceit. The Greek word is *dolos* [dol'-os] and it means laying a snare for others. It has to do with lying, cheating, cunningness, deception, dishonesty, and fraud. Society is filled with these things. There are people who lie so much, they actually believe their own lies. They've been telling them for so long that it's their reality. They couldn't tell the truth if they had to. They lie about things there's no need to lie about. They just lie. That's part of this deceit. Then, of course, cheating is part of deceit. People cheat in all kinds of ways, in all kinds of things. Many of them call it good stewardship, but it's not good stewardship, it's wrong.

The Bible condemns deception, of course. When God established the law, He had much to say about honesty versus dishonesty. Noticing Leviticus 19:11, “*Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, ...*” There's two things there; stealing of course, is taking what is not rightfully yours; people have some pretty odd definitions of what constitutes stealing.

Remember you used to go to the restaurant and they had all the jams on the table. They don't do that anymore. Why? Because people took them all. That's stealing. “Well, I paid for the meal.” You didn't pay for every jam on that table. That's stealing. They can't put those things there.

Leviticus 19 continues, “*... neither deal falsely.*” That's dishonest in any business transaction. “*... neither lie one to another. And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I [am] the LORD. Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob [him]: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.*” Then God deals with it again in Deuteronomy 25, where He talks about how man was not to have two balances. In other words, they sold things by weight and the merchant wasn't to have two balances to fix his price

and to cheat people. In Proverbs 11:1, *“A false balance [is] abomination to the LORD: but a just weight [is] his delight.”* False balance is not talking about balance of the secular and the spiritual in life. That's how a lot of people interpret that verse. That's not what it's talking about. God is talking about honesty and dishonesty in business affairs, that you don't have a false weight. He says a just weight is His delight. In Proverbs 16:11, *“A just weight and balance [are] the LORD'S: all the weights of the bag [are] his work.”* Again, He is talking about being honest. That's almost gone in society. Out in society, you can't believe someone just because they said so. There may have been a time when you could do that, but those days are long gone. I'm not saying that everybody is dishonest, but most probably are. That's what this deceit is. It's dishonesty. We're full of it, so much so, that it becomes common practice.

The next thing Paul mentions is malignity, conveying the idea of an evil disposition. The tendency of this disposition is to put the worst possible construct on everything. You see somebody do something, or they say something, and you put the worst possible construct as possible upon it. That's very prevalent in society. It consists of misinterpreting the words or actions of others. People who are *“malignant”* will say something like, “Well they said this, but this is what they meant.” That's quite a leap. You don't know what they meant, unless they tell you. It's misinterpreting and doing so on purpose.

It also conveys the idea of rudeness in disposition to kindness and courtesy. We live in an angry, hostile, dishonest society. We live in a very rude time. It's very unusual when someone is polite. Most aren't. Most are rude. This is part of this reprobate mind and all the things that were mentioned before a reprobate mind. When you become narcissistic you become rude, because after all, you're the only one that matters. We have a society today that is just overrun with rudeness. We live in an age of rudeness. Without a doubt, there is an escalation of rudeness. It is a time when people's awareness of what constitutes courteous and polite is almost non-existent.

The simple “Thank you” is rare out in society. Cashiers being rude to customers, acting like you are inconveniencing them because you've come into their place of business. Then of course, there's the customers that are rude. It's everywhere. The child of God, of course, is to live above the rudeness. We're not to get sucked in by any of these things that we're mentioning. Certainly a child of God is to be polite and treat others with kindness in a society where it is very, very rare.

In Matthew 5:44-47, *“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, [That's hard to do. Love your enemies.] do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;”* Because of the society we now live in, if you do these things, it's shocking. It's not what people expect. Someone curses you, they expect you to curse them back. That's the protocol. They hate you, you're to hate them. In this society, in which we live, we are to follow verse 44. It says, in verse 45, *“That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven:”* That means in order to imitate your Father and then gives an example. *“... for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good,”* The same sun rises upon those who curse God and those who sing praises to God. God's our example. *“... and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, [That's not hard to do or shouldn't be, to love those who love you.] what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?”* The most wicked of sinners, they do the same thing. The most wicked individual can love somebody that loves them. Again, we're to rise above that, rise above the society that we live in. *“And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more [than others]? do not even the publicans so?”* You acknowledge individuals that you don't agree with, you salute them. You don't just salute or acknowledge those who are in total agreement with you. We're to live above the rudeness of society. “They don't talk to me. I'm not going to talk to them.” That's not what the Bible says.

In Romans 12:10 it's talking in church capacity, but it can be applied it to society, *“[Be] kindly affectioned one to*

another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;” You don't have to agree with somebody to not be rude to them, to acknowledge them.

1st Corinthians 13 says that true love is not rude, and not any of these things that we've mentioned. Verse 4 says, “*Charity, suffereth long, and is kind.*” Love is kind. Love treats with kindness. That's what we're to do. “... *charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,*” I don't have to applaud, I don't have to agree with what someone does, but you and I as God's people are to live above the rudeness of society.

We live in a very angry, very hostile, and very rude society. When society is overflowing with these things, it can't even function properly. We see it in our government, which cannot function because of the hatred, the anger, and hostility. It gets in the way of common-sense. That's what happens when you get angry enough, it gets in the way of reasoning. We see it everywhere in our society. To the natural man, hate feeds hate, anger feeds anger. You and I, of course, are to rise above that.

It would be comical if it wasn't so sad, but you have a political party that says our president [Donald Trump] is divisive. Yet every word out of their mouth is divisive, everything they do is divisive.

Our society is filled with these things and therefore it makes it perilous times. When you live in anger, hostility, and rudeness, it's going to make for a very perilous time. You and I, who are God's people, are to rise above it. It's not easy. That's where we need the help of the Holy Spirit. It's not our nature to treat someone properly that treats us improperly. We need the help of the Lord so that we do not become part of the problem of society.

As we continue with our study of Romans 1, from verse 19 on, we're looking at the results of God turning people over to a reprobate mind. In the last lesson, looking at verse 29 we see, "Being filled and full of debate, deceit, malignity. All of that is expressive of hatefulness toward others.

Next comes whispers and backbiters, two different things, which we'll see in this lesson. Keeping the context of debate, deceit, and malignity, we have whispers. I believe there's a very definite order in this list.

Backbiting is talking bad about somebody. *Whispers* is just gossip and doesn't have to have anything to do with truth or facts. It's unconstrained conversation about other people, the things, the events going on in their lives.

Of course in our day of technology, whispers have a whole new tool to carry out their habit of whispers. They are people who are hateful for the most part. They are not interested in truth. They hear parts of different things and then they create their own story, create their own facts. It's the spreading of rumors.

The bad thing in the society in which we live is there are more people who are more than happy to listen to the whispers than those who don't want anything to do with them. People want to know what is going on whether it's true or not. This is why fake news takes off; people like that stuff. The National Enquirer and all those types of papers and publications have been around for decades. That has been going on in those types of publications since they've been around. Now it's called journalism. Journalism is reporting facts, not creating facts. Journalism has nothing to do with opinion. That is called a columnist, one who gives their opinion. Those who just report the news are not to give their opinion. They are just to report what happened and leave it at that. There is really no such thing as *news* anymore, because people want to hear whispers. Once you identify a whisper, those are the people that you talk to about the weather. You pretty much leave it at that. You don't say

anything of any substance, whatsoever, because I do not believe they are capable of hearing truth. They just hear what they want to hear and off they go. Society is filled with it. I guarantee you, someone could make up something about you that is just outlandish and there will be plenty of people who believe it.

The Bible says in Psalm 41:7, the psalmist David speaking, "*All that hate me whisper together against me: [Remember the context of whispers. They are the 'all that hate me'.] against me do they devise my hurt.*" You have to ask yourselves, "What is the purpose? What is the intent of someone who spreads rumors?" It's not good and it usually has its foundation in hatred.

In Proverbs 16:28, the Bible says, "*A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends.*" A whisperer, a gossip, one who spreads rumors, they have the ability to separate friends. Whisperers conceal the real intentions. They insinuate things, they make assumptions, and they build a story upon insinuations and assumptions. They do this by hinting, by just being suspicious. They are the people who are suspicious and they like to create suspicion about other people. Whisperers. That's a sad society to live in, but that's where we are. Again, being filled with so much so that it's commonplace. It's a sad society when it's commonplace. Whisperers. So much so that it's epidemic. Those who listen to whispers, if they are not already they soon will be whisperers themselves. They spread it. The more it spreads the more far out it becomes.

The next thing is backbiters. This is malicious talk about someone who is not present. Backbiting is easily stopped, but human nature likes to hear backbiting, they enjoy it. It makes them feel better about themselves. In Proverbs 25:23, "*The north wind driveth away rain: so [doth] an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.*" Backbiting is easily stopped by refusing to listen to it. "I don't want to hear it. I'm not going to listen to it." You can stop it. But once again, it's not something that people really

want to stop because they enjoy it, just like they enjoy hearing rumors. You know, people will call on the phone, and they will sometimes say, "What's the latest gossip?" They'll laugh, but they're not joking, they really want to know what the latest gossip is or what you have heard recently. Then of course computers feed this. Backbiting is evil speaking.

We live in a day where we are overrun, in our society and sadly in the Lord's churches, we are overrun with whisperers and backbiters. There are people, God's people, whom I will not tell anything of any substance whatsoever. Nothing, because they are whisperers and backbiters. They could not keep a story straight if their life depended on it. They do not have the ability, nor do I think they have any interest in keeping things straight. They just want to tell what they think they know, what they think they've heard. It is destructive to society. It's just destructive. It is a work of Satan and it is a way of planting seeds. Eventually those seeds are going to come up and there is going to be a harvest.

We have been teaching from Romans 1:29, “Being filled with”. This is the result of a reprobate mind. Society or the individual is filled with these things, so much so that it becomes commonplace, it becomes an epidemic, which shows us the growing nature of sin.

We left off in the last lesson with “whisperers”, which is the end of verse 29. There is a comma there which means the statement in verse 29 continues, or flows into verse 30. In verses 30-31 we read of “*Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, [Unappeasable.] unmerciful.*”

In verse 30, we have the term “backbiters”. When the mind is reprobate, this becomes a common thing. Backbiting is something that we have all done, something we have all been guilty of. No one can claim innocence in that regard. What we are talking about here is "being filled with" to the point it's just commonplace, it's what people do. Backbiting, of course, is malicious talk. Many think that backbiting is saying that which is false. That is not backbiting, that is slander. Backbiting can be truth, but it's about the purpose behind saying something.

It's malicious talk about someone that is not present with the purpose of bringing them down in one form or another. It is evil speaking, because the intent is evil. You can talk about someone, and what you say may be true, but what is your intent of saying that? What is the purpose of saying it? That's what backbiting is. It is the purpose. What is the purpose? You can talk about someone when they're not present and say they're just a good person and you appreciate them for this and that, and that doesn't fall under the category of backbiting because your purpose is not to destroy. In backbiting the purpose is malicious.

Proverbs has much to say about this subject. In Proverbs 25:23, the Bible says, “*The north wind driveth away rain: so [doth] an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.*”

Evil speaking is commonplace today. It's so common that people don't think anything of it. There are people, who every time they get together, that is what they do. It's commonplace. They see nothing wrong with it. When you have a society that is plagued with malicious speaking, you've got a lot of problems.

By evil speaking, friends are separated. We already saw whisperers, which is someone who just spreads rumors. The rumors could be true, but what is the purpose? Notice in Proverbs 16:28, "*A froward man soweth strife:*" They plant seeds of strife. I've seen them in action. They will plant seeds and then when the strife begins, they stand in the background as if they didn't have anything to do with it. They just watch, and they get joy out of that. That is evil. That is an evil individual, a toxic individual. Again in verse 28, "... *and a whisperer separateth chief friends.*" Malicious speaking has ended many friendships.

Proverbs 17:9, "*He that covereth a transgression seeketh love;*" There's a purpose there, the intent is seeking love, so you cover a transgression. You don't spread it. That's love, you're seeking love. "*but he that repeateth a matter* [Again, it could be true, but what's the purpose.] *separateth [very] friends.* [Or very close friends]" By evil speaking, friends are separated. Society is filled with it. It's commonplace. You go to the workplace, you go anywhere, it is everywhere you go. People will come up to you, "Did you hear?" Look out, here it comes. Most of the time it is something you really don't need to hear.

Deadly wounds are caused by evil speaking. Proverbs 18:8, says, "*The words of a talebearer* [That would be a whisperer.] *[are] as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.*" Proverbs 26:22, "*The words of a talebearer [are] as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.*" They produce inward destruction. Strife is stirred by evil speaking. Proverbs 26:20 verse 20 of Proverbs 26, says, "*Where no wood is, [there] the fire goeth out: so where [there is] no talebearer,*

the strife ceaseth.” A lot of strife would not even exist if people kept their mouths shut. It would be like wood in the fire.

Discord is caused by evil speaking. Reading Proverbs 6:19, he mentions seven sins. He says there are “sins” and then he says the 7th is an abomination. That seventh sin is “he that soweth discord” among the brethren. That is done through whispering and backbiting.

Because of the consequences of evil speaking, and the tongue being the instrument of it, the Bible has much to say about the tongue. It is a very small member of our body, but oh the trouble that is caused by the tongue, in society, in families, and churches, on and on you can go. It is said to be a razor. In Psalm 52:2, *“Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor; working deceitfully.”* We all have this sharp razor. This sharp razor can cause much damage. The tongue, a sharp razor.

It is said to be a sword. Psalm 64:3, it is talking about the workers of iniquity, *“Who whet their tongue like a sword, [and] bend [their bows to shoot] their arrows, [even] bitter words:”* We see here the tongue is like a sword. It's also compared to a bow that shoots arrows and the arrows are bitter words. It's also referred to as an arrow in Jeremiah 9:8, *“Their tongue [is as] an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: [In this case, lies.] [one] speaketh peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but in heart he layeth his wait.”* There's an evil intent. We all have this razor, we all carry around this bow and this arrow. It is very dangerous.

James 3:6 is of course a very familiar passage regarding the tongue and the evils and destruction that are brought about. *“And the tongue [is] a fire, [It is compared to a fire.] a world of iniquity: [There is a world of evil in the tongue] so is the tongue among our members,”* In verse 5, he talked about how the tongue is a little thing, but how powerful it is. Continuing in verse 6, it says, *“that it defileth [It pollutes, poisons.] the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it [Meaning the tongue.] is set on fire*

of hell.” Then in verse 8, “*But the tongue can no man tame;*” People say, “Well, I’m just going to start controlling what I say.” You can not do that in and of yourself, not completely. Verse 8, continues, “*[it is] an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.*” We all have this tongue. It is bad enough amongst God's people. Now you take it in the context of those who are of a reprobate mind and oh the poison of the tongue. You don't have to be out in the world very long and if you have any godliness about you at all, it is hard to be around the tongue of the ungodly. It's hard to tolerate. The tongue of the ungodly. Our society is filled with it. People talk about what is appropriate. They don't even know what appropriate is. Their tongues are evil.

From this we see that the sins of the tongue, of course, are destructive, they are hurtful. In Jeremiah 18:18, the enemies of Jeremiah said, “... *let us smite him with the tongue,*” In other words, let us use our tongues to destroy him.

We live in this reprobate society. The tongue is untamed, uncontrolled. As you read on in Romans 1:30, you see that they are inventors of evil things as well. Now, the tongue is not just limited to verbiage, what we speak verbally, there are all kinds of outlets to let the tongue go. It's called, “grievous words” in Proverbs 15:1. “Being filled with”, so much so that it is commonplace. It's an epidemic. That's how it is today. There is hardly any place you can go where somebody isn't talking about something. Evil speaking. Now someone can speak evil on a computer and you can push “like” or “dislike”. On and on it goes.

The next thing that is mentioned in Romans 1:30, after backbiters, is “haters of God”, which is the root of everything. Hateful towards God. Cultural Christianity pursues the god they want not the God who is, because they hate the God who is. Even the ungodly sometimes will say, “Well, I love God.” You need them to describe to you their definition of God, because they do not love the God of the Bible. That is easily proved. All you have to do is present

Him and see how hateful they become. We live in a society where it is commonplace, it's an epidemic to be hateful toward God. If you're hateful towards God, how can you possibly treat your fellow man correctly. You can not. Hateful toward God. That is our society. It's the result of a reprobate mind.

God help us, as we live in this society, that we don't become a part of what's going on. Thank the Lord for the plainness, the clarity of His word. Pray that the Lord help us to live for His honor and glory in this society in which He has placed us and called us to live, to be a witness for Him.

Chapter 9 - Being Filled With - Part 11

We have been looking at the results of what happens to a people when the Lord gives them over to a reprobate mind. We are now in Romans 1:30 and the phrase, “*haters of God*”. A person who's been given over to a reprobate mind is hateful toward God. The technical term of “*haters of God*” would be *misotheism*, hateful of God.

Hate of course speaks of something intense. It's an intense hostility. It's an intense aversion to whatever it is that's hated. In this case, it's an intense hostility and aversion to God. That, of course, is very clearly seen in our society today. Not everybody is a hater of God, but much of society is hateful toward God. Many would deny it, many wouldn't. Many would just come right out and tell you they hate God.

It is a charge that it's nothing new. It's a charge that has been brought against the world by Christ. It is a characteristic of the world and has been ever since the fall, back in Eden. In John 7:7, Jesus said, “*The world ... me it hateth,*” The world hates Christ. In John 15:18, Jesus says, “*If the world hate you,* [That is God's people. In this case it would be the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ] *ye know that it hated me before [it hated] you.*” The world hates you because you're identified with the one they hate. You hear much today about the world hating Christianity, and it does. But there's a deeper issue, a more serious issue, meaning the reason for the hatred. The reason for their hatred is they hate God, and therefore they hate anyone who is identified with the one they hate. John 15:24, says, “*If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.*” They have seen Christ's works, they have seen Him, and having seen Him they hate Him. You see, people will say, “Well if Christ walked the earth today, I wouldn't hate him.” Oh, yes, you would. You'd hate him more than you do now. I'm not talking about God's people but the world. That's what is said here. “Because they've seen me, they hate me.” When God's people manifest the

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person that the world hates, they hate those people. In verse 25, *“But [this cometh to pass], that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.”* That of course means that the Lord has done nothing that would justify their hatred. Jesus walked the street healing their sick and they hated him. He was saying to them only those things that would benefit them and they hated Him. So it is today.

This hatred of course, is manifested in just about every aspect of society. Secular society hates God. The religious society hates God. They might deny it. “I don't hate God. I love God.” Well investigate a little further. What God are they talking about? They're talking, generally, about a god that they have dreamed up, that they have imagined in their imagination. Theirs is a god that will let them do whatever they please and love them. Oh, yeah, who wouldn't love that god. But that's not God. They love the god that lets them have their own way. That's not God. Present to them the God of the Bible, present to them the sovereignty of God. They hate that God. Present to them the God who gives life; they don't have a problem with that God, but the Lord giveth and taketh away. It's the same God. Now they have a problem. “I'm mad at God, because my mother, father, brother, sister, whatever the case might be, died. God could have prevented it.” Yes, he could have but He didn't, therefore, they are mad at God. Let me tell you something, you're not going to win that battle. It's not going to do you any good to be mad to be angry at God.

This is why the world hates God. This is one of many reasons they do not allow the Bible in the schools or many other places. It represents the one that they hate. It's not about separation of church and state. That doesn't have anything to do with it. It's about their hatred for God.

Many who claim to love God are referring to the god that they've imagined in their minds. Every now and then you'll hear somebody make such a foolish statement, “Well if

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I was God.” Well you're not and you never will be. That is a statement of great ignorance, a statement of great pride. It's basically saying, “If I was God I would do a better job.” There are plenty of people who believe that. They are haters of God. They continually show themselves to be the enemies of God. This is so in the secular world, this is so in the religious world. You can't read the gospels without seeing that Jesus Christ had a real problem with the religion of the day. He had a problem with religion. God still has a problem, for lack of a better word, with religious society, because in truth, they are haters of God.

The world views God as an annoyance. All you have to do is mention His name. You don't have to say much about Him. Just mention His name and people start getting a little bit uncomfortable. It's an annoyance. They find God to be an inconvenience. That's why people don't observe the Lord's day. God is an inconvenience. “I don't have time.” He's a bother. He's an irritant. I have had family tell me, “Dan, you can talk to me about anything, but leave God out of it. I don't want to hear it.” Why? Because they are haters of God. God is an irritation to them.

Our society, being a reprobate society, sees God as a problem. Listen to some politicians. They see God has a problem. They see God's people as the problem. The reason they see God's people as a problem is because again, they are identified with the one they hate. The root problem is their hatred for God.

We shouldn't get all that upset if they hate us. What ought to upset us is the reason they hate us. It's because they hate God. The only way you're going to get them to like you is if you change your view of God or your presentation of God. We are not going to do that, so they're going to hate. Anytime a church or religious society or organization has as its goal, “We don't want the world to hate us,” you're going to have to change some things. You're going to have to change your view of God. You're going to have to change

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what you say of God, because you are not the direct object of their hatred. The direct object of the hatred is the one you identify with, which is God. So what ought to upset us is not so much that they hate us, but that they hate God. You can hate me and there is not going to be an eternal consequence. But you hate God, that's far more serious. Society is "*being filled with*" haters of God.

The next thing he mentions is spiteful. That has reference to those who abuse, who treat others with unkindness or disdain, it is to treat others with contempt, to lightly regard other individuals, dishonor them, to treat them in a shameful way. Even lost people will say, especially older people because they've been around long enough to see the change, "The world is so unkind today. The world is so hateful today. The world's so disrespectful to one another today." All that is very true. It's the result of this reprobate mind, but it's a direct result of haters of God. "Haters of God" carries over into other aspects of our life. It doesn't take much anymore for someone to just go off. It's all this disdain, it's just bubbling up, just waiting for an opportunity to let it go.

"Being filled with", "being full of" hatefulness toward God and being spiteful. That doesn't make for a pleasant living environment, but it's commonplace. It is epidemic. We are a society of resentment, of bitterness. It's not limited to our society by any means. It's a worldwide problem.

All of this is the result of, "the Lord gave them over to a reprobate mind." Again, people are trying to correct the problem, but they can't correct it. They have laws against hate speech, and hate crimes. I saw the other day, some young woman holding a sign, "Stop hate." I'd like to sit down with her. You can't stop hate. You can't make laws and do away with hate. You have to realize where the hate comes from. It is a spiritual problem. It is not a problem that laws are going to fix. It is not going to happen. It is a

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society given over to a reprobate mind.

God help us. that we do not become part of the problem, that we do not become part of that society, that we rise above it. There is a remnant who always will. We thank God for that.

In the last lesson, we saw in Romans 1:30, “*haters of God*” and “*dispiteful*”. Next is the word “*proud*”. We live in a very proud society. These are the things which are the results of a reprobate mind, a mind that has been given over to itself. Pride of course, is inordinate self-esteem. We hear a lot today about self-esteem. You don't want to hurt anybody's self-esteem. Self-esteem is overrated. It's the absence or the loss of humility. Pride is described in the word of God by several words and each of these words just describe another characteristic or looks at it from another angle.

The Bible has nothing good to say about pride. Nothing! Not one positive comment is made about pride in scripture. It is always viewed as sin. It's always viewed as destructive. I believe there is a fine line between self-esteem and pride and that line is very easily crossed.

Pride is described in many words. 1st Samuel 2:3, Proverbs 8:13, Isaiah 13:11, use the word arrogance. Arrogancy is the feeling or the display of superiority, someone thinks that they are better than someone else. That is in us by nature and it's something that we need to be aware of, something we need to battle. There are people who just come off as arrogant. The reason they come off that way is because they probably are. It's just a feeling. It doesn't even have to be expressed. Usually it isn't, but it's a feeling of superiority.

Another word that would describe pride is conceit. In Proverbs 26:12, “*Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit?* [Here is a man who is depending on his personal impression of himself, his conceit. It's very dangerous because ...] *[there is] more hope of a fool than of him.*” In Romans 12:16, in the latter part, “*Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.*” Conceit is a high opinion of one's worth. “You know, they won't survive without me. If I'm not there everything falls apart.” That's conceit, it's a high opinion of a person's individual worth.

Another word is “haughty,”. In 2nd Samuel 22:28, says, “*And the afflicted people thou wilt save: but thine eyes [are] upon the haughty, [that] thou mayest bring [them] down.*” *Haughty* is a feeling, not necessarily an expression. It's a feeling of preeminence. Conceit is a feeling, as well. These things are more of an expression. It's just the feeling of preeminence. People can cover these feelings of preeminence, these feelings of pride. They can cover them with a cloak of false humility. That also is a danger. I mean, when it seems to be the theme of their conversations, how bad they are, how lowly they think of themselves, them saying that all the time, who are they trying to convince? I'm not buying it. If someone is always talking that way there is such a thing as a false humility.

Pride is described by the word *boastings*. Of course, that's verbal. In James 4:16, “*But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.*” There is boasting, bragging, self-confidence, or the vaunting of oneself.

Pride is described as *vainglory* in Philippians 2:3, where it says, “*[Let] nothing [be done] through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*” Us esteeming others better than ourselves is a very rare thing, today. There are not a whole lot of people that do that on a consistent basis. *Vainglory* is to glory in oneself. More importantly it is to do things for the glory of self. One may do a charitable work. What is your reason for doing it? Is it to help those in need or is it that you get some glory? You do something at the church, why do you do it? We need to ask ourselves these questions. Do we do it to help or do we do it to get credit? It is *vainglory*, if we do something to get patted on the back, if we do something to get complimented, or for whatever anything along those lines. That is *vainglory*, and *pride*. You can pick those people out. They are the ones who get angry when you don't notice what they have done. They get angry if you don't thank them for what they've done. They have done it all for the wrong reasons.

There are two aspects of pride. There is the outward display of pride. In Proverbs 6:17, it's referred to as a proud look. That is the outward display. Then Proverbs 21:4 it is described as a high look. The outward display of pride, of course, cannot be displayed outwardly if it is not there inwardly. Pride is an inward thing, as all sin is. Therefore it is addressed in Proverbs 16:5, as the proud in heart. The proud in heart may not always show the outward manifestation of pride, but they are proud in heart. In our text the word proud, of course, would cover both aspects, the outward and inward, and so much so that they are being filled with, being full of pride. So much so that it's commonplace, it's an epidemic.

Society today is drowning, or already has drowned in self-esteem, superiority, self-importance, and self-glory. Again, it's epidemic. People are taught to be proud. Children are taught to be very proud. They are taught that, not necessarily on purpose, but many children are taught to be proud.

Pride defiles. Remember Mark 7, in verses 21 through 23, the Pharisees were complaining because the disciples didn't wash their hands. It was just a horrible thing to them. Jesus said there is something worse than not washing your hands and that's to have filth in your heart. One of the things he mentions is pride. He said it is not unwashed hands that destroy a man. It's what proceeds from the heart.

Pride defiles, it pollutes. It hardens the mind. This is where we are today in society. In Daniel 5:20, talking about Belshazzar, "*But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride,*" His mind hardened in pride.

In Obadiah verse 3, the Bible says, pride deceives.

Perhaps the most serious consequence of pride is in Psalm 10:4, "*The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek [after God].*" Pride is a hindrance to seeking the Lord, because pride says, "I can handle this. I can fix this. I don't need God." Pride is a

hindrance to seeking the Lord. Pride is a hindrance to doing the will of God. In Exodus 5:2, remember pharaoh saying, "Who is the Lord that I should let thee go? Who is the Lord that I should obey his will?" Pride is a hindrance to seeking the will of God. "After all God has given me a good brain, and I'm intelligent and I know what's best for me. I don't need God to tell me what's best for my life. I know what's best for me." But you don't. Pride is a hindrance to seeking the will of God. Even those who seek the will of God, if they are not careful, pride will hinder you when really, truly seeking God's will.

Pride is perilous. Perilous times shall come, in 2nd Timothy 3:1-4. One of the things mentioned in those verses is pride.

Pride leads to contempt and rejection of God's message. Proud people have contempt for the message of God because the message of God goes against pride. They reject God. Pride is a great hindrance to them to be able to personally apply the word of God.

In Proverbs 13:10, it says where there is pride there is contention, where there is pride there is strife. Much contention would end if it weren't for pride. Pride causes all kinds of problems. Proverbs 11:2 says pride leads to shame.

Here we are in a society filled with pride, filled with the consequences of pride. You will notice just through general observation, and also throughout the scriptures that pride and a fault-finding spirit go hand-in-hand. The Pharisees, of course, are the prime example of this. They were very proud in their religion, very proud in their outward behavior. They were a people of a fault-finding spirit. That's what pride does. Pride produces a harsh spirit, superficiality, and a desperation for attention. "Pay attention to me." It's Pride.

Pride leads to the neglect of others, which of course brings us to narcissism. Narcissistic society is based upon pride. You can not be narcissistic without pride. The two kind of go hand-in-hand. Due to pride, all of these things are

epidemic in our society.

The next thing that he mentions is boasters, which is the verbal expression of pride; the praise of oneself, to express one's own credit for their own honor, for their own glory. In 1st Timothy 3:2, speaking of perilous times, mentions boasters. It is part of that which makes things perilous. Then we come to inventors of evil things.

The consequences of a reprobate mind are nothing but destructive. It destroys everything. We see here in Romans 1, the results of people, of society that has been given over to a reprobate mind. The truth is they do not know any better. Their mind is so, so warped.

Once again, in Romans 1: 28, we read, “*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; Being filled [Referring to these who are then given over.] with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of [The second time, being filled and now full of.] envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, ...*” That is what we want to look at today, “*inventors of evil things.*”

People who have abandoned God and have been given over to a reprobate mind, become creators of more ways to do evil, creators of new forms of vice. They seek to promote, to advance sin through their inventions, their new ways to gratify the lusts of the flesh. In Ecclesiastes 7:29, the Bible says, “*Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.*” Inventors of evil things. We could go on for a long time on that subject. You could go throughout United States history and see this, the inventors of evil things. Now immediately, someone will say, “Well the thing in itself is not evil. There's some good.” You put anything in the hands of sinful man and they will find a way to use it for evil. It can be the greatest invention in the world; and yes, it does have good uses, but once it's in the hands of sinful man, the bad uses far out way the good. You can just go through our lifetime and see these things.

If you look at 1st John 2:15, you find, “*Love not the world, neither the things [that are] in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*” We are exhorted, in a general sense, not to love the world. Then it gets more particular; “neither the things that are in the world”. Those words, “neither the things that are in the world”, have reference to the expression, the demonstration, the passion of the world spirit. We are not to love the world in a general sense, we are not to love the things of the world.

I believe the things of the world describe how the

world goes about its business, how the world operates, how the world functions, which would include the priorities of the world, the interests of the world system. That which absorbs man's attention, man's time of the world system is what the world system values, it is what the world system treasures. The things of the world. It is what the world system is driven by. We all have things and there is nothing wrong with that. But we must always be sure that we do not place our value in the things of this world, that we do not have our treasures in the things of this world, and that we are not driven by the things of this world. Then he further explains his statement, what he means by “the things that are of the world”, in verse 16, “*For all that [is] in the world, [That would be the things that are in the world.] the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.*” Then he classifies all that is in the world, the things that are of the world, under three avenues, three sources, three outlets. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Those are the three avenues for the things of the world. Man is “inventors of evil things”. The reprobate mind invents new ways to feed these three avenues, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life. You think of some of the inventions of man and how it feeds these three avenues, how it goes through these three avenues.

First of all, the lust or the desire of the flesh. You can never leave humanity out of the picture. The “invention” can be the greatest thing that ever was, but part of the equation is the lust of the flesh, the desires of the flesh. It is amazing how man, in a sinful flesh, can take a wonderful invention and use it to promote the work of Satan. Man has that innate ability to take almost anything and to use it to promote his own fleshly desires. Now the word *flesh* of course, can have reference to physical impulses, it has reference to the sinful nature of man. Here the lust of the flesh refers to both. It is the sinful, corrupt, depraved, nature of man, and it is the impulses of that corrupt and depraved nature. It's the

impulses of man's depravity or the depraved nature of man. This flesh, depraved by nature, is active, it's not dormant. That is indicated by the word *lust*, the lust of the flesh, the desires of the flesh, the desires of our sinful nature. We do not lose our sinful nature in this life. We are to restrain it by the power of the spirit that dwells within us. But we never lose it in this life. It's always there and that sinful nature has desires. Those are desires that run contrary to God. Not only are there those desires but they're active. They are not dormant, they are active. Most of us who are here are very much aware of that in our own lives.

In a very familiar passage of Romans 7:14-23, people will say that the way it is written is hard to understand. It really isn't. Just read it slowly. It's really pretty plain. Paul is talking about the battle that is ongoing in his life between the nature of flesh and the new nature he received at salvation. If this was so with Paul, certainly it is so with you and I. In verse 14, he says, "*For we know that the law is spiritual: but, ...*" The law is spiritual, "but", is indicative of a problem. "*I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not;*" He is talking about his desires. He has desires to do bad, but he doesn't do them. He has desires to do good. He doesn't always do them either. We can identify with that. We do not carry out all the bad desires we have, but we don't carry out all the good desires we have either. He continues, "*... but what I hate, that do I.*" How often that is so. Our spiritual man hates the sinful flesh, but we find ourselves doing that which we hate. In verse 16, "*If then I do that which I would not, [That is, I choose not to do.] I consent unto the law that [it is] good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*" That's always so, sin dwelleth in me. You can pray and ask God for forgiveness and He washes that sin away. But guess what, sin dwelleth within me. It's my nature. It's your nature. Verse 18, "*For I know that in me [That is, in and of myself.] (that is, in my flesh,) [What I am by nature.] dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me;* [That

is, being a saved person, I have a will to do good. It is present with me.] *but [how] to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.*" We can all identify with that as well. Verse 19, "*Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.*" We have to keep that in mind, in all man's inventions, evil is present with me.

In verse 23, "*But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*" Then he cries out, "*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" Then we see, "*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*" The spiritual man serves God, the fleshly man serves the fleshly nature.

The lust of the flesh, the desires of the flesh are active. We see this activity of the flesh in Galatians 5:17, "*For the flesh lusteth [Warreth.] against the Spirit, [It is active. But the spirit is also active.] and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.* Verse 19, "*Now the works of the flesh*", again showing this sinful nature is active. Verse 24, "*And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts*" again showing that this flesh is active within us.

The world's way of life is geared toward the desires and the passions of the physical impulses of the depraved nature of man. The substance, the content, the theme of the world system is the lust of the flesh, is the physical impulses of the depraved nature of man. The world's way of life is patterned to fulfill the lust of the flesh. Man in his fleshly nature continues to invent new vices, new ways to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Once these devices are around for a while, even God's people become accustomed to them, they become

spellbound by them. They find themselves defending that which cannot be defended scripturally. They are spellbound by it. They are not going to let it go. They might see when it first comes out, "Oh this is bad. I'm not going to let my kids have this." Give it a while. You are not only going to let your kids have it, you'll have it. That's our nature.

He goes on to mention the lust of the eyes. The ways of the world system are designed to gratify sight. The world's aims and purposes center around appearances. The lust of the flesh is really fed by the lust of the eyes. The eyes are the gateway to the mind. Inventors of evil things, all it does is feed lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes.

The next thing mentioned there in 1st John, is the pride of life. Just about everything in this world feeds the pride of life. Man invents new ways to feed the pride of life. Just constantly feed the monster of pride, promoting the pride of life.

The three avenues, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, are the motivating factors of the world. They are the spring of action for those who are of the world. It is what characterizes the system of the world.

People live in response to these three avenues. People live in response to the lust of the flesh. All you have to do is watch a commercial. They're geared toward these three, at these three avenues. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. It feeds these things. They are geared toward these things because people live in response to these things. You and I, of course, are to be different. We are to live in response to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and not be sucked in by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Then perhaps the best summary of all this in 1st John 2, "... *is not of the father.*" The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life is not of the father, it is not of God, it is not of the Lord. The way of the world system is people living not of the father, but they live according to their own assessment. Man invents evil things. In other words man creates that which

further a life which is not of the Father

The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life are all temporary. The world lives in response to the temporary. The world is driven by the temporary, and they invent things to further the evil of man.

There are many inventions of course that had no evil intent when they were invented. But you put it in the hands of sinful man, and you've got a disaster. Don't ever underestimate our sinful nature. Whenever people say, "Well nobody would do such and such with that." You have just underestimated the sinfulness of human nature. Man will do just about anything with anything to further, to feed his own lust, whether it be the lust of the flesh, or the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life, making themselves feel better about themselves.

God helped us as we live in this world.

Chapter 9 - Being Filled With - Part 14

Note: Some of the lessons were not recorded in the month of February, 2020. Since these writings are adapted from the recordings, you may notice references to previous lessons that are not available.

In Romans 1:30, we want to look at the last part of the verse where it says, *disobedient to parents*. I approach that not so much emphasizing the disobedience, but more so as an attack on parental authority. In a reprobate society parental authority is all but removed in our day. Children are taught by example of parents and society that parental authority is no longer necessary. Parents and children are viewed as equals. Children are given, of course, disastrous leeway.

The Bible teaches in Proverbs 22:6, that children must be trained. That is not an occasional work, it is not a sporadic work, it is a consistent work. We read in Proverbs 29:15, “... *left [to himself] bringeth his mother to shame.*” Children in the society in which we live have been left to themselves. We saw previously, that when God commands parents to discipline, which is training their children, He's telling them to do what He does with His own children. We looked at Hebrews 12:5-11. We saw there that God disciplines his children because he loves them. He does so for the purpose of correction. There are degrees of administering discipline. He speaks of correcting and scourging. He also does this to bring them to repentance or to bring about change in their spirit and their attitude. All of this is for their welfare and for their benefit. The Lord of course is our example.

We're speaking right now more on corrective discipline, corporate discipline, that is bodily punishment. Again God is our example. We see that His discipline is wise, of course, and always is. His discipline is loving. Beginning in Psalm 89:30, it says, “*If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit*

their transgression with the rod, [God has a rod.] and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless [Even though there's the rod and the stripes.] my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." God is our example. God has a rod and this speaks of corporal punishment, bodily punishment. This is seen all through the Proverbs. Many times when people in a reprobate society read these verses they immediately jump to the extremes and therefore discarded it all. You can not do that. There are extremes, of course, where it becomes child abuse. We realize that but that is not what is to dictate you and I when we are disciplining children. In Proverbs 13:24, "*He that spareth his rod [That would be to omit or to withhold.] hateth his son:*" People today will say, "Well, I love my children too much to spank them." No, you don't. That's not what it's about at all. The Bible says you hate him. ... *but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.*" This means early, before it's too late. You start disciplining your children when they are 15, 16, you have waited too long, way too long. You need to start as soon as they're born, disciplining, training the children. I'm not saying you should use the rod on a newborn, but there is training. You are to train them around your schedule, not vice versa. He that spareth his rod.

In 2nd Samuel 7:14, God has arrived and uses that rod, "*I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:*" Notice what it says in Micah 6:9, "*The LORD'S voice crieth unto the city, and [the man of] wisdom shall see thy name: [Now notice what is said next] hear ye the rod,*" It would be wise for God's people to **hear** the rod of God. The rod is to provide instruction. So it is when it comes to disciplining a child. "... *hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.*" Listen to the correction administered by the rod. That is true of God's people, that would be wise of children that are under parental authority. By **hearing** the rod, you may spare yourself from having to *experience it* again. If we go back to Proverbs 13:24, "*but he*

that loveth him chasteneth him” The Lord said that in Hebrews 12, and He repeated again in Revelation 3:19. In Proverbs 19:18, it says, “*Chasten thy son while there is hope,*” This is implying that there comes a time when it's too late. Chasten now. I don't believe you can begin too early, but you certainly can begin too late. “... *and let not thy soul spare for his crying.*” Children will use their crying as a tool. Parents many times are foolish enough to fall for it. They'll start crying before you even spank them, and then many parents in their foolishness, won't spank them because, “Oh, they are so broken hearted.” No, they're not. They might be, but more than likely they are playing you, you fall for it. They learn to turn on the tears. Spare not for their crying. All of this is within common sense, of course.

Proverbs 22:15, we see that, “*Foolishness [is] bound in the heart of a child;*” That is a lesson that all need to grasp. Foolishness is bound. Where? In the heart of a child. So what's the object in disciplining a child? The heart. You are not just out to inflict bodily pain. You are after the heart because that's where foolishness is bound. We have to realize that there is a difference between foolishness and childishness. There is a big difference. You expect a child to act like a child. You do not rob your child of their childhood. You don't expect a child to act like an adult. You expect childishness. You don't correct childishness. You don't administer corporal behavior for childishness. But you do for foolishness. Foolishness here speaks of that which is wrong. This is bound in the heart of a child. “... *[but] the rod of correction*” Notice, it doesn't just say, “but the rod will drive it far from him.” He makes sure he mentions the purpose of the rod. The purpose of the rod is to correct, to instruct, to train. It's not just a means for the parent to release their frustration on the children. It is the rod of correction and the goal is the heart. It's about what is so common in a reprobate society.

The goal is the heart. You spank a child that stomps their feet, walks away and pouts. You better stop that

behaviour, because their heart's not right. The goal is the heart. More discipline needs to be administered, because you can not allow them to pout and to stomp their feet and walk away. That's a disrespect of authority. They haven't gotten the message. That needs to be corrected. That's how you get to a submissive heart. They receive punishment and they do so with a submissive spirit. That's where you want to get. Again, we are not talking about abuse.

In Proverbs 23:13-14, "*Withhold not correction from the child:*" Now correction can be verbally, that's very true. You can sit down and talk to a child, but that is not what this is talking about. Because it goes on to say, "*for [if] thou beatest him [Simply the infliction of bodily pain.] with the rod, he shall not die.*" "Well, what about the people that kill their children?" That is not what we are talking about. That is an entirely different subject. You do not stop disciplining your children because some maniac abused his. That is not your pattern. That is not your authority. You withhold not correction from the child. The purpose of the rod is to correct. The purpose of the rod is not to destroy. Just like when God uses his rod on us, it is not to destroy us, but to spare us destruction. So it is with disciplining of children. The purpose is not to destroy that child, but to prevent destruction in that child's life, and to teach them what is right. "For thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die"

In Proverbs 29:15, "*The rod and reproof give wisdom:*" Notice again the rod and reproof, correction. The rod and reproof the two go together. We see in Psalm 94:12, "*Blessed [is] the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;*"

We have here in Proverbs 29:15, "*the rod and reproof.*" In the context, a child left to himself would be a child without correction, a child without restraint, a child without boundaries. Such a child will bring his mother to shame. In Proverbs 29:17, "*Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.*"

All of that instruction is not out of date. The

common thing today, in a reprobate society, is rather than punish a child for disobedience we will instead bribe them if they will do good. That sends a terrible message. That explains much of what we deal with today in a reprobate society. The message that you send by that is, reward. People expect to be rewarded for doing what they should have done anyway. You don't bribe a child, that if they behave, "Now Johnny we're going into the store, and if you behave mommy will buy you a candy bar." Really? You bribe them. It sends a terrible message. That is the way of the world today. You see parents pleading with their children to behave. I mean they are begging them, "Would you just please behave?" They need a different message, one that will get through to them. We must remember the ways of the world are not our pattern. In a reprobate society we must not get caught in the world's traps of child-rearing. We must realize that the world is not the authority. God is the authority and God has already told us how it is to be done.

Parental authority must be established at birth. It has to be established, "I'm in charge, you're not." It has to be maintained through the child-rearing years. That authority is to be exercised with unconditional love, always. It is to be exercised with compassion and sensitivity toward the child. Again, it gets back to the heart. Parents must be more concerned with the emphasis on the attitude and character, then they are about performance, athletic skill, external beauty. The emphasis is in the wrong spot in a reprobate society. "You know my son, he is so great at baseball." Yeah, but what's his attitude? What's his character? That's far more important.

It is God's design for parents to correct and it is God's design for children to obey their parents. That's God's design. Of course as you enter all the dysfunction that is the result of a reprobate society, all these things get muddled. You have problems that you never had before. You have children living with two different parents, at different times, two different sets of rules. Many times the children are used

as pawns. “Well mom told you to do this. I’ll do just the opposite. Dad tells you to do this, I’ll just do the opposite. You have to listen to me. You’re under my authority now.” The water is getting muddy because of sin, and it’s sad.

In reprobate society, the family for a long long time has been under satanic assault. When that family unit falls, society falls with it. Today when people use the word family, it doesn't mean the same thing that it did when I was a child, not the same thing. I didn't have three dads, three moms. I had one. Everything gets muddied in reprobate society. But God's order remains the same.

You know, society puts the emphasis upon having things. But in the end, after you have raised your children, I'm going to tell you something; it does not matter one iota what kind of car you drove, it does not matter how big a house you lived in, none of that matters. What does matter is, has a child been taught character, where they can be a productive citizen, a productive adult? Or have they been taught that the world revolves around them, nobody else matters, it's all about them. Then they raise their children, and it just gets worse and worse and worse. That is where we are today.

If God's divine order for the home is blatantly rejected, dysfunction becomes the norm. That is where we are today. That is why again, we read, “being filled with or full of” disobedience to parents, so much so that it is commonplace, it becomes an epidemic. That is where we are in a reprobate society.

Chapter 10

Without Understanding

In Romans 1, we have been looking at the results of, the consequences of God giving a people over to a reprobate mind, leaving them to themselves. We are now in verse 31, and the words, “*Without understanding*”. Man by nature, by birth does not understand spiritual matters. That is true, whether you are 18 years old or one day old. Man does not understand spiritual matters. An 18 year old can **know** of spiritual matters, whereas a one-day-old can not. But neither **understand** spiritual matters.

By “understanding” I mean spiritual comprehension. Psalms 14:1-4, as well as Psalm 53:1-4, says, “*The fool hath said in his heart, [There is] no God. They [The ones just referred to.] are corrupt, they have done abominable works, [there is] none that doeth good. The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, [and] seek God.*” The context of the people being talked about is “children of men”. That is everybody. “*They are all [The word “all” always needs to be taken in context. He is literally talking about everybody here.] gone aside, they are [all] together become filthy: [there is] none that doeth good, no, not one. Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people [as] they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD.*” Paul refers to this passage in Romans 3:11, “*There is none that understandeth, [As a result.] there is none that seeketh after God.*” Man's understanding, his spiritual comprehension is this; and you need to get this out of your vocabulary; “Well, they're too young to understand”. Age isn't the problem. What you're implying by saying that is that you get to an age where you do have spiritual understanding, which means you have some works, and that is heresy. Nobody understands unless God does a work in them.

We need to understand the difference between understanding and having a knowledge of something. Anybody that sits in church has a **knowledge** of God, but that doesn't mean they **understand** what they have a knowledge of. Man's understanding, his spiritual

comprehension is corrupt, it is enslaved to his sinful nature. Man, in and of himself, can possess a knowledge **of** spiritual things. That's referred to in Romans 2:20, speaking about a knowledge **of** spiritual things, "*An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge [There is a big difference between the form of knowledge and understanding.] and of the truth in the law.*" They have a form of knowledge, of truth, and law. They know **of** truth. That's true of anyone who comes here any length of time at all, they know **of** truth, they know **of** the law of God. That doesn't mean they understand it. If they are lost, they have no understanding. "There's none that understandeth." A form of knowledge is not saving knowledge. It is devoid of comprehension, devoid of understanding.

From Psalm 14, and Psalm 53, we see this absence of spiritual comprehension in natural man is connected to foolishness and atheism. Verse 1, "*The fool hath said in his heart, [There is] no God.*" It did not say they say with their lips there is no God. They say within the heart there is no God. In other words, they live as if there were no God. That's true of the lost, the unsaved sinner. They live as if there were no God. Those who sit here Sunday after Sunday, lost, in their heart they don't really believe the necessity of them being saved. Jesus said, "if you knew you would have". We see this natural lack of understanding results in foolishness. I'll call it practical atheism. That is they live as if there were no God, they live as if they're going to live here forever.

It is also connected to corruption. They are corrupt. That word means a degradation of morals. A degradation of morals is connected with this lack of understanding. We see also, they have done abominable works. There's a connection to foolishness, atheism, degradation of morals, and abomination.

There is a connection to a non-pursuit of God. We see this in Psalms 14:2, "*The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that*

did understand, [and] seek God.” That's what Paul is referring to. They are all gone upside. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. Man in his natural ignorance will not seek God.

Connected to this is a going away from God. Not only will they not seek God or move in the direction of God, they will do just the opposite. We see they're all gone aside. They're all gone aside from what? Aside from God. There's none that seek God and they go aside from God. They go the opposite direction from the Lord.

Then there is a connection to sinful acts. They are altogether become filthy. There's none that doeth good. No, not one.

There's a connection to hatefulness toward God, and acts of oppression against His people. In verse 4, *“Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people [as] they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD.”* They act with hatefulness toward God and God's people. There is a rejection of God, as they do not call upon the Lord.

All this stems from, “There's none that understandeth”, without understanding. That is natural. We are all born in that condition. You do not develop a spiritual understanding on your own by age. Nobody does that. So stop saying, “Well, they're too young to understand.” An 80 year-old, I can say, is too old to understand. Neither one understand. God has to do work. That is the new birth.

From all this we see the disastrous results of an absence of spiritual understanding. We come here to Romans 1:31, “without understanding”, which is a state of destitution. An absence, destitute of understanding, absent of understanding. Is this talking about what we are by birth? I don't think so. In the context of Romans 1, this is something that goes beyond, this “without understanding” is something that goes beyond man's natural ignorance of spiritual matters, man's natural dullness concerning spiritual matters.

This “*without understanding*” is something that is

the result of being given over to a reprobate mind. This is something that goes beyond our natural depravity. This is serious. “Without understanding” is kin to what we read in verse 21, “*their foolish heart was darkened.*” Their heart was already foolish. Again Psalm 14, “*The fool has said in his heart there is no God.*” Our heart was already foolish, was darkened. That is, made black and ignorant, made even blacker and more ignorant. I don't even know how you get more ignorant than total ignorance. But that is what we have here. “*Their foolish heart was darkened.*”

To be without understanding as the result of being given over to a reprobate mind, meaning the lack of comprehension, it is to be without reason, without understanding. That is they're left to themselves and now they have no reason. They do not have the ability to reason. Listen to people, listen to politicians. They do not have the ability to reason. Listen to people today. They have lost their ability to say, “Well, let's sit down and have a reasonable conversation.” You can't. They have lost their ability to reason. In order to have a reasonable conversation, you have to have two people with reason, and that's hard to find. It's to be without reason.

It is to be without rational ground. You can not try to rationalize with these people who have been given over to a reprobate mind. They have lost their rational ground. They do not have the ability to think orderly. To think orderly means, “You do this. This is the result. This will be the result of this.” That is orderly thinking. They have lost their ability to think orderly and you try to explain something to people who have been given over to a reprobate mind, you might as well talk to the wall. They have lost their ability to think in an orderly way. I'm not talking about people thinking exactly like us. I'm talking about being able to just order thoughts. They have lost that ability. It is a lack of mental sanity and sobriety.

Over all this “without understanding”, what it means is they have been given over to a reckless habit of mind.

Chapter 10 - Without Understanding - Part 1

When somebody is reckless they are dangerous. It doesn't matter if they are in a car, if they are handling a gun. If they are reckless, they are dangerous. A people that has been given over to a reprobate mind simply means they are in a reckless habit or state of mind. They're dangerous and the results can be disastrous. That is what we have here in Romans 1. We'll look more at this "to be without understanding" in the next lesson. This is something that goes beyond our nature. It is a result of reprobate mind.

Chapter 10 - Without Understanding - Part 2

In the last lesson, in Romans 1:31, we began looking at the phrase, “without understanding”. We have to keep in mind that this is the result of a reprobate mind and that is how we need to consider this. Having said that, we learned in the last lesson, that man by nature, man by birth, does not understand spiritual matters. He is without understanding. It does not matter what the age of the individual is, they are without spiritual understanding. To say, “Well so-and-so, they're at an age where they can not understand.” That is not so. They are without understanding. That is true of all men; by nature, by birth, they are without understanding. There is a natural “*without understanding*”, without spiritual understanding.

We learned in the last lesson, that “without understanding” is connected to foolishness, atheism in heart, corruption of or a degradation of morals, abomination, and non-pursuit of God. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God in a saving way. There is a connection to hatefulness toward God and acts of oppression against God's people. There is a connection to a rejection of God. Man does all these things by nature. But here in Romans 1, this “without understanding” is something that goes beyond man's natural lack or absence of understanding. It is something that goes beyond man's natural spiritual dullness. It is the result of a reprobate mind.

It is kin to what we read in verse 21, “... their foolish heart”. Our heart was already foolish, we are born that way. Our heart was already darkened, but this is something that goes beyond, “... their foolish heart was darkened,” meaning their heart was made black and ignorant. This “without understanding” goes beyond the natural absence of spiritual understanding.

What is it? What does it mean to be “without understanding”? All you have to do to find out what it means is talk to just about anybody today and listen to what they say. They are without understanding. It is a lack of comprehension, which means to be without reason, without

rational ground; there is no rationale in their thinking; an inability to think orderly, a lack of mental sanity and mental sobriety.

As we said in the last lesson, it is basically a reckless habit of mind. When someone is reckless they are dangerous. When somebody is reckless they not only endanger themselves, they may very well endanger those around them. Somebody that is reckless in an automobile, is not only a danger to themselves but a danger to those around them. So, it's a reckless habit of mind. I believe that pretty much sums up our society; a reckless habit of mind, making absolutely no sense whatsoever.

To be "without understanding" is to be senseless. This is something that even goes beyond man's natural absence of understanding. It's to be without discernment. That is, there is an inability to separate truth from error. In 1st Kings 3:9, the prayer of Solomon, "*Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that [I need this understanding heart, that ...] I may discern between good and bad:*" There is a connection. between understanding and discernment. Discernment is of the utmost importance. It is the faculty of mind that enables us to distinguish between one thing and another, enables us to distinguish truth from error, what is right, what is wrong, moral and immoral.

People, who are without understanding as a result of this reprobate mind, have lost their faculty of mind that is able to discern between moral and immoral. The individual who defends immorality, defends an immoral way of life, will use such arguments as "This is the 21st century, or everybody else is doing it." Well, not everybody is, but that is the reasoning. I mean, they have lost their ability to reason and they have also lost their ability to distinguish. Anybody that tries to defend error or immorality or anything like that, can't discern. Then they will make statements such as, "Well it's all the same." You have just announced that you have no ability to separate between two things.

“Without understanding.”

Throughout the Bible, there is a call for God's people to discern. Particularly, this principle is taught in the Old Testament. You cannot live the Christian life and not be able to discern between right and wrong. The foundation of the Christian life, the first principle of the Christian life is “follow me.” You are going to have to be able to discern in order to do that. You have to discern between Him and everyone else. If you can't do that, who knows who you're going to follow. In Leviticus 10:10, the people are called upon to discern, “*And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean;*” There is a difference. There is a difference between your hands being clean and your hands being dirty. You know, they try to make two men married to each other, two women married to each other, the same as a man and a woman married to each other. They say, “There is no difference.” They will say, “Our marriage is just as valid as a man and a woman.” You see they have lost their ability to discern. They are without understanding. They can't make that difference. A lot of it of course, is they are not willing to, but I'll even take it further, they **can not** because they have been given over to a reprobate mind.

In Leviticus 11:47, “*To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten.*” We could give a lot of examples of the lack of discernment in our society. In Jeremiah 15:19, “*Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, [and] thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, [There is discernment there, precious and vile.] thou shalt be as my mouth:*” We see we are to take forth the precious from the vile, there has to be a distinction. This is why churches have given into abominable practices, because they can not discern between the precious and the vile. They are without understanding.

In Malachi 3:18, “*Then shall ye return, and discern*

between the righteous and the wicked,” The wicked will say, “Well, I’m no different than anyone else.” But they are, they have lost their ability to see that difference. They have lost their ability to discern, “... *between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.*” Today, people who profess to be saved, who obviously are not serving God, who are in no danger of serving God, will say, “Oh, I serve the Lord just as much as the one who does.” They believe that. The reason they believe that is because they are without understanding. They can not make a difference between the one who serves and the one who doesn't.

“Without understanding” results in an absence of discernment. You put that together with everything else in Romans 1; you put that together with the fact that we live in a culture of filth that is vile, of wickedness and ungodliness, abomination, blasphemy and heresy; then you add to that people who cannot put a difference between those things and what is right, you have disaster, you have destruction. Not only that, it is intensifying. It intensifies by the moment. That is where we are today in society.

People have been given over to a reprobate mind. They are without understanding, they are without discernment. It is what we read of in Ephesians 4:18-19, “*Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling ...*” Their conscience is destroyed, without feeling. I can't tell you how many times I have sat down with people, tried to show them where they were wrong and many times they will say, “Well, the Lord hasn't, we don't feel like we're doing anything wrong.” What is sad is that's true. They are blatantly wrong, but they don't feel like they're doing anything wrong. “Certainly, if there was something wrong the Lord would show me. Certainly if there was something wrong with it, I would feel a certain way. But my conscience is clear.” That is a sad commentary because it means that you are without understanding. You have gotten to the point

where you are past feeling, it is the hardening of the heart.

To be without understanding, is to be possessed, controlled, and under the influence of worldly wisdom. In James 3:14-15, he speaks of two different kinds of wisdom. There is a heavenly wisdom that descends from above. In verse 14, "*But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom* [That is the wisdom that produces bitter envying and strength.] *descendeth not from above,* [It is not of God.] *but [is] earthly,* [It is in line with the spirit of the world.] *sensual,* [That means it's in line with fleshly appetites. Lastly,] *devilish.*[That means it's demonic.]

This "without understanding" is a very serious situation. We live in a society that has been left to themselves, the result is they are without understanding. The result of that is destruction everywhere. The result of that is the destruction of the home, the destruction of family, the destruction of marriage, on and on and on we could go; the destruction of learning, the destruction of everything. "Without understanding."

God help us in this society in which we have been called to serve the Lord.

Romans 1:31 says, "*Without understanding*". We know lost man is without understanding concerning the gospel. This "*Without understanding*" is something beyond man's natural spiritual dullness. If you listen to so-called leaders talk, many of them might as well just put a sign on their head, "Without understanding." They have no idea. It is simply a lack of comprehension. To me, perhaps the best definition is something we see all the time. It is to be without reason. That is, you have two people, one has understanding, one does not, and given the exact same facts, they will come to two completely different conclusions. They have the same facts, but one does not have the ability to take the facts and reason, because they are without understanding. They cannot reason, they are incapable of reasoning. It is an inability to think orderly. Their thoughts are everywhere. Some may think this is mean, but it is a lack of mental sanity to be without understanding, it is a lack of mental sobriety. It is a reckless habit of mind and they are dangerous to themselves, but they are also dangerous to others.

"Without understanding" means to be senseless, which is also very descriptive of our day. To be senseless is to be without discernment, and that is really what the phrase means literally, "without understanding" is without discernment. It is the inability to separate differences. That is why you see so much "comparing apples to oranges" today. They do not have the ability to separate the difference between an apple and an orange. It is an inability to separate truth from error. They've lost that part of their mind to discern. It is very dangerous.

In Ephesians 4:18-19 it says, "*Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling ..."* Because of the blindness of their heart they are past feeling. Their understanding is darkened, they're ignorant, they're blind, they're past feeling. What we need is a miracle of

God.

Notice in Luke 24:45, it is talking about the two on the Emmaus road, "*Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, ...*" God had to work on their understanding. What we have to understand about the reprobate mind is it is a mind that's lost its way and can not find its way back. The word reprobate is a curse. It is not that God can not reverse the reprobate mind, the very word, the very meaning implies He won't. We know that God may intervene, and we can only pray that He will.

This "to be without understanding" is described throughout the word of God. In Isaiah 29:14, "*Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, [even] a marvellous work and a wonder: [We need to pray for that.] for the wisdom of their wise [men] shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent [men] shall be hid.*" Then in Jeremiah 4:22, "*For my people [is] foolish, they have not known me; they [are] sottish...*" That means dull, stupid, senseless. This is what God says of His people. "*... they [are] sottish children, and they have none understanding:*" We see this "without understanding" goes along with being sottish, a word that we are not very familiar with, but it means dull, senseless. "*... they [are] wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.*" That describes "without understanding"

"Without understanding" is foolishness, as we see in Psalm 38:5, "*My wounds stink [and] are corrupt because of my foolishness.*" Psalm 53:1, "*The fool hath said in his heart, [There is] no God.*" It's foolishness that leads to atheistic thoughts. Atheistic thoughts lead to more foolishness.

Foolishness is a mocking of sin. "*Fools make a mock at sin:*", Proverbs 14:9. They jest at sin. The same is true with perversion, Proverbs 19:3, "*The foolishness of man perverteth his way:*" The fool is filled with self-confidence, Proverbs 28:26, "*He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool:*" This lack of understanding leads to foolishness, madness,

derangement, lunacy, craziness recklessness, a state of frenzy.

Notice in Ecclesiastes 9:3, *“This [is] an evil among all [things] that are done under the sun, that [there is] one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is **full of evil, and madness [is] in their heart** while they live, and after that [they go] to the dead.* Then in Ecclesiastes 10:13, *“The beginning of the words of his mouth [is] foolishness: [That is the beginning.] and the end [In other words, foolishness has a result.] of his talk [is] mischievous madness.”* Madness, lunacy. “Without understanding” is a very, very serious problem in society. When you have these individuals being elected to public office, you have problems. Who are people “without understanding” going to vote for? People “without understanding”. People that they can relate to.

When you put these people in schools and colleges and their teaching is the result of “without understanding”, it is a huge, huge problem that goes back decades, a hundred years, maybe. You have people today who want to do away with history and write what they like. That is not history. They want to do away with statues, the Civil War, as if it never happened, but it did happen. History includes bad and good.

The purpose of the bad is that you learn from it. That's what is so wonderful about the Bible. The Bible gives us the bad and good of a society. Read about various individuals in the Bible. The Bible doesn't hold back about the bad characteristics. When you have people saying, “We don't like that part of our history, so we're going to pretend it didn't happen or we're going to rewrite it,” you are doing away with history, you are doing away with learning. “Without understanding” just keeps increasing.

You think of our individual lives. Our lives are history. Do you like everything about your life? No? Are there bad things about our life? Yes. We are to learn from that, not do away with it as if it never happened. It shapes

Chapter 10 - Without Understanding - Part 3

who we are. This “without understanding” is a serious result of the reprobate mind. It just keeps increasing. God help us.

We are in Romans 1:31, “*Without understanding.*” In the last lesson, we learned that this includes many things; atheistic thoughts, mocking of sin, perversion, self-confidence, madness, derangement, lunacy, reckless behavior, dishonesty, on and on it goes. “Without understanding” also includes an ignorance of the sinful nature of man. This “without understanding” is something different than what we are by nature. We are without understanding to some degree, but what Paul is referring to is something else.

It includes an ignorance of the nature of man. The reason that some people believe that you do not need those who enforce laws is because they believe that man is basically good, man will behave. That is based on ignorance of man's sinful nature. It has its roots, of course, in humanism.

It also includes an ignorance of Satan's devices, how the devil works, an ignorance of sin, how sin works, the consequences of sin. We see again that they are filled with “without understanding.”

If you do not have understanding, which is the result of a reprobate mind, problems are misidentified. You watch the news and listen to people, and more often than not problems are misidentified. They focus on the wrong things because they do not have the understanding to understand what the problem is. If problems are misidentified then solutions are inaccurate as well. That is why so often, the solution creates a greater problem, the solution or the cure is worse than the problem. That happens a lot of times.

Included in this “without understanding”, they have the foundation in the philosophies of humanism, secularism, pluralism, and atheism. They are all tied to the different branches of humanism. What they all do is they simply blur or do away with God-ordained lines. God's lines are very well defined and very easy to see. Humanism and secularism and the like, they begin to blur those lines. Then as you advance through generations, the lines get more and

more blurred. It started out as a thick black line and now it is just a shadow. That is what is happening in our society. The lines are blurred. The lines are done away with. Lines between male and female, done away with, lines between husbands and wives, lines of morality and decency, just kind of fade away. That is the result of “without understanding”. What you have is a society that is drowning in dysfunction, a society where dysfunction is more the norm than a sane society. It is more normal, more common to be dysfunctional. A dysfunctional family is really the normal thing now. I defined dysfunctional as contrary to God's word. It is dysfunctional. That is the common thing. Therefore, when it becomes the common thing, that line is even more and more and more blurred.

To be without understanding is to be without conscience. The Bible has a lot to say about conscience. The word occurs thirty-one times in the New Testament. It is used both positively and negatively. To be “without understanding” affects the conscience.

The conscience is the faculty of judging one's own conduct with reference to a standard of right. We are born with a conscience. We are born with it. It is designed to protect us, but of course it becomes corrupt. Therefore it becomes your enemy. It is the faculty by which we judge according to a standard of right. We just know this is right, this is wrong. Conscience tells us that. When one is without conscience, they no longer discern between right and wrong.

It is the process of thought that makes a distinction between that which is moral and that which is immoral. It commends the moral and condemns the immoral. It is a part of us that bears witness with God's law. I mean, why do people do something that is wrong and they try to hide it? Because they know, conscience tells them this is wrong. We are in a day where many things are no longer hidden, but they are flaunted. Why is that? Well, it is because conscience is gone. Conscience is affected by this “without understanding”.

In Romans 2:15 *“Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, [This is the conscience of the natural man.] and [their] thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)”* Then notice Romans 9:1, *“I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,”* There is a conscience affected by the spiritual. “My conscience also bearing me witness” is our conscience that can make you feel guilty. That is conscience. That's a God-given thing. That's a good thing. But, as in all creation, it is affected by sin. When God gives the people over to their own mind, to their own ways, conscience becomes more and more affected. It no longer bears witness, where a person is without the witness of God.

We have said many times, you can sit down with somebody and you want to explain to them why what they're doing is wrong, and they will say, “Well I don't feel that it's wrong. If it was wrong wouldn't the Lord cause me to know it was wrong and feel it's wrong?” I mean, I am talking about things that are very plain in the word of God. Take adultery. “Well, I just don't feel guilty about sleeping around. I just don't feel condemned about that.” Well, that's because their conscience is not what it should be. That is a sad testimony. They say that to prove what they are doing is not wrong, but really it proves just the opposite. It proves that they are in worse shape than you thought. Their conscience, there is no witness of God there.

Conscience is the moral faculty, the faculty of conviction, or convincing of wrong. You go back even before you and I were saved, and there were times when you did wrong and you were convicted of it. That is conscience. People today many times will do what is wrong and there is no conviction whatsoever. This is carried over into churches as well. A lack of feeling, a conviction, a convincing of wrong. That is how I'm using the word conviction here.

Notice in John 8:9, we have the account of the adulterous woman. Remember they were going to stone her

and the Lord wrote on the ground. In verse 9, this is unsaved individuals, *“And they which heard [it], [They heard what Christ wrote on the ground.] being **convicted** by [their own] conscience, went out one by one,”* They were convicted by their conscience. To be without understanding is to be without conscience, which means to be without conviction of wrong. These are people who say, “Well who’s to say what’s right and what is wrong?”

Conscience is the faculty of remorse and shame, remorse and shame for wrongdoing. To be without conscience is to be without remorse, to be without shame. In Jeremiah 6:15, you can read the exact same words in Jeremiah 8:12, *“Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time [that] I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.”* They lost their conscience, which of course is going to result in the judgment of God.

Conscience is very important. It is a gift from God. When man is turned over to himself, conscience is greatly affected, the ability to discern between right and wrong. How many times have you heard parents speaking of the children say, “Well they know better.” Do you know that for sure? You can say, “I taught them better than that.” That you can say as a fact if you have, but you cannot say with absolute certainty, “They know better.” You do not know that. They may not. They may have gotten to the state where their conscience no longer works. So, they don’t know better. Yes, you taught them better. They may know better. I’m not saying they don’t. What I’m saying is, really think about that before you say that, because they may not. That makes the situation worse than you think it is.

Conscience is the ability to feel and to be moved by a sense of wrong. You take a child, just a little child, they do something wrong, they come to you and they apologize. You do not know anything about it. Why did they do that? Because of their conscience, they have felt a sense of wrong.

You take the child who just does wrong right in front of you, does not feel any remorse whatsoever. There is a difference in their conscience. Again, conscience as a gift of God. It is the ability to feel and to be moved by a sense of wrong. If you are without conscience, then that is greatly diminished or absent altogether. That is the society that we live in. You look at the behavior of people and people say, "What are they thinking?" Well, they are not. They have a reprobate mind. They don't have the ability to reason. This is not an excuse, it is just explaining their behavior.

This "to be without conscience" is further explained in Ephesians 4:17-19. We read of, *"the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:"* There are some very serious words there; darkened, alienated, ignorance, blindness. Now notice in verse 19, *"Who being past feeling"*, That is conscience. This is something that goes beyond just apathy. "Who" describes those that we read of in verse 18. This is where this leads to; the understanding being darkened, being alienated from the life of God, ignorance, blindness. What it eventually results in is being past feeling. That is they become so hardened in sin that their emotion toward sin, as far as feeling guilty, is dead. They're past feeling. A people or society left to themselves will eventually get to "past feeling". It's almost like they don't have a soul. They do of course, but it's like there's nobody home. A people left to themselves, their conscience is negatively affected, and the result is "past feeling".

The conscience can become weakened. This is true with the unsaved and saved. Notice in 1st Corinthians 8:7, *"Howbeit [there is] not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat [it] as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled."* Their conscience is **weak** and defiled. This person has not necessarily gotten to "past feeling", but the conscience is weak. We need to keep an eye on that in our

own lives. In verse 10, *“For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol’s temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;”* That is, his conscience being weak, he is encouraged to do what is wrong. In verse 12, *“But when ye sin so against the brethren, and **wound their weak conscience**, ye sin against Christ.”*

What is a weak conscience? It is not as bad as “past feeling”, but it is a conscience not strong enough to distinguish accurately or clearly. This is due to the process of sin.

There is also the defiled conscience. In Titus 1:15, *“Unto the pure all things [are] pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving [is] nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. [Or polluted.]”* This can happen through the process of secularization. Secularization is a process. You just do not wake up one morning secular. It gradually weakens the conscience.

There is also the evil conscience. Notice in Hebrews 10:22. *“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”*

There is the seared conscience. 1st Timothy 4:1-2, *“... some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;”* Their conscience is cauterized. It is sealed and nothing gets in. It kind of goes back to “past feeling”.

This “without understanding” leads to “without conscience”. Conscience can become weak, defiled, eventually, as the process goes on, it becomes past feeling. This of course leads to many problems. In Isaiah 42:25, *“Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger; [God’s judgment.] and the strength of battle: and it hath set him on fire round about, [Notice what it says next.] yet he knew not; [God’s judgment is right before them. God’s judgment is upon them! And they don’t even realize it.] and*

it burned him, yet he laid [it] not to heart. Conscience Has been affected.

In Acts 28:27, "*For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with [their] eyes, and hear with [their] ears, [Meaning, 'Don't confuse me with the facts, I've already made up my mind.'] and understand with [their] heart, and should be converted,*" They just become more and more hardened, become uncaring, become unfeeling concerning wrong, concerning the consequences of wrong. You can watch an individual go through this, an individual who has been given over to a reprobate mind and that is sad. But you take a whole society, when this becomes the common thing in society, this is very serious. This is not something that man can fix. As far as I know there is not a doctor for your conscience. How do you fix that? Only God can. Will He? From what we read in Romans 1, He has already given them over. Could He? Yes. Will He? Probably not. Again, it's "being filled with," full of "without understanding", so much so that it is commonplace, so much so that it becomes an epidemic.

You can tell people who have a conscience. You get a group of people together and you start telling them about the Lord, and perhaps everybody in the group begins to mock and to make fun, to commit abomination. They do not feel the least bit guilty or condemning. All of a sudden one person in the group gets quiet, they stop acting like that. Conscience is working. I believe that. I'm not necessarily saying the spirit of God is dealing with them in order to save them, but they have a conscience. They become silent because they feel guilty, they feel bad.

When a person loses that feeling of guilt and the ability to feel bad for a behavior, they are in serious, serious trouble. They are a danger. God help our society.

Chapter 11

Covenant Breakers,
Without Natural Affection,
Implacable,
Unmerciful

Chapter 11 - Covenant Breakers

In Romans 1:29-32, are the results of what we read in verse 28, a reprobate mind. In the last two lessons, we've looked at “*without understanding*”, which is the absence of reason, rationale, and the inability to think. It is a reckless, senseless state of mind, without discernment. In the last lesson, we saw it is to be without conscience. That brings us to the next thing in verse 31, covenant breakers. Without understanding, covenant breakers.

A covenant breaker is a person without principle. It is a lack of integrity, moral character, decency, goodness, honor, propriety, discretion. We read of “integrity of heart” in Genesis 20:5-6, 1st Kings 19:4. Those who are covenant breakers are filled with this lack of “integrity of heart”. It's an ongoing process, increasing all the time, becoming more and more common that people do not have principle, integrity, moral character. That's why it's very difficult to trust people today because they lack this principle, they lack a moral compass.

We read of “integrity of heart”. That is of course where it must begin. This integrity is within, which is the same as integrity of heart. In Psalms 7:8, it says, “*The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity [that is] in me.*” I believe integrity is something that we are taught. Most of us here, if not all, were taught integrity by our parents. There was a time when the schools taught integrity, but those days, for the most part, are gone. Integrity is not taught in schools. It is not taught in the home, for the most part, because the parents do not have integrity so they wouldn't know how to pass on principles of good character to their children. As a result, it becomes a very common thing. These covenant breakers do not have integrity of heart, they do not have integrity within.

We see that if we have integrity within, if we have integrity in our heart, then we walk in integrity, that is we practice it. Notice in Psalm 26:1, “*Judge me, O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity.*” The Integrity is within and

now we walk, we practice integrity. Then in verse 11, "*But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity:*" The "but" is a contrast to verse 10, "*In whose hands [is] mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes. But as for me, [In spite of what others are doing as for me.] I will walk in mind Integrity:*" Why? Because integrity is within. But these covenant breakers don't have integrity within. These are individuals that can sign a document, sign a contract with no intention of honoring their contract. None whatsoever. They give their word and it doesn't even cross their mind that, "You know, I ought to do what I said I would do." They don't have integrity within, they do not practice integrity.

In Proverbs 11 we see that integrity is a guiding principle. It must be within us and it guides us. It guides our life. Proverbs 11:3 says, "*The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.*" The integrity of the upright shall guide them. It is a guiding principle. But again, the mind becomes reprobate, people become covenant breakers, they lack this integrity, they do not have this guiding principle within them.

It speaks of a people without conscience, acting in disregard of their word of the promise. The result of this lack of integrity is people do whatever is convenient, whatever is expedient in order to fulfill their desires, whatever that is, it doesn't matter. Whatever will fulfill their desires, they have to lie, they have to cheat, they have to steal; none of that matters because, "I'm going to fulfill my desires and my ambitions without any regard to others, without any regard to vows, without any regard to contracts." Then, of course, you have lawyers who are lacking integrity and they defend these people who have no integrity. You have people with no integrity defending those with no integrity. The result of course is crookedness, dishonesty and evil doing. A people without conscience, a people without a moral compass, acting in disregard to their vows or their word. They behave in an untrustworthy and fraudulent way.

Chapter 11 - Covenant Breakers

Beware of the individual who always has to tell you how honest they are. Beware of that person. They're not only trying to convince you, they're trying to convince themselves. If a person is honest, they don't have to tell you about it. You'll know. If they do not have intent to steal from you will just know that, they won't have to tell you.

The very word covenant breakers implies irresponsibility. People are taught today to be irresponsible. It implies a lack of accountability, it implies a lack of respect. If you sign a contract, and you have no intention of keeping that contract, you have no respect for the person on the other end of that contract. You have no respect for their family. You have no respect for them whatsoever. It shows a lack of respect, it shows a lack of commitment.

All of these things are so commonplace today. I mean, it's a rare thing to find a person who will take responsibility, and accountability; who respects other people, respects their property, and just respects them as another human being. Try to find somebody that has commitment today. These are rare qualities. This is the result of a reprobate mind. We have an irresponsible society. A society that does not want to be accountable for anything. A society with very little respect. No one has the right to destroy someone else's property. I don't care what their cause is, you just don't have that right. It's a lack of respect. This is why these covenant breakers do not think anything of breaking marriage vows. First of all they didn't mean anything when they said them, so they don't think anything of breaking a marriage vow. They do not think anything of breaking a business contract. Covenant breakers are the result of a reprobate mind and again *being filled with, full of*, so much so that it becomes commonplace. We are in a sad state when these things are common. Everything mentioned in Romans 1:29-32, are commonplace. These are not rare occurrences. These are commonplace. Being *filled with*, that is covenant breakers becomes an epidemic. We are a society of covenant breakers. As a result, we are a society that is drowning in

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desecret, fraud, deception, lies, and just untrustworthiness.

Who can you trust? Very, very few, because they do not have principle. They have not been taught to have principles. They have not been taught, "You do what's right. Regardless of what anyone else does, you do what's right." That's our responsibility regardless of what anyone does to us. We are to do what is right. That's our responsibility. It's our responsibility as a human being, and it is certainly our responsibility as a child of God. Just do what's right. How do you know what's right? The word of God. It's pretty plain. It's not that difficult if we do not have a reprobate mind. Those with a reprobate mind do not even know what's right. They have no clue. God help us.

Chapter 11 - Without Natural Affection

In Romans 1:18-32, we have learned that these verses describe our society. We also realize that someone has to live in the kind of period where the Antichrist is ushered in. I believe we are that people. Everything that is happening is just preparing for the reign of Antichrist. We need to understand that. There is no need to get all bent out of shape and all upset about it, because it is a glorious thing. Again, in Romans 1:28, where we read about the final step of God's judgment, before His cataclysmic judgment, we read. *"And even as they did not like to retain God in [their] knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, [the reason] to do those things which are not convenient;"*

We have spent a lot of time on the reprobate mind. It is illustrated every day. You turn on the radio, you read a newspaper, you watch the news, a reprobate mind is everywhere. I see it in church people. It is everywhere. People have no ability to reason, no ability to think. Then beginning with Romans 1:29, Paul gives the results, or the consequences of this reprobate mind, which we have been going through. In verse 31, we have *"without understanding"*, which we have looked at, followed by *"covenant breakers"*, which we studied in the last lesson, and now you come to *"without natural affection"*. *"Without natural affection"* is not the same as what we read and learned of in Romans 1:24-27. It says there, *"Wherefore God also gave them up [Again, we see here that God handed them over to themselves.] to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour [Notice the dishonor.] their own bodies between themselves: 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. For this cause [Because they did these things.] God gave them up unto vile affections: [Then Paul describes these vile affections.] for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: [Contrary to nature. Contrary to the natural.] 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. [or fitting.] Those verses, of course, describe homosexuality, which we have already spent much time on in previous lessons. However, what we read in Romans 1:31, “*without natural affection*” is not referring to homosexuality. Paul dealt with that in the verses mentioned previously. This is something else.

Let's look at those three words, “*Without natural affection*”. three words. “*Without*” means to be destitute of something, the absence of something, a separation, to be void of, *without*. Then you look at the word “*natural*”. “*Natural*” is a God-given instinct, a God-given disposition. “*Affection*” is a feeling of love, a desire towards someone, a lot of care and attachment to someone. Putting these three words together, *without natural affection* means to be destitute, to be void of, to not possess the God given disposition of love, desire, regard, attachment, and devotion toward those that we ought to **naturally** love. It means to be without it, void of that. It is the natural bonds of human affection, gone. They are gone. It is a disregard of natural ties, a disengagement toward those that we ought to naturally be drawn to, a disrespect and disregard toward those we are to naturally love.

Your children were born and you loved them. You loved them even before they were born. There was a love and it's natural. If it isn't, you have a problem. God gives us an instinctive natural love and care for our children, our parents, our siblings. My siblings and I really have very little in common other than we have the same parents and we grew up together. They don't approve of my lifestyle, I don't approve of theirs. But having said that there is a natural affection, there is a love.

Without natural affection. *Without natural* is something that goes beyond the natural. It is a different realm. This is in a different realm than God-given instinct. It is a condition that has the individual void of that which is

God-given by birth.

“*Without natural affection*” are very, very sad words. It is exhibited more and more in our society all the time. It is certainly manifested in abortion. *Any woman or any man that does not have a problem with abortion is without natural affection, plain and simple.* You say, “Well, what if, what if, what if?” Let me say it again, they are without natural affection. They are void of it. Abortion is the remedy for those who do not want to be inconvenienced by a baby. It is without natural affection.

You take child abuse of all kinds, verbal, physical, it does not matter, it is result of *without natural affection*. You look at the abuse of elderly parents and grandparents, once again it is *without natural affection*. Neglect. Neglect of children, neglect of parents, neglect of grandparents, in the name of, “I don't have time.” That's not your problem. Your problem is, *without natural affection*. Your problems are greater than time. All abandonment whether it be of children or parents is without natural affection. Crimes against children. It is “*without natural affection*”. Crimes against parents and grandparents. It is “*without natural affection*”.

You read the newspapers, you watch the news, we could stand all day and give example after example. Someone has a newborn and to just cast it into a dumpster, that's “*without natural affection*”. There are other mental illnesses going on, there is no question. But “*without natural affection*” explains the heinous acts against children by their parents, against parents by their children, and by siblings toward siblings.

“*Without natural affection*” is a terrible condition. It is a result of God's abandonment, a result of God's judgment of abandonment. We've said over and over, you look at an earthquake, a tornado, a hurricane, so called natural disasters; and people say that is the judgment of God upon that area of the country. That may be so, it may not be so. But there's something worse than that, and that is the judgment that we read of here in Romans 1, when God

leaves people to themselves to do what they do in their sinful nature and then to reap the consequences of it. That is where we are as a nation, as a society.

Without natural affection is a terrible condition which results in great calamity, affliction, distress, and sorrow. In 2nd Timothy 3:1, which is really the parallel to Romans 1, it says, “*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.*” From this verse, we know that in the last days perilous times, difficult, trying, uneasy times shall come; hard times, violent times, threatening times, dangerous times, very stressful times, times that are very hard to bear. Then in 2nd Timothy 3:2-5, you have the results of these perilous times or what makes a time perilous. The list is very, very similar to what we read in Romans 1. Everything following the root cause, which is the first thing Paul mentions, “... *men shall be lovers of their own selves*”, flows from that. “... *covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection,*” There it is again. The dominant characteristic of perilous times is, ***men shall be lovers of themselves***, and Romans 1 explains that it’s because they disregarded God, they love the creature more than the Creator. “*Without natural affection*” stems from self-love. It proceeds from a people so filled with self-absorption, self-gratification, self-service, self-will, self-desire, self-seeking, and self-convenience, that they do not have time or concern for those who they ought to just naturally love, those who they ought to naturally care for, those who they ought to naturally have time for. You take the time. It is not a matter of not having time, it is a matter of taking time, because everybody has the same amount of time. It is a matter of taking the time. It is a matter of reorganizing your plans, reorganizing your schedule. That can be done.

People who have “without natural affection”, or do not have natural affection, view those who they ought to naturally love as a distraction. They are a distraction to their life, they are a distraction to their desire to please self. God

expects us to love ourselves, but this, “*men shall be lovers of themselves*” goes beyond that. God does expect us to love ourselves. Matthew 19:19 makes it clear. “... *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*” So God expects us to love ourselves. This *self love* is what causes you to eat, to go to bed, to get out of the way of an approaching truck; because you love yourself and that's a natural self-love. The “*lovers of themselves*” that Paul is talking about in 2nd Timothy 3:2, is something that goes way beyond this natural self-love we ought to have that Jesus is talking about in Matthew 19-19. What Paul is talking about in 2nd Timothy 3:2 is a love that has no room for anyone else and results in “*without natural affection*”. It is a fixation, an obsession with self. There are elderly people who have been abandoned by their children; there are children that have been abandoned by parents; on and on and on we could go; it falls under this category “*without natural affection*”.

Each one of these results is as it says in Romans 1:29, “*Being filled with*”. It is present tense, ongoing; it just continues to increase so much so that it becomes commonplace, so much so that it becomes an epidemic, then it grows into something else.

What we read here in Romans 1:31, is all the result of God leaving a people to themselves. You follow Romans 1; you can look at something happening before your eyes; you can study the Bible, and this is what is going to happen next; because it is a natural progression. People say, “Well, we need to elect so and so to office to stop this.” You don't understand. You don't understand what God is doing. A politician is not going to stop it. If you think that you need to turn your eyes to God and get your eyes off the politicians. The politicians are not the solution, God is the solution.

In the next lesson, we will look at “*implacable*”, which means unable to appease, unable to satisfy.

Chapter 11 - Implacable

Continuing our study of Romans 1, beginning with verse 21, where those “... *who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*”; continuing on to verse 28, where “*God gave them over to a reprobate mind.*” Following that, in verses 28 to 32, you read of the results of a reprobate mind. These results certainly apply to individuals, but in these lessons we are viewing it more collectively as a society. In the last lesson, we looked in Romans 1:31 at “*without natural affection*”. I do not believe that phrase is referring to homosexuality. That was covered in earlier verses. This “*without natural affection*” proceeds from people so filled with themselves that they cannot love those they ought to naturally love, whether it be their children, their parents, or grandparents. It is **that** *natural affection*. Again, do remember that it is **being** *filled with*, meaning these things are ongoing to the point where they become commonplace and epidemic.

Following “*without natural affection*”, is “*implacable*”. Implacable is a word that you do not hear that much. Even though it is not used that much today, it is a very descriptive word of our time, describing what is going on in society today.

The Greek word which *implacable* is translated from is *aspondos* [*as'-pon-dos*]. It means without consent or truce. It has reference to those who cannot be appeased, who cannot be subdued, or pacified whether it be in their anger, their enmity, their malice, or their revenge. They are not pacified, not subdued in their own ways. It conveys the idea of an individual that is constantly in enmity, one who refuses to lay aside enmity. I said that to a person once and in a church. I said, “You're implacable.” They said, “I don't even know what that means.” I have known people that are implacable. They refuse to lay aside enmity. You see the implacable person does not want to get over what they see as an offense. They do not want to work things out. They are easily outraged. Implacable people are easily outraged, usually about things that concern them directly, and they

even pursue those who they see as the offender with unending revenge. There are people who spend their life in revenge. They are implacable. That is not a good thing.

Implacable has its roots in ungratefulness, ungraciousness, arrogance, in a resentful spirit that cannot be pleased, cannot be appeased. They are implacable. It is a people that are adamant, hardened, unmovable, inflexible, self-willed, unrelenting, and without remorse, used in the context here, in their rejection of God and in their sin. This is so concerning everything that is mentioned in Romans 1. Implacable. Every now and then you'll hear somebody say, "We're not going to be quiet until ..." They might believe that, but the truth is they won't be quiet even after "until" because they are implacable. They cannot be appeased. You can not sit down and reason with an implacable person. They have been given over to a reprobate mind. They are consumed with whatever it is that they see as an offense.

When I first came to this church, I remember talking to a man. His words to me were, "Well, I will never be at Home Baptist Church because brother Titus offended me." I said, "What did he do?" "Well, it's been a long time, brother Dan. I don't even really remember." That's the person I said to, "You're implacable. Are you listening to what you're saying?" We have a whole society of it. A society that is settled, firmly established in their rejection of God. There are all these people who say we just need to sit down and reason with them. You are wasting your time. They are implacable. We need to understand that.

Now consider this word in relation to everything that is mentioned here. Beginning in Romans 1:21, "*... when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*" You can add "implacable" there. They were firmly established in that. "*Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,*" You can add "implacable" to the end of that as well. "*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.” In other words, creation becomes God, and they are “implacable”. All these people that want to do away with police, do away with laws, they are humanists and they actually believe that humans will do the right thing. They believe we don't need laws because humans are good, humans are god, and they will just do the right thing. It's foolishness and they are implacable in that, they are firmly established. *“Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:”* I believe here we have homosexuality. They're implacable, they're settled in it. You can't reason with them. Then in verse 26, you have vile affections. They did not like to retain God in their knowledge and they are implacable in that. You can't reason with them. They have become adamant in these ways, hardened, immovable, inflexible, and self-willed.

This is one of the reasons we have, basically, a two political party system. They can't meet in the middle on hardly anything because people are implacable. It is almost gone. We can not sit down and reason and come to a middle ground because people are implacable.

Then, when you look at verses 29 through 31 and you see all these sins mentioned that we have been covering in these lessons, in each one of them these people who have been given over to a reprobate mind, are implacable. They are hardened, immovable, inflexible in these things. This is so regardless of the growing and advancing destructive consequences. They can see the destructive consequences, but the problem is they don't see them as consequences of their actions. They blame the destruction on something that does not have anything to do with their action. They can not make the association from their own actions to the results of these actions. That does not connect, that does not commute. They are implacable.

Feeling absolutely no shame, implacable people are angry and they do abominable things. They feel no shame

whatsoever. In Jeremiah 3:3, speaking of His own people, God says, "*Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; [That is a consequence.] and thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst [That is implacable] to be ashamed.*" Refused. That is implacable. Refused to be ashamed. Implacable. In Jeremiah 6:15, "*Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush;*" It doesn't say "neither did they". It says neither **could** they blush. This is a serious condition. They are implacable. "*therefore they shall fall among them that fall:*" Jeremiah 8:12, "*Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, [again] neither could they blush:*" They are implacable. Zephaniah 3:5, "*The just LORD [is] in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame.*" So, they do not feel shame, they have no remorse, they have no repentance because they are implacable.

Notice in Proverbs 1:24-25, "*Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:*" They were implacable. They were not interested in a truce with God. Ecclesiastes 8:11, "*Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.*" Fully set, firmly established to do evil. They are implacable. We have a whole society of implacable people. Jeremiah 7:13, "*And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not;*" They are hardened, implacable. Romans 2:5, says, "*But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath*" That is what the implacable person does, they treasure up themselves wrath.

The result of an implacable person is they of course continue in sin. They get deeper and deeper into sin. We see

this in 2nd Kings 17:14, 2nd Chronicles 28. You see a people that sin more and more. Sin does not decrease, it increases. That is the very nature of sin. It is the very nature of the sinner also. They are implacable, they are firmly established in these things. They become more and more obstinate. The people that reject God become more and more obstinate. They become more relentless in their sinful way. Their disdain for God grows. Their hostility toward God grows. “Well, you need to just come up with some educational programs to fix this.” *It **will not work** because they are implacable.* They are firmly established in these things. The implacable secularist will not be appeased with anything short of God being expunged from every aspect of society. They are not going to be appeased until that happens. We need to understand that.

We need to understand what we are dealing with. We are dealing with implacable people, people that are firmly established in their sinful ways, and becoming more and more established in their ways. An implacable person is not happy. They are never happy, and never will be. We have a society that is very unhappy. People are not happy. Implacable. They're not happy unless something is stirred up. They like to stir things up. We have seen implacable people in churches. They have the same characteristics, and they are going to get offended by everything and refuse to be appeased. If they are somewhat appeased, they are not going to be happy because they want something stirred up. So they are going to stir it up or usually what they do is they get someone else to stir it up. They are implacable.

Implacable is destructive wherever it is. The implacable person looks at everybody else and everybody else is wrong. An implacable church member thinks everybody else is wrong, everybody else has the wrong attitude, the wrong spirit. They believe they are the only one that has the right attitude, the right spirit. They think they are the only one right with God. That's the implacable person. Again, “*being filled with*” and “*full of*” implacable,

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so much so that it is commonplace and an epidemic. It is commonplace in our society and an epidemic. It makes for a miserable society.

You live with an implacable person, you have a miserable house. You have to associate with implacable people at work or whatever, it is miserable. They drag misery with them everywhere they go. Our society is filled with them. Implacable people. It just helps us to understand what we are dealing with in society.

The next thing we have is *unmerciful*. We have a society filled with the unmerciful. Only God can fix what is wrong with this society.

Chapter 11 - Unmerciful

In the last few lessons of this series from Romans 1, you find verses 29-31, which are the results of a reprobate mind. In the last lesson, we studied the word *implacable*, which means that there is a people that is settled and established in the things that are mentioned in verses 29, 30, and 31.

Next is the last word of verse 31, *unmerciful*. The people that have been given over to a reprobate mind are unmerciful, and they are implacable in this, meaning they are firmly established. The word *unmerciful* means a destitution of compassion. If you think about it, there is something very strange about a merciful God and His creation of an unmerciful creature. Every human being is the recipient of the mercy of God. It is a very strange thing to be the recipient of the mercy of God and then turn around and be unmerciful. Yet that is the characteristic of those given over to a reprobate mind; they are unmerciful.

Being the recipient of God's mercy and yet not showing mercy to others is illustrated in the parable of "the unmerciful servant", in Matthew 18:23. The occasion of this parable is Peter asking the Lord how many times he should forgive someone, and Christ answers his question with this parable. Beginning in verse 23, it says, *"Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion."* Remember, unmerciful is a destitution of compassion. This certain king was moved with compassion, *"and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took [him] by the throat,*

saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not.” His master was moved with compassion, but he would not. “... but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion [There it is again.] on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.”

In this parable, we see in verse 30, “*he would not.*” He absolutely refused to show compassion. He would not, he was steadfast. What he did is considered to be wicked. Verse 32, “*O thou wicked servant.*” To be unmerciful is to be wicked. To receive mercy at the hands of God and yet to be unmerciful is wicked. We also see it is unreasonable. Verse 33, “*Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?*” Is that not the reasonable thing to do? Since you have been the recipient of mercy is it not reasonable that you should show mercy on someone else? We see also his lack of compassion prompted anger from his lord. Verse 34, “*... and his lord was wroth.*” So we have this unmercifulness, “he would not.” It's wickedness, it's unreasonable, and it prompts the anger of the Lord. Yet today we have a society filled with unmerciful. We are an unmerciful society overall. I'm not saying everybody is, but in general, we are an unmerciful society with a destitution of compassion.

If unmerciful is a destitution of compassion, I believe we need to understand what compassion is. So, what is compassion? Well, it is a sympathetic consciousness of the

distress or the pain of others. It does not stop there. Included in compassion is a compelling desire to relieve the distress or the need of another. We see here in the parable the lord was moved with compassion, he was compelled; compassion compelled him to do something; compelled him to release this servant from his debt. He was moved with compassion. It includes sympathy and empathy. It's moved, it's compelled to do something.

Compassion is a characteristic of God. In Psalm 78:38, "*But he, [being] full of compassion,*" The next word is a verb, which means He did something; compassion moves you. He "*forgave [their] iniquity, and destroyed [them] not:*" That would be what they deserve; that's mercy. He is full of compassion. Psalm 86:15, "*But thou, O Lord, [art] a God full of compassion, [Notice what goes along with compassion.] and gracious, longsuffering, [That's patience. That's what the servant in the parable pleaded for was for his lord to have patience.] and plenteous in mercy and truth.*" Psalm 111:4, in the latter part of the verse, it says. "*the LORD [is] gracious and full of compassion.*" Psalm 145:8, "*The LORD [is] gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.*" God is a God of compassion.

In Matthew 9:36, we read of the compassion of Jesus Christ, "*But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved [Again compassion compels you. He was moved.] with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.*" Jesus was moved with compassion. Compassion moves you. Matthew 14:14. "*And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed [He did something. He was compelled to do something. He healed.] their sick.*" Matthew 15:32, "*Then Jesus called his disciples [unto him], and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will [Again He's compelled.] not send them away fasting, [Why? Because He was moved with compassion.] lest they faint in the way.*" Then in

Matthew 20:34, “*So Jesus had compassion [on them], and [He did something.] touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.*” From all this we see that compassion feels and compassion acts. Jesus was moved with compassion; He was moved to do something; He was moved to act. Unmerciful is a destitution of compassion; a destitution of seeing the need and refusing to move, to feel anything regarding that need. It goes along with being an unfeeling people.

Christ of course is our example. In Acts 10:36-39, “*The word which [God] sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) That word, [I say], ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:*” He went about doing good; He was moved with compassion. That is Christ. We see it all through the gospels. Jesus sees someone who was blind or lame or whatever and Jesus had compassion, He was moved to heal the blind, even those who are ungodly. He enabled the lame to walk, even those who were ungodly because he had compassion; he was moved with compassion. But we live in an unmerciful society; a society that is not very compassionate.

Beginning in Philippians 2:1, it says, “*If [there be] therefore any consolation in Christ, [And there is comfort in Christ.] if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, [And there is. These things are in Christ.] if any bowels and mercies, [There it is, mercies.] Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, [The same love you find in Christ. If these things be in Christ, fulfill my joy, being like-minded, having the same as Christ.] [being] of one accord, of one mind. [Let] nothing [be done] through strife*

or vainglory; [If you are moved to do something, do not let your motivation be strife or vainglory; glory to self.] but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.” This brings us back to that parable of the unmerciful servant. He was forgiven his debt. When his servant came to him with a debt, he didn't look at that servant thinking, “This man is better than me.” No, he thought he was better than him. That's the root of unmerciful. We see here, “*Let each esteem other better than themselves.*” If you look at someone and you, “Think they are better than me,” you don't have the problem acting on their behalf. But if you look at them as below you, “Well, why should I help them?” There's that lack. “*Look not every man on his own things,*” That's what the man did in the parable. He was just looking after himself. A self-centered society is going to be an unmerciful society; a self-centered individual is going to be an unmerciful individual. “*... but every man also on the things of others.*” That's necessary for compassion. “*Let this mind [That mind that has just been described.] be in you,*” It is a mindset. To have compassion involves a certain mindset and involves the mind of Christ; “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:*”

In the parable of the “Good Samaritan” we see compassion. The priest and the Levite perhaps had some sympathy for the individual; it is highly doubtful, but perhaps they had some sympathy. You can stretch it and say perhaps they had some empathy, but they had no compassion. They were not moved to do something to help the man who was lying on the side of the road. Nothing in them moved them to do that. But concerning the Samaritan we read in Luke 10:33, the last statement says, “*..he had compassion [on him], ...*” He had compassion; he was moved to do something; then we're told what he did. Notice the verbs in verse 34; he went to him. Because he had compassion, he went to him; he bound up his wounds; he poured in oil and wine; he set him on his own beast; he brought him to an inn; he took care of him. It was

compassion that moved him to do these things.

In “The Sermon on the Mount”, Jesus addresses this issue of compassion when He talks about our neighbor in Matthew 5:43-48. We are to show kindness to our neighbor. In other words, we are to be compassionate to them, even if our neighbor, those who are nearby are enemies. Even if they are enemies, we are to be moved to help them if we can. Jesus said in Matthew 5:43-48, if you only show compassion on those you love you're no better than the lost man. The lost man can do that. To show compassion on your enemy, that takes something else. The Samaritan was moved. Christ as our example. Everything Christ did He did for his enemies; at least they were once His enemies.

We are to be a people of compassion in an unmerciful society. We live in an unmerciful society, and if we're not careful we will get sucked into an unmerciful society where we are not moved to help someone. We are to be a people with compassion.

Proverbs 25:21, *“If thine enemy be hungry”,* give him clothes. Well clothes aren't going to help him. That's not what he needs. *“If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty,”* give him bread. No, he needs drink. *“... give him water to drink:”* Compassion meets a need; compassion is ready to relieve the need. In Isaiah 58:7, *“[Is it] not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?”* He's talking about compassion, mercy. We know that Galatians 6, deals with bearing one another's burdens, but in verse 10, he says, *“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all”* Not just our friends, not just the people we know, but unto all men. Then he adds the word *“especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”* They are your first responsibility, but you don't neglect the others. Especially. You don't go out and show compassion on those you don't know and then show no compassion and those you do. We see there are

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degrees here; especially unto them who are of the household of faith,” which is of course talking about church.

The compassion, the mercy is also a product of heavenly wisdom. We saw that it involves a mindset in Philippians 2. In James 3:17, *“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, [and] easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits,”* We come to Romans 1 and we see the word unmerciful. We go to James 3:17 and we see the wisdom that is from above ... full of mercy. What does that tell you? It tells you that there aren't many walking in the wisdom from above and good fruits without partiality and without hypocrisy.

We live in the days that are ushering in the reign of the Antichrist and it is a privilege to live in such days. But, we don't have to be sucked in by everything that is going on around us.

Chapter 12

Attitude Toward Sin

Chapter 12 - Attitude Toward Sin - Part 1

Once again in Romans 1:29-32 we have the results of a reprobate mind. In verses 29-31, there are twenty-three classifications of sin. What we have to remember is “being filled with”, which means these twenty-three classifications of sin are growing. These things are not diminishing, these things are growing and it is the result of a reprobate mind.

Now we come to verse 32, which also is a result of the reprobate mind. Romans 1:32 says, “*Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things* [The twenty-three things mentioned.] *are worthy of death,* [Or are worthy of the Judgment of God] *not only do the same,* [Meaning they participate in the same.] *but have pleasure in them that do them.* What we see here in verse 32 is an attitude towards sin. The result of the reprobate mind is sin and sin grows. There is an attitude towards sin, which again, is also growing.

Look at verse 32 again. “*Who*”, would refer to those who are described by the characteristics mentioned in verses 29-31; “*knowing*”, means that they are acquainted with; “*the judgment*”, the ordinance or sentiment “*of God*”; “*that they which do such things*”, referring, of course, to verses 29-31; “*are worthy of death,*” they know that the things mentioned are displeasing to God and they know that it is deserving of punishment; “*not only do the same,*” knowing this they still participate in these things. If you remember back to the lesson where we studied about conscience, and that's one of the ways that they know; “*but have pleasure in them that do them.*” From this we see those who have a reprobate mind do not care, are not concerned with what pleases or displeases God. They find delight in that which is sinful. They not only find delight in it, they approve it, they encourage others in it. What you have here is an obsessive fascination with that which is sinful. There are two basic matters we went to notice here in verse 32, regarding an attitude toward sin.

Number one is presumptuous sin, which speaks of an attitude; it is a classification of sin, but it speaks more of an attitude about sin than anything else. We read “*knowing the judgment of God, ... they which commit such things are worthy of death, ... do the same.*” They do the same in spite of what they know, whether it be conscience or whatever, in spite of what they

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know, they do the same. This is what is known as presumptuous sin. Presumptuous sin is a sin committed willfully against manifest light and knowledge; it is to commit sin on purpose with intent, willfully.

There is such a thing as a sin of ignorance. God's laws dealt with that. In Leviticus 4:13 we read, "*And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance,*" He's relating some laws. They sin through ignorance. They don't know what they are doing is sin, but it's still sin. It is sinning through ignorance. Leviticus 4:22 says, "*When a ruler hath sinned, and done [somewhat] through ignorance [against] any of the commandments of the LORD his God...*" There it is again, *through ignorance*. Leviticus 4:27, "*And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance ...*" So, there is such a thing as sinning through ignorance.

A sin through ignorance is still sin, but it is not presumptuous unless the ignorance be willful. That is possible as well. People are ignorant because they choose to be ignorant. For example, if you were to say to someone, "I want to show you what the Bible says about what you're doing," and they say, "I don't want to hear it," that's willful ignorance. Now their ignorance is presumptuous. Look at 2nd Peter 3:5, "*For this [Referring back to verse 4.] they willingly are ignorant of ...*" So there is a sin through ignorance, but the ignorance can be presumptuous, that is you can choose to be ignorant. "Don't tell me what the Bible says. Don't tell me how this was wrong." That's willful ignorance. In such a case the ignorance is a presumptuous sin.

There is a difference between a sin through ignorance and a presumptuous sin. Presumptuous sin is a sin of deliberateness, a sin of intent. It is basically a sin with premeditation. We put a difference between murder and premeditated murder. There's a difference. Someone will say, "Well murder is murder." Yes, that's true, but there are differences. Sin is sin, but there are different classifications of sin. Presumptuous sin is a sin of premeditation. One may sin without intent to do so. Something you shouldn't look at may pop up on your computer, you look at it and then you turn it off, you didn't determine to do that. Now if you get on your computer and you go looking for that stuff, that's presumptuous sin. That's premeditated. That's with

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deliberateness. There's a difference. So one may sin without intent to do so. Such is not presumptuous.

You have to be weary of people who say, "All sin is alike." Oh no it isn't. When you go down that road that's how abominable things get in the church. "Well, that's no different. Homosexuality is no different than telling a lie." Really? **Really!?** There is a difference. Yes, all sin is sin, but once you start down that road, now you've opened the door to accept it all. "Well, you accept liars in your church, so except me."

Presumptuous sins are also addressed by the law of God. We see that sins through ignorance were addressed and we see presumptuous sins are as well in Exodus 21:14. "*But if a man come presumptuously [with deliberateness] upon his neighbour, to slay him ...*", he's talking about a presumptuous sin here, premeditated murder. In Numbers 15:29-30, "*Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, [both for] him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them. But the soul [now there's a contrast] that doeth [ought] presumptuously, [whether he be] born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.* Again, the law is dealing with presumptuous sins. There are sins of ignorance, there are presumptuous sins. In Deuteronomy 17:12-13, "*And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the LORD thy God, or unto the judge, [He will not listen. This is the same individual, 'Let me show you where you're wrong.' 'I don't want to hear it.'] even that man shall die: and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel. And all the people shall hear; and fear; and do no more presumptuously.* Again, the law deals with presumptuous sin.

The psalmist David prayed concerning presumptuous sins. In Psalm 19:13 he wrote, "*Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous [sins] ...*" The psalmist recognized presumptuous sins.

Presumption sin speaks of an attitude towards sin. It takes the attitude, "I'm going to do this and I don't care what you think or what God thinks or anybody else thinks, this is what I'm going to do." That's presumptuous sin. It's a different classification of sin. All sin is sin but there are classifications of sins.

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The word presumptuous means brazen, overconfident. It is the individual that says, "Well I've been doing this for years and God hasn't punished me yet, so I'm just going to continue doing that." That's overconfident, that's tempting God also. Not very wise. It's an arrogancy in sinning. It's just like people who have made up their mind what they're going to do and they just dare you to do something about it. That's an arrogancy in their sin. I've dealt with those people many many times. Presumptuous sins. It's people who are very proud in their sins. They will boast of their sin. They're very bold in their sin, very froward.

This is the result of a reprobate mind and it grows and grows and grows. People become more and more brazen in their sins. In Numbers 15:29-30 he is speaking of those who sin presumptuously, and then in verse 31, talking about these that sin presumptuously, "*Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, [He thinks lightly of the word of God.] and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity [shall be] upon him.*" He hath despised. Those who sin presumptuously think little of God's word.

In 2nd Peter 2:10, we see some characteristics of those who are presumptuous. "*But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government.* [That is they despise, they think lightly of authority.] *Presumptuous [are they],* [They think lightly of government or authority. In other words, 'I don't want anyone telling me what to do. Then notice] *selfwilled,* [They are driven by what they want to do and they do it regardless.] *they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.* [This refers back to government or authority.]" They are not afraid, they are fearless in their sin. They are blazing in their sin. This is a result of a reprobate mind and being full of; this is of a growing nature.

Presumptuous sins involve an attitude of frowardness. Frowardness is a readiness. They're ready to sin, they're ready to do that which is wrong. Frowardness is a hastiness. They're in a hurry to do what is wrong. They don't give it any thought. They're driven by their sinful passion. Frowardness speaks of an eagerness, earnestness, a boldness, in this case, in sin.

Notice this frowardness is spoken of throughout scripture. We're talking about an attitude toward sin. Presumptuous. In

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Deuteronomy 32:20, it says, *“And he said, I will hide my face from them, [This is God.] I will see what their end [shall be]: for they [are] a very froward generation, children in whom [is] no faith.”* They are froward, that is they’re ready to sin. They’re hasty in their sin. They have a passion. They have an eagerness. They have an earnestness and a boldness in their sin.

Many of the religious in their presumptuousness, they cover it with a cloak of righteousness. “Well, we prayed about it.” Well, it's against God's word, so who have you been praying to. It's presumptuous, but they know that sounds good. In most cases that will keep the preacher quiet or whoever else is dealing with them. “Well, they did pray about it.” No, it's just covering presumptuous sins. “We've decided what we're going to do. We're going to do it and nobody is stopping us.” Presumptuous. Notice in Proverbs 2:12-15, he is talking about wisdom, *“To deliver thee from the way of the evil [man], from the man that speaketh froward things; [There it is again, that frowardness, perverseness. Then he gives some characteristics.] Who leave the paths of uprightness, [They do so presumptuously. The reason they leave the paths of uprightness?] to walk in the ways of darkness; [If you're going to walk in the ways of darkness, you have to leave that which is right, and people plan to do this, that's presumptuous.] Who rejoice to do evil, [They take delight! They're looking forward to the sin that they want to commit.] [and] delight in the frowardness of the wicked; Whose ways [are] crooked, and [they] froward in their paths:”* Then in Proverbs 3:32, *“For the froward [is] abomination to the LORD: ...”* They're an abomination to the Lord. Proverbs 6:14, *“Frowardness [is] in his heart, he deviseth mischief [He plans it out. That's perverseness, that's frowardness.] continually; he soweth discord.”* Proverbs 11:20, *“They that are of a froward heart [are] abomination to the LORD: ...”* Then in Proverbs 22:5, *“Thorns [and] snares [are] in the way of the froward: [They're going to get hurt. Oh, they'll blame it on someone else, but they're going to get hurt.] he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them. [The snares and thorns and the froward.]”*

What we see in Romans 1:32, is brazen, shameless sinning, with boldness and contempt, in a growing nature. Isaiah 3:9, *“The shew of their countenance doth witness against them;*

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[Look at their face.] *and they declare their sin* [They're proud of their sin. They're bold in their sin, brazen.] *as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.*" When you have a society full of it, a whole society has rewarded evil unto themselves.

All sin a sin. All sin is sinful. All sin is great because all sin is against a great God. And every sin has in it the venom of rebellion, the venom of rejection of God. But there are some sins more blazing in their rebellion and rejection and such are presumptuous sins.

We said Romans 1:32 deals with two primary matters. Number one is presumptuous sin, which is an attitude. The second thing is there is a pleasure in sin.

You read in Romans 1:29-31, of a society that commits those things with deliberateness. That's their attitude. Then, you have a society that takes pleasure in those things. They take pleasure in the very things that will destroy them. God help us as we try to serve the Lord in a reprobate society.

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We began looking in Romans 1:32, which follows twenty-three consequences of the reprobate mind in verses 29 through 31. What we really see in verse 32, is the attitude behind what is mentioned in verses 29-31, a certain attitude toward sin, toward the things that are mentioned. This is being filled with something that is intensifying as we go.

Reading to Romans 1:32, again, "*Who* [Referring to those described by the characteristics mentioned.] *knowing* [That is they have an acquaintance with.] *the judgment* [The ordinances, the sentiments.] *of God, that they which commit such things* [Again, referring to the things mentioned in verses 29-31] *are worthy of death*, [They know, there is a part of them that knows these things are displeasing to God. There is a part of them that knows these things are worthy of the judgment of God, but they continued on.] *not only do the same*, [Knowing this, they just participate in these things. And not only that] *but have pleasure in them that do them.*"

By way of review, what we see here are people who do not care. They are not concerned with what pleases God or displaces God. You talk to people today and you say, "You know, that doesn't please the Lord." They don't care, it doesn't bother them in the least, and they find delight in that which is sinful. They approve of that which is sinful and even take that to the extent where they disapprove of that which is right, and they encourage others in the same way of life. What you really have is an obsession, a fascination with that which is sinful.

In the last lesson, there are really two matters being presented here with regard to an attitude toward sin. In the last lesson we looked at, "*knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death ... they ... do the same.*" It's speaking of presumptuous sins, which means they sinned wilfully. It is a sin of deliberateness. There's a sin of intent and a sin of premeditation. That means that there is a brazenness in their sin. They're overconfident because God doesn't send immediate judgment, they're overconfident and become arrogant in their sinful ways. They become proud, they become bold,

and very froward. This is what is meant by presumptuous sins.

The second matter being dealt with is, not only do they sin wilfully, but they have pleasure in sin. Notice what it says. *"...not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."* They flock together. They have pleasure in them that do them, that do the things that are mentioned. They stay together. They have a fellowship amongst themselves, if you will. They relish in, find gratification, satisfaction, and excitement in those things which are listed in verses 29-31. They love these things. They live for these things. They live for the very things that bring the wrath of God. There is a tolerance for these things. They approve, there's an acceptance. They accept one another. Be careful who you accept. Be careful what you accept. There's an acceptance. There's accommodation. They make accommodations for the things mentioned in Romans 1:29-31. They embrace these things. They embrace that which is an abomination to God.

What is said in verse 32, *"...not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them"* is spoken of in other places as well. In Proverbs 17:15, it says *"He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, [The two seem to go together most of the time. If there's a justification of the wicked, there's usually a condemnation of the just. So there is a justification of that which is wrong and there is a condemning of the just.] even they both [are] abomination to the LORD."* That's what is going on in Romans 1:32. In Proverbs 23:24, *"He that saith unto the wicked, Thou [art] righteous; [You may not use those exact words, but you said, 'Well, there's nothing wrong with what you're doing.' Well, what you're saying is they're righteous. 'Others may not approve, but don't worry about that, there's nothing wrong with what you're doing.' Thou art righteous.] him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him:"* There are consequences. Proverbs 28:4, *"They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with*

them.” What we do can justify the wicked, condemn the righteous. If we disobey God's commands, then we are aligning ourselves with the wicked, and in a sense praising, approving of the wicked. When a child of God says, “Well, everybody else is doing it,” they're justifying the wicked. They justify their own behavior and in reality, praising the wicked.

When we obey God's law, you don't have to say anything. All you have to do is what's right, and people begin to feel guilty and they will stop asking you to come around. We've said many times, for the most part, you don't have to separate from the wicked. You just live right and they will separate from you. That's what this verse is telling us. You keep the law, you contend with them. That doesn't mean that we're not there to rebuke them verbally. But, I'm telling you, you just do what's right and they won't really like being around you. You won't have to go to them and say, “You know what, I can't spend time with you anymore.” They'll make that decision for you if you just do what's right.

Isaiah 5:20 says, *“Woe unto them that call evil good...”* That's what they're doing in Romans 1:32. Listen to politicians today, listen to celebrities today, what are they doing? They're calling evil good and good evil. It's a sad day when doing right becomes wrong. That's where we are. Continuing in Isaiah 5:20, *“that put darkness for light, and light for darkness;”* In other words, they are just totally confused. *“... that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”* That's what's going on in Romans 1:32. Look in Ezekiel 13:22, *“Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked,”* Be careful that you do not strengthen the hands of the wicked. Sometimes in keeping your silence that is what you're doing. A lot of people take your silence as approval. Be careful that you don't strengthen the hands of the wicked, *“...that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life:”*

In Malachi 2:17, *“Ye have wearied the LORD with*

your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied [him]? [Then he answers their question.] When ye say, Every one that doeth evil [is] good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where [is] the God of judgment?" When we commend the wicked, we weary the Lord. When we say, "Well if I was doing wrong, God would punish me and He hasn't, so obviously I'm not doing anything wrong." That's what is meant there, "*Where is the God of judgment?*" That is a wearisome thing to the Lord.

Romans 1:32 we see immorality is exalted, biblical values are mocked. That is where we are today. What we see in Romans 1:29-32 is the act of sin advancing. Sin always progresses. It's good to know the nature of things. It's good to know human nature because human nature will do what human nature does. You can predict behaviors. It's good to know the nature of sin, because you can follow the progression. You start off with the act of sin in Romans 1:32, that is now advanced to a delight in sin; being full of, it advances to a repetition of sin; being full of, advancing to an indulgence in sin, which of course is the habit and custom of sin. You just see this progression all through the word of God. We see it playing out before us.

What we have here is a people that are distorted, corrupt in their thought process, in their views, and in their acts, so much so, that it becomes commonplace, it becomes an epidemic. The result of all that is a society that is mired in, saturated with, and in the stranglehold of all kinds of things; humanism, secularism, pluralism. Getting back to humanism; you don't have to listen too long to a politician, to Hollywood, almost anybody; listen to them talk. They're coming from a humanistic viewpoint. They are in a stranglehold of humanism. We see here that when these things progress, society just lives under the perverted narration of these things. They live under the lies of these things, they live under the control and the manipulation of the philosophies and the ideals of sin. It is a society that is twisted. There's a society that is perverted and in their own

erroneous beliefs and in their feelings and their attitudes. It ends up that they are offended by God. They are offended by that which is right.

Summary

Ours is a society that is described by Romans 1:18-32. It is a society that is being prepared for the reign of the Antichrist. You and I that are saved will not be here, but this society will be and they are being prepared for the reign of the Antichrist. I don't know who the Antichrist is and neither do you, neither does anyone else. I don't even believe the Antichrist knows who he is, but I do believe that he's alive today and he's about to take center stage and society is being prepared.

What we have here in Romans 1:18-32, the subject again is the wrath of God, the abandoning wrath of God. There are different aspects of God's wrath and what's being dealt with here is the abandoning wrath of God. What that results in is a downward spiral away from God. We see this very clearly in Romans 1. In verses 19-21, you have the words *because*. In verse 24 you have the word *wherefore*. In verse 26 you have the words *for this cause*. All those words and phrases state the same thing, that is, there is a progression here. There is a spiral. One thing leads to another. What we've seen in verses 19-21, it begins with a rejection of God. *"Because when they knew God they glorified him not as God."* They rejected God. *Neither were they thankful, but became vain in their imaginations.*

It begins with the rejection of God, and that leads to vanity. They became vain in their imaginations. Rejecting God, they became vain in their imaginations. That is they became fearful and wasteful in their minds. They become vain.

Becoming vain leads to spiritual blindness. In addition to being vain in their imaginations their foolish heart, which is foolish because they rejected God, because they are vain, was darkened. You have a rejection of God, leading to a vanity of mind, leading to spiritual blindness.

They no longer can see, they are blind, which leads to self-deception and ignorance.

In verse 22, “*professing themselves to be wise.*” Man thinks that he is smarter than anyone that's ever lived on the face of the earth. Man actually believes that this is the smartest people that ever lived. How sad? How bad does that make past history? I believe Noah; can you imagine the intelligence of that man? I mean that wasn't an ignorant society. Society has not progressed in their knowledge. I mean they progress in things they know of, perhaps but there is a self deception and ignorance that is off the charts. *Professing themselves to be wise, they became.* That is, when you become something you pass from one state to another. They actually passed from wisdom to fools.

You have this rejection of God leading to vanity, leading to spiritual blindness, leading to deception and ignorance. All that leads to a replacement of God. Verse 23, “*and changed.*” In their foolishness and in their professed wisdom, they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image. They bring God down to man and eventually they bring God down even below man. Verse 25, “*who changed.*” Twice we see that phrase “*who changed.*” They changed their image of God, they changed the truth of God into a lie. Professing themselves to be wise, they say their ways are better than God's ways.

They changed the truth of God into a lie and “*worshipped and served the creature.*” Worshipped and served man. Good without God, the humanist motto, Good without a God. They changed the truth of God into a lie and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator.

Then you come to, “*for this cause.*” They replace God and here is what happens next. Life loses its real meaning. You replace God, life loses its real meaning and you see that in verses 26 and 28. *For this cause God gave them up unto the vile affections. Women did change the natural use into that which is against nature and likewise also the men.* In verse 28, *and even as they did not like to*

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retain God in their knowledge God gave them over to a reprobate mind. Life has lost its meaning. How sad.

Then the last thing you come to verses 29 through 32 the end result of all of this is a drowning in sin. Romans 1:18-32 is a very apt picture of our society. Next many may think, “We finally got through that.” Well, we haven't yet because we're going to go back to Romans 1:16, “*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.*” What you have there is the remedy, the only remedy for this society. There's only one remedy and that's the gospel. That's Christ.

Chapter 13

The Remedy

In Romans 1:14-17, it says, “*I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it [The gospel of Christ.] is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just [or justified] shall live by faith.*”

Since we started this study, we've been referring to Romans 1:18-32. We have pretty much studied every word in those verses. The subject matter of the verses in Romans 1:14-17, quoted above, is *the gospel*. These verses serve as the introduction to Romans 1:18-32, however, I am making it the conclusion of this series of lessons. In verses 14-17, is God's remedy for what we have previously studied in verses 18-32. Politics will not fix what is going on in Romans 1:18-32. Man will not fix it either. The remedy is what we read here in Romans 1:14-17.

Keep in mind that the subject of verses 14-17 is the gospel. Then beginning in Romans 1:18, Paul writes, “*For the wrath of God ...*” Paul changes subjects. The subject of verses 18-32 is *the wrath of God*. As you read through those verses, you see that the aspect of God's wrath that is being spoken of is the abandoning wrath of God, which is God leaving man to himself, and that's where we live. That's our society today. God has abandoned man, if you will, He has left man to himself. He has turned them over to a reprobate mind; that's made very plain and we have spent a lot of time on that matter. The abandoning wrath of God is due to man's sin. It's a societal thing and that's why things continually get worse, because man has been left to himself. The awful spiral of human depravity is what you see in verses 18-32. What you see is the process of secularization. Everybody, all of God's people should be very familiar with verses 18-32, because it explains everything that's happening in our world. It not only explains what's happening, it tells us basically

what's coming next. You just follow the process. We should not be shocked.

What is illustrated in verses 18-32 is the mess that humanity is in, why this mess continues, and why it will continue to get worse. People who say, "Well the world is getting better." I don't know what world they live in, but they have absolutely no knowledge whatsoever of God's chain of events and they have no knowledge whatsoever of Romans 1:18-32. Things are not going to get better in this world. Things are going to continually get worse, carrying the world into the tribulation period. The world is being set up for the reign of the Antichrist. All this is made very plain in the scriptures.

What is spoken of here in Romans 1:18-32, is the degeneration of a society. This has been going on for a long time. This didn't just start 20 years ago, it's been going on for a long, long time, even before you and I came upon the scene. It is a picture of a society plunging toward destruction, plunging toward ruin. Romans 1:18-32 explains how it happens. It is a picture of a society that is corrupt, enslaved to corruption, submerged in the mire and the muck of sin, sinking further and further into the depths of spiritual and moral bankruptcy. Romans 1:18-32 tells us how it all happens. God left them to themselves "*to do those things which are not convenient.*" It is the path of degradation, the path into the depths of sin.

What we see is a picture of an atheistic, secularized, pluralistic state. That is what is being described in Romans 1:18-32. It is a cycle, as we pointed out throughout this series. This is a cycle. This is a process.

But God does have a remedy. That is the gospel. We cannot stress enough, that for a long time, God's people have fallen into the trap of thinking, "Well, we just have to elect the right people to office and that'll fix it." No, it won't. Yes, I agree we have to elect the right people to office, but that will not fix the things we read of in Romans 1:18-32, because this is God's plan, carrying the world into the

tribulation period. You are not going to stop God's plan.

However, there is a remedy for those who will listen. That is the gospel. That's what Paul is addressing in Romans 1:14-17. So, the best thing to do when you're talking to someone of a reprobate mind, which is most of the population by the way, is to present to them the gospel, because that's their only hope.

What is the gospel? We all know it is "*the good news.*" The word *gospel* means *good news*. It means *glad tidings*. Paul wrote in Romans 10:15, "*as it is written, [He is referring to Isaiah 52:7] How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, [The good news of peace. Not peace between man and man, but peace between God and man] and bring glad tidings of good things!*" The gospel is a gospel of peace. It is news concerning peace between God and man. It is glad tidings of good things.

From this we see that the gospel is information. It's information of good things. It is good news, a declaration, a proclamation, a report of good things. It is referred to in several ways throughout the New Testament and the references that are made, further explain what the gospel is. It is referred to seven times as the gospel of God. In Romans 1:1, "*Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called [to be] an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,*" It is good news from God, it is good news concerning God. This is the remedy, this is the only thing that can fix verses 18-32. Good news from God, good news about God, as it is referred to in Romans 1:9, where it says, "*For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son ...*" It is the gospel of His son Jesus Christ. It is good news concerning Jesus Christ. It is good news, it is information declared and proclaimed concerning Jesus Christ the son of God.

This is the remedy because it is the power of God unto salvation. What do the people need in Romans 1:18-32? They need salvation, they need deliverance. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation. It is what God

uses to bring about salvation, to bring about the deliverance that man so desperately needs. It is the gospel of God, it is the gospel of His son.

Twice, it is also referred to as "*the gospel of peace*"; once in Romans 10:15 and once in Ephesians 6:15. Good news, information declared, proclaimed, and presented concerning the way of peace with God. The way of peace with God happens to be through His Son. You cannot have peace with God outside of Jesus Christ. It is the gospel of God, it is the gospel of His Son, it is the gospel of peace. In Ephesians 1:13, it is referred to as "*the gospel of your salvation.*" It is good news, it's information declared, proclaimed, reported, and presented concerning deliverance and rescue. Salvation, that's a deliverance, a rescue. Society and individuals need to be delivered from the things mentioned in Romans 1:18-32. They need to be rescued and therefore it is the gospel of salvation. It is good news concerning salvation.

The agendas of politicians do not fix Romans 1:18-32. The agenda of any individual does not fix it. There's only one remedy and that is the gospel.

The gospel is referred to as the hope of the gospel. It's good news of hope and assurance from God. There is hope for society, for individuals; that hope is the gospel. That hope is what is declared in the gospel. That is the only place of man's hope. Hope is not in the Democratic party, hope is not in the Republican Party, it is not in so-called "progression." Hope is in the Lord. There is no other; that is the only place of hope. The problem is when a society is given over to a reprobate mind; we have already seen this over and over; what do they do? They reject God, they dismiss God, they expel God from everything.

The gospel is also referred to as *the truth of the gospel*. Galatians 2:5, Galatians 2:14, Colossians 1:5, everything declared, proclaimed, reported, and presented in the gospel is truth. Whether man believes it or not does not change what is true. Whether you believe facts or not

doesn't change the facts. Whatever you feel does not change the truth or the gospel. Again, a society plunging to its own ruin does not change truth though they try to change truth, but truth does not change. The gospel is the truth of the gospel. The gospel is conformable to fact. It is in accord with the *actual* state of things.

The truth is, man does not want to know the *actual* state of things. He really doesn't; he doesn't want to go there. So he makes up how he perceives society. But the gospel is the simple, absolute, fixed, immovable, unchangeable, inflexible truth of God concerning the salvation of souls. It is genuine, it is real, and it is opposed to everything that is erroneous. It is what you can depend upon. You can not depend upon man, you can not depend upon a political party, but you can depend upon the gospel of God. **The message of the gospel is a solid rock in the midst of shifting sand.**

It is also referred to as the *glorious gospel* in 2nd Corinthians 4:4, 1st Timothy 1:11. Glorious of course speaks of that which is illustrious, that which is eminent, that which is preeminent, that which is very influential, wonderful, marvelous, magnificent. The message of the gospel was remarkable, it is extraordinary. It is not the ordinary. It is blasphemy and an attack on the gospel to try to make it ordinary. It is not ordinary, it's of God. It is extraordinary and when man wants to make it just like anything else he has attacked the gospel. He is no longer presenting the remedy. News of the gospel is the most significant, the most extraordinary, the most amazing, and influential news that there has ever been. It is news that concerns everyone throughout history. The gospel is the remedy.

The gospel is definite, it is distinct, it is particular, it is exclusive. It is referred to with the definitive adjective "the". Every time it is referred to in the Bible it's "*the gospel*." It's never "a gospel", never. It's never referred to in the New Testament as "a gospel". **The gospel.** Eighty-six times "the gospel." Four times it is referred to as "*this*

gospel". It's never "a gospel" because that implies that there are several. There is one and therefore it is "*the gospel*."

You follow the word throughout the New Testament; it is never referred to in generalities. Never. The New Testament is never vague when it speaks of "*the gospel*". The gospel is presented in very precise terms all through the New Testament. Times have changed. I am reminded all the time, "Well, brother, you do know it's 2020." Yeah, what's your point? Times have changed, I understand that. **But the gospel has not, the word of God has not, God has not!** God does not have to adjust to the times. *He is!*

The gospel times have changed, societies have changed, we have seen much change just in our lifetime. Culture changes, but the gospel never needs updating. Anybody who tries to update it is trying to improve it. **It is the gospel of God!** How dare man try to improve on what God has done. That's blasphemy. The gospel doesn't need updating. The message does not need updating. It is "the" particular and distinct gospel. It is "the" remedy for the world that we live in.

The gospel is of God. It is a declaration from God, it is a declaration about God, it is a proclamation, the presentation, a report coming from God. Paul said in Galatians 1:11, "*But I certify*" [That is I verify and I confirm unto.] *you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.*" It is not of man. That makes the gospel more than a philosophy. If it is of man it is just a philosophy, but it's not of man, it's of God. If it's of man, it's just an idea, but it's not of man, it's more than an idea. If it's of man, it's an opinion, but it's not of man, it's of God. The gospel is more than a philosophy, more than an idea, more than an opinion. It is a message from God.

It is an affirmative statement. Whenever God speaks, it's affirmative. It is an affirmative statement from God. It is not the invention of man, it did not come from a human source, it does not have its basis in man, it is not dependent upon human reasoning or human ideas. It did not originate

with man, it did not even originate with the religious world. It is the message of God. Here we are in a society that is on the fast track to destruction, and what they need is the message of God. That's what they need. What they need to hear is the message of God.

It is a definite message, a present message, a continuous message, a certain message. It is dependable, reliable and suitable to the times in which we live. It's exclusive, extraordinary, unparalleled, incomparable. It stands alone. It stands alone on its own merit. It does not need man. Never has there been a more needed, a more remarkable, more momentous, more meaningful message than the message of the gospel. It stands needing no alteration from man.

God is perfect, His message is perfect. You do not add to it, you do not take from it. "Well, we have to because times have changed." You do not know who God is. If that is your reasoning then you have no clue who God is. God does not need to change. God is still what man needs today. Rather than getting into the trap of political argument with people, (and it's easy to fall into, believe me), tell them what they need. That's God. "You need the Lord." That's what they need. They don't need the democrat party, the republican party, the libertarian party, or the independent. That's not what they need. They need the gospel and that's the remedy. That's what we are to be taking to the world. What good does it do to argue with a lost person about politics? What they need is the gospel. Present to them the gospel. Lord help us.

The last lesson began in Romans 1:14-17, which is really introductory to Romans 1:18-32. However, I am viewing it as the conclusion of this series. It is God's remedy for what is going on in Romans 1:18-32. In verse 14, Paul says, "*I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation [It's what God uses. No one is saved apart from the gospel. That is the tool that God uses.] to every one that believeth; [You have to believe in order to be saved. That also is in the hands of God, of course.] to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein [The gospel.] is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: [As faith grows.] as it is written, The just [Or the justified.] shall live by faith.*" This is God's remedy for verses 18-32. Is the gospel going to stop what is happening in Romans 1:18-32, on a societal level? No, because verses 18-32 is God's plan. It's the way things are going to go. The gospel is not going to stop that. But individually, the gospel will bring individuals out of that, just as he has brought you and I out of that. To individuals stuck in verses 18-32, the gospel is the remedy.

We have seen in the previous lesson that, of course, the gospel is good news, it's information of good tidings. When *the true gospel* is referred to, the definitive adjective "the" is always used. It is never *a gospel*. When the Bible is speaking of *the true gospel* it's always "*the gospel*". It is definite, distinct, particular, exclusive. ***The gospel.*** We saw it in the last lesson it is referred to as *the gospel of God*. It's news from God, news about God, the gospel of His Son. There is no gospel apart from Jesus Christ, none. It is the gospel of peace. It tells of the way to have peace with God. It is referred to as the gospel of your salvation. It is good news, information about salvation. It is called *the hope of the gospel*. It is news about hope. It's what gives man hope again, what gives individuals hope that are stuck in verses

18-32. It is not who gets elected to be the next president. That's not what gives hope. Hope is found in the gospel. It's referred to as *the truth of the gospel*. The gospel is truth. It's referred to as the glorious gospel.

Galatians 1:11, Paul said, "*But I certify*" [That is I verify and I confirm unto.] *you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.*" The gospel is a declaration from God, it is a declaration about God, it is a proclamation, the presentation, a report coming from God. It is not the invention of man. It does not have its basis in man nor is it dependent upon human reasoning or human ideas. It did not originate with even the religious world. It is the message of God. It is not after man.

There are a lot of things being preached today in the name of the gospel, but it's not the gospel at all. It's what Paul calls another gospel. You have the social gospel, the prosperity gospel, on and on it goes. There are people who deny Jesus Christ and claim they are preaching the gospel. You can't preach the gospel if you take out Jesus Christ because he's the subject of the gospel.

The gospel is the remedy. The gospel is a message to all people, for all people. In Romans 1:16, in reference to the gospel, notice he mentions Jew and Greek, or Jew and gentile. Those are nationalities, Jew and gentile. That is the simplification of nationalities. The gospel is for all nationalities. It doesn't matter what language a person speaks, the color of their skin, the gospel is a message for all nationalities. We see also in verse 14, he talks about the Greeks, the barbarians, the wise, and the unwise. He mentions the Greeks and then he breaks that down to the barbarians, the wise, and the unwise. These are classes of people. So we have all nationalities and now he breaks it down to the classes of people. All in Rome whether they were Jew or gentile, if they were educated, they spoke Greek. If they did not have a formal education, they were considered among the barbarians. You have the Greeks and the barbarians, classes of people. Then you can break that

down to the wise and the unwise. So, the gospel is a message for all nationalities, for all classes of people; all classes of people whether they be rich, poor, educated, uneducated, it doesn't matter. They all need the gospel. God be merciful to us if we withhold the gospel because of nationality or class. It's a message for all and it's the remedy for all people.

All through the New Testament we see men going to various places. As they do, they go among a variety of people in a variety of circumstances. They go and they preach the gospel. The gospel is for all nationalities, for all classes of people, the gospels for all places. Therefore the gospel is for all times. We don't have to make adjustments in the gospel to fit the times. That's what a lot of people are doing and when you do that you adulterate the gospel and before long you're not even preaching the gospel. The gospel does not have to be updated. As it is, it's for all nationalities, all classes of people, all places, at all times. This is God's remedy for verses 18-32.

In Matthew 4:23, *"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel"* Went into all of Galilee. What we want to notice is *preaching the gospel*. It didn't matter what section of Galilee he went to, they all needed to hear the gospel. So it is today. It doesn't matter what area of town you go to, what area of the country you go through, what part of the world you go to, they all need the gospel. That is the remedy for whatever area you may be in.

In Matthew 9:35, *"And Jesus went about all the cities and villages,"* Were all those cities and villages identical? Of course not. They were made up of different peoples, different cultures. What did He do? *"teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel..."* There's more to that verse, but we're just concentrating on going to various places, various people, doing the same thing; preaching the gospel. If a missionary goes to, we'll use Australia. Brother James is in Australia. It's not the responsibility of brother

James, nor is he called, to make the Australians Americans. That's not what a missionary does. He is to preach the gospel to those people. It's not the missionaries responsibility to Americanize them. If I go down to Cunningham, Kentucky, it's not my responsibility to make those people city people. That it's not my responsibility. That's not why I was there. Wherever we go, it's not to preach our culture and our way of life. It's to declare the gospel because that's the remedy.

In Matthew 24:14 it says, "*And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations;*" Once again, the gospel is the remedy for all people. Then in Matthew 26:13, "*...Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world...*" The gospel is to be preached everywhere, in whatever language it needs to be declared in, whatever language it needs to be printed in, that's what people need. There are people who, of course, translate the Bible from English to whatever language you want to choose. That's good because people need to read it in their language. The reason people do that, the reason they go through the trouble of translating, is because that's what people need, is the gospel.

In Mark 13:10, talks about what we just said. "*And the gospel must first be published among all nations.*" It's a good work to translate the Bible from one language to another so the people can hear it in their own language and read it in their own language. The reason it's necessary is it's the remedy.

Mark 16:15. Jesus said, "*...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*" It doesn't matter where they come from, how they've been brought up, what their culture is, the color of their skin, or the language they speak, "*preach the gospel to every creature*". Why? That's what they need. That's what people living in the circumstances of Romans 1:18-32 need. What they need to hear is the gospel. It's easy to get sidetracked. I do it all the time. It's easy to get sidetracked and argue with people about

politics, but that's not what they need. Even if you convince them of your view, your political view, it's still not what they need. It won't save their soul. They need the gospel. The devil is very good at sidetracking us and getting us into other things rather than what people really need, which is the gospel. Again all the world, to every creature.

We of course as individuals or as a church, we can't go into all the world. It's not even possible. As I've stated many times, the best way to go into all the world is for each and every individual to declare the gospel in their little world. If every individual witnessed to everybody in their family, everybody they work with, it would accomplish more than a visitation program would as far as spreading the gospel. I believe that biblical principle was established throughout the word of God. In Acts 8:25, "*... they ... preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.*" The Samaritans were, for lack of a better word, half-breeds, Jewish-Samaria. They were hated, absolutely despised by the Jewish people, but we see these saved individuals went into many villages of the Samaritans and preached the gospel.

The book of Acts is the best book in the Bible, no doubt, to illustrate the preaching of the gospel. In Acts 14:7, it says, "*And there [In the cities of Lycaonia and the entire region.] they preached the gospel.*" Acts 14:21, "*And when they had preached the gospel to that city, ...*", that would be Derby. You see, they went from city to city. As you go from city to city, politics may be different in one city than another, customs may be different from one city to another; practices and all kinds of things may be different or they may be the same; it doesn't matter. What they need is the gospel and that's why they would go from city to city. Whatever city they went to, they preached the gospel. Acts 16:10, "*And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them. [The people of Macedonia.]*"

2nd Corinthians 2:12, "*Furthermore, when I came to Troas to [preach] Christ's gospel,*" He said, "The reason I came to Troas was to do something specific. I came to preach Christ's gospel." "*...and a door was opened unto me of the Lord,*" meaning, to preach Christ's gospel. We don't have to open the doors, and it's not for us to shut the door. It's for us to go where the Lord tells us to go and to go to who the Lord calls us to go and tell them about Christ. Tell them of the gospel. The Lord opens and the Lord shuts doors. It's not the Lord's will for me to speak to every single person, but it is the Lord's will for me to speak to some. We need to follow that leading. Perhaps it's not the Lord's will for me to speak to this person, but it's the Lord's will for someone else to speak to him. Again, that's just how the Lord works it.

In 2nd Corinthians 10:16, "*To preach the gospel in the [regions] beyond you,*" Paul is saying I'm not limiting myself. I'm going to preach the gospel beyond you, beyond this area, beyond this people. Galatians 2:2, "*And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, [Speaking of those who were greatly respected in society.] lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.*" He preached privately to them that were of reputation.

From all of that we see that the gospel is a message for all places, for all times, for all people; all nationalities of people, all classes of people. The gospel is God's remedy for Romans 1:18-32.

God has a timetable. He is working everything out according to his timetable. Everything is heading toward the tribulation period for the world. For you and I, it's heading toward the coming of Christ. In that tribulation period there will be a one world government, there will be the reign of antichrist. Everything is moving in that direction. Don't misunderstand me, I'm not saying the gospel is going to reverse that course, that's not going to happen because it's not God's will. God has the course.

For individuals stuck in verses 18-32 the way to get out is salvation. What God uses in salvation is the gospel. So, we can say, the gospel is the remedy. We are not saying that it is going to stop verses 18-32. There are those who believe that just about everyone's going to be saved before Christ comes. The Bible teaches just the opposite. That's nowhere in scripture. That preaching makes people feel good, but it's just not so and things will continue to deteriorate. Things will continue to fall apart in the world and society.

But people caught in that mess, what do they need to hear? They need to hear the gospel. That's what they need to hear. Yes, we can get into a political discussion with them, but don't treat that as a replacement for the gospel, because it's not. That will not save them. It will not save their soul. It will not deliver them from the mess that they're in. Do not fall into the trap of thinking, "If we elect so and so, whoever it is, then things will, you know, all the problems will go away." You know, that's not going to happen. God has a course; things are going to continue on their course, according to God's timetable. For you and I that are saved, it's all leading to the coming of Christ. For the world it's all leading to the tribulation period.

The gospel is the remedy, it is the good news, it is a declaration, a proclamation, a report coming from heaven into a world of death and darkness. Paul said the gospel hath shined in our hearts. The gospel serves as a light. We just pray that the Lord would take the gospel, use it to impart life, and the soul sees for the first time, that is the remedy. God help us to always keep that in mind.

Chapter 13 - The Remedy - Part 3

We have been looking at the remedy for the things that are described in Romans 1:18-32, and we see God's remedy in Romans 1:14-17. The remedy, of course, is the gospel. The gospel is not going to reverse the course the world is on as described in Romans 1:18-32, because this course has been established by God. But it is what gets individuals off this course of destruction.

We've seen that according to Galatians 1:11, Paul said, "*...that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.*" The gospel needs no alteration of men. When we think that we have to help God out, when we think we have to produce results, that's when people begin to alter the gospel in order to produce the results that they desire. Anytime we become result-driven, we're in trouble. We just need to do what God says, and leave the results with him. That's safe. The gospel needs no alteration.

We've seen that it is a message for all people. He mentions Jew and Greek, which refers to all nationalities. There is no nationality exempt from the gospel, no nationality that we ought to exclude from declaring the gospel to. He goes on and mentions barbarians, the wise, and the unwise. You have nationalities and these words, barbarians, the wise, and the unwise, refer to classes of people within these various nationalities. No nationality is to be exempted from the gospel, no class of people. We must never think that one nationality or that one class of people is superior to another as far as the gospel is concerned. The gospel is to be declared to all.

What is the setting? We've seen what the gospel is, we've seen that it is a gospel for all people. The gospel of course is good news. But the setting of the gospel, it's very dark, and the gospel is like a light in that dark setting. The gospel is good news. It is a declaration, proclamation, report coming from heaven. It comes into a world of death. That's the setting of the gospel. It comes into a world of darkness, a world of ignorance. It is a word coming from heaven to a world that is under the dominion, under the sway of Satan, a

world that is actually the embodiment of the spirit of Satan. You have this good news in this setting.

In Genesis 3, there is the biblical account of the entrance of sin into the world. The gospel is a message from heaven to a world that is wicked, to a world that is very twisted, very vile, a world that has six thousand years of history of breaking and transgressing the laws of God. Six thousand years of history of doing the same things over and over. The only thing that breaks the pattern is the reception of the gospel. We have the setting of six thousand years of history of profane and God forbidden behaviors. Six thousand years of opposition, resistance, and defiance to God. That's the setting of the gospel. It comes to a world that has had a long history of darkness.

It is a word of hope, a message to a world that is alienated and estranged from God, a world that is unconscious of God. People and the world, for the most part, give very little thought to God, very little thought to the Lord. It is a word that is a solid foundation to a world marked by pride, blasphemy, confusion, disorder, chaos. Is a word from heaven to a world of misery. The world is a miserable place. All you have to do is look at people, they are miserable. They put on a lot of masks, but behind the mask, many times, is nothing but misery.

The gospel is a word of encouragement from heaven to a world destitute and marked by defeat.

It is a word of relief, a message of relief to a world of pain, a world of failure, a world of exhaustion, weakness, disappointment, fear. The world lives in fear. The gospel is a message of relief. The gospel is a word of remedy from heaven

We will say it over and over and over that we have our political views, but we must realize that politics, politicians will not, cannot fix what is wrong with the world. They can fix a few symptoms, but they do not have the ability to get to the root of the matter. Does that mean that politics doesn't matter? No, that's not what it means. It

means we must realize who the remedy is. That's God. There is no other remedy.

It is a remedy for a world that's looking for answers, and the world *is* looking for answers. The problem is they don't know what the questions are. They're looking for answers, for solutions, but they don't really know the problem, the real root problem. It's a word from heaven to a world that's been duped and is clinging to the philosophies, the ideas, and the opinions that got them in this mess to begin with. That's the setting of the Gospel.

It's good news to a world that has fallen, to a world that is guilty, to a world that is perishing. In this darkness, we read in 2nd Corinthians, that God has shined the gospel in our hearts. The gospel is a light. It's the only hope for mankind. It's our responsibility to declare the gospel. It's not for us to make people believe the gospel. That's God's business. But it is for us to declare the gospel, knowing that that is the remedy.

It's not going to reverse the course because that's been set. Nevertheless, it is the remedy of bringing individuals, however few or however many that might be, out from following that course of destruction. It's the only remedy. Education is not the remedy. We live in a society that thinks education will fix just about anything. Or money will fix just about anything. Money's not going to fix the problem. Education's not going to fix the problem. Politics is not going to fix the problem. The gospel is the remedy. You and I, as God's people, must never ever forget that. We must never be duped into believing that there are other solutions other than the gospel.

Continuing in Romans 1:14-17, which is the remedy for what is in Romans 1:18-32. By remedy, I am not saying that this is going to stop the cycle that is presented in verses 18-32, but it is the remedy to bring individuals out of that cycle. The remedy of course is the gospel. Romans 1:16, *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it [The gospel of Christ] is [Present tense] the power of God unto salvation [In other words, it is what God uses to bring about salvation.] to every one that believeth; [You cannot be saved without believing. It is God's power that brings that about as well] “to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”*

We've seen some of the titles of the Gospel, that it's for all people, all nationalities, all classes of people. We looked at the setting of the gospel, which of course is basically what is depicted by Romans 1:18-32. The setting is one of darkness.

The gospel is a “good news”, the declaration coming from God concerning man as a sinner before a pure, holy, righteous, and just God. Everyone enters life as a sinner and guilty before God. You don't reach a certain age and become guilty. We come into this world guilty before God, at enmity with God, entrapped, imprisoned by the power, by the darkness, by the ignorance, the blindness of sin. That's how everyone enters. this life. We enter this life in the depths of sin, alienated from God, unacceptable to God, without the righteousness of God, without the righteousness that God requires. We have no merit to plead before God. That is how we all come into this world, in utter destitution before God. The end result of all that, if God does not intervene, is what we see in Romans 1:18-32. That's where we end up.

The gospel is a message to these who are guilty, who are unable to save themselves. Of course, the religious world for the most part believes, some of them would deny it, but they believe that man is able to save himself. That is another gospel, a false gospel. The gospel is for sinners who are unable to save themselves. They are sinners who are dying, and they are in the path of destruction, in and of

themselves condemned before God.

The good news for these sinners is that there's pardon for the guilty. There is reconciliation for the enemies of God, liberty for those who are enslaved by sin, cleansing for those who are defiled by sin, nearness for the sinner who's alienated from God. There is acceptance for the unacceptable before God and there is a righteousness for the unrighteous. There is a hope for the hopeless. That's the message of the gospel, and that of course is the remedy for life.

The gospel is a message. Everything in the gospel centers around a person, is about a person. That person of course is Jesus Christ. We read in 2nd Corinthians 4:4 it says, "...*the glorious gospel of Christ,...*" Jesus Christ is the central figure of the gospel. You remove Christ, you have no gospel. I don't care what you replace Him with, you have no gospel without Jesus Christ.

He is the central figure of the gospel. It is the glorious gospel of Christ. 2nd Corinthians 4:4, goes on to say, "*who* ['Who' being Christ.] *is* [Present tense.] *the image of God,*" Then in 2nd Corinthians 4:5, it says, "*Christ Jesus the Lord,*" It's the glorious gospel of Christ, it is Christ Jesus. the Lord. Christ refers to the fact that He is anointed and sent. If He is anointed and sent, He has to be anointed by someone and sent by someone. The name Jesus means a savior. Therefore, the gospel is good news from heaven concerning a God anointed, God sent savior or redeemer or deliver or rescuer. It is Christ Jesus the Lord. This one who is sent, Jesus, He is Lord. In other words He is God. He is the en-fleshment of God. The Jehovah's Witnesses and a few others as well, deny the deity of Jesus Christ, the Lordship of Jesus Christ. There is no salvation, no gospel outside of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. People will ask, "Are there Jehovah's Witnesses that are saved?" Well, I don't know, but if they believe what they say they believe, no, they're not saved. They deny the deity of Jesus Christ. If they truly believe what they say they believe, no they're not

saved. Jesus is the Lord.

The gospel is a declaration from heaven to earth, that involves sinners, concerning this one Christ Jesus the Lord. He is the Lord, He is God. If He is God, He is fully qualified, fully equipped to do what He came to do. What did He come to do? Save sinners. He is fully qualified to save Sinners. He doesn't need my help in saving a sinner. He is God. He is fully qualified to save a sinner. As God, He is Almighty. As God he's eternal, infinite, immortal, immutable, omniscient, holy. "Well there's not enough people being saved, we need to do something." You're not God, you can't save anyone, that's God's business. Maybe there's not as many people being saved as you would like, but that is God's business; that's not our business, it's not within our ability. We're not called to help God out in this matter.

The gospel is Christ Jesus and He is Lord. That means He is greater than the death that the sinner is facing, greater than the darkness that the sinner lives in, greater than the ignorance of the sinner. All lost sinners are ignorant of God. God is greater than their ignorance. It's not a matter of education, it is a matter of the power of God. He is greater than their sinfulness. The sinfulness of a sinner is great, but God, He's Christ Jesus the Lord. The One who came to save, the Lord, is greater than the sinfulness, greater than their corruption, greater than their depravity. He is the one and only way to God.

The gospel is a very limited message. It's a message for all people, all classes of people, all nationalities. It's very limited, very strict. He is the only way to God. "Well, if you present that way that offends people." Yes, everything about the gospel offends people. If you're worried about offending people, you just don't preach the gospel at all. Of course that's what has happened in many cases. The gospel is a message about One who can literally transform lives.

The gospel is a message about Jesus Christ. It is a message about a work that This One did on the behalf of

sinners. Christ Jesus came to save sinners. This is declared in 1st Timothy 1:15, "... *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;*..." One of the simplest statements that there is; "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." He came. He is Lord. He is God and He came. Just use some common sense. He came. He had to exist before he came. His birth was not His beginning. He had to exist before He came. In other words, He was before He came. If he was before He came, He had to be something. In the very familiar verses of John 1:1-2, it says, "*In the beginning was the Word, [Which is Christ] and the Word [Which was in the beginning.] was with God, and the Word [Which was in the beginning and was with God.] was God.*" He existed before He came, He was before He came. What was he? He was God. He had to be somewhere before He came. Where was He? He was with God. He was not only with God, He was God. In verse 2, it says, "*The same was in the beginning with God.*" He goes on to say all things were made by him. He was before He came.

He was God and He came. In other words, God became human flesh. God was clothed in human flesh. God is Spirit. You cannot see Spirit. Flesh you can see. This Spirit was clothed in flesh. In other words, He became visible, God became visible. The flash also veiled His glory, otherwise man could not look upon Him. He came, He was with God. Where was God? God was in the heavens. God is in the glories and majesties of heaven. He came. Where did he come from? The glories and majesties of heaven. It says he came. If he came he had to come to somewhere. He came into the world. Therefore, God came from heaven, came to the world; He came from that place where He had the same glory as the Father; He came from that place where He had the praise and adoration of a heavenly Host, into the world.

The Bible tells us the world, of course, was not prepared to receive Him, to welcome Him. He came into a world of hatred, a world that hated God. People will say, if

Jesus Christ were to walk the earth today, since we're educated, it would be different. No, it wouldn't be any different. He would still be despised and rejected. He came into a world of malice, rebellion, a world that was going down to ruin. Christ Jesus the Lord came to save sinners.

This means that since He's God, He came, possessing everything that is necessary to save a sinner. Colossians 1:19, says, "*For it pleased [the Father] that in him [Jesus, the one who came to save.] should all fulness dwell;*" Everything that the center needs is in Christ. Colossians 2:9, "*For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead [And here is how it dwells.] bodily.*" All that God is was in Christ, everything that He was was in Christ. Veiled? Yes. Everything that God was, so what's Christ.

In John 1:10, we see Christ Jesus came, "*He was in the world,*" after He came of course. "*The world was made by Him*" before He came. He was in the world "*and the world knew Him not.*" They did not know who He was? Who was He? He was God, but they didn't know that. "*He came unto His own,*" referring to the Jews, "*and His own received Him not.*" Even His own people did not receive Him. He was in the world, the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own and they wouldn't have anything to do with Him. He came to save. After we read John 1:10-11, a little bit off track here, "*But as many as received Him,*" there were some who did receive Him "*to them*". Who's the them? The ones who received him. "*... to them gave He the power*", or the ability, "*to become the sons of God,*" Unless He gives them the power, they can never become the sons of God. "*... even to them that believe on His name,*" he gave them the power.

In verse 13, "*Which were born,*" spiritually, "*not of blood.*" Salvation has nothing to do with your genealogy. Nothing. We are born not of blood. I'm afraid, I'm certain of it, there are going to be a lot of so-called Baptists, who are going to find out that they weren't saved. You talk to some and it's almost like they think salvation just runs in their

family. Your family has nothing to do with it. Perhaps everyone in your family that's ever been in your family tree has been saved, but I'm here to tell you that your genealogy doesn't have a thing to do with it. "... *not by blood nor of the will of the flesh.*" That is our own flesh.

You don't will yourself to be saved, a dead man cannot will himself to be alive. Salvation is not of the flesh. It's not of blood, it's not of the flesh. The gospel declares this, it's of Christ. Then goes on to say, "*nor of the will of man,*" that's the will of anyone else. It's not by your will, it's not by anyone else's will. "Well, I want so and so saved and I'm going to pray that the Lord saves him." Well we ought to. But know this if the Lord saves them, you didn't have anything to do with it. They weren't saved because you prayed. They were saved because it was the will of God to save them. That doesn't mean we shouldn't pray, we should pray. We should pray that God saves them. Why do we pray to God to save them? Because He's the only one who can. It's not of the will of man, but of God. I love those three words, "but of God."

Salvation is of God, every particle of it is of God. No part of it is of man. That would be salvation by works. Salvation is by grace. People will ask, "Do you believe salvation is by Grace?" And most of Christendom would say yes, "I believe salvation is by grace." When you ask somebody if they believe salvation is by grace, you better ask them to define grace. There's a lot of different definitions of grace. Ask, "What do you mean by salvation by grace? and then listen, because most, somewhere along the line, insert works. Paul said if it's a work, it is no longer of Grace.

They sing "Amazing Grace", and they don't know the first thing about it. They love to sing the song, and there's nothing wrong with singing the song, because there's a truth goes forth. But salvation by grace is one of the most wonderful truths that you and I will ever come to a knowledge of. The gospel is the message of salvation by

Chapter 13 - The Remedy - Part 4

grace.

Anyone that preaches works, I don't care what form you preach it in, it doesn't matter, it's all the same, it's still works. That's another gospel. It's not the true gospel. There's only one true gospel and that is the remedy for what we read in Romans 1:18-32.

Going into Romans 1:14-17, we have God's remedy for Romans 1:18-32. The remedy of course is the gospel. I've looked at the characteristics of the gospel. The gospel is distinct from all other messages. It's very definite, very particular, it's of God, not of man. Paul made that clear in Galatians 1:11. The gospel is not the product of man, not the true gospel. It is entirely of God. It is a message for all people, all nationalities, all classes among those nationalities. You can never go wrong declaring the gospel to any individual. We have seen the setting of The Gospel. Of course, it is set in the darkness of sin and it shines forth as a light.

The gospel is a message about a person. That person is Jesus Christ. You remove Him, you have no gospel. There is no gospel without Jesus Christ. The gospel is a message about the work that Jesus Christ did on behalf of sinners. We're told here in Romans 1:16, that, "... *the gospel of Christ: for [the gospel of Christ] it is the power of God unto salvation*" It's what God uses in the salvation of a sinner. No one is saved apart from God using the gospel. "*Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.*"

We want to consider now that it is a message that brings satanic opposition. What we see in verses 18-32, is that cycle of satanic activity. The gospel is the remedy, so Satan is going to oppose the gospel. He does so in many ways, of course.

In 2nd Corinthians 4:3-4, it says, "*But if our gospel be hid, [If it is hid.] it is hid to them that are lost: [The saved are very much aware of the gospel.] In whom [That would be the lost.] the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them [Them that are lost.] which believe not, [That's a characteristic of the lost. Here is why Satan has blinded their eyes.] lest [He is trying to prevent something.] the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them [Again, them that are lost.]"* From this verse we see that Satan actively and adamantly opposes the message from God. He adamantly and actively opposes

the gospel. The sinner is born ignorant of the gospel, is born ignorant of his or her needs. Satan seeks to keep the sinner blinded, ignorant, deceived concerning the gospel. From verse 4 we see that Satan is trying to prevent something particular from happening. That is *the light of the Glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them*. That is what he is trying to prevent, the light of the gospel shining unto them that are lost.

There is the light of the glorious gospel and Satan, all the forces of hell, do everything they can to keep that light from shining unto the lost individual. He does this out of hatred for the gospel, but also our fear that the lost will experience the blessing of the gospel. He will do everything he can to prevent people from hearing the gospel. He will work very hard to keep people from hearing the gospel. He would do everything he can to prevent the preaching of the gospel. He will do everything he can to get people to corrupt, to get the preacher to corrupt and misinterpret the gospel. A lot of things are preached in the name of the gospel that are anything but the gospel. Man will stand and declare that they preach the gospel when in fact they do not. Men will declare they preach the gospel who deny the deity of Jesus Christ. They've removed the central message of the gospel and still have the audacity to declare that they preach the gospel. Many declare they preach the gospel, but they're just tools of Satan. Satan uses them to corrupt, to misinterpret the gospel. You often hear people say, "The simple gospel message." Well, it's not that simple, it really isn't. People bringing in their corruption, certainly, brings in more confusion of what is the gospel.

Because the gospel is not in line with the teachings, the philosophies, the ideas of the world, because the gospel is in direct opposition to man's ways, the gospel is ridiculed by the majority of people. The majority of people think the gospel to be utter foolishness. Beginning at 1st Corinthians 1:21, "*For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom [That is the world by its own wisdom.] knew not*

God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching [Not foolish preaching. The world looks at preaching as just utter foolishness.] *to save them that believe.*" The Lord uses what the world considers foolish. He uses preaching to save them that believe. *"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock,* [The Jews can not get past that.] *and unto the Greeks* [The gentiles.] *foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks,* [Regardless of nationality.] *Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*" The world looks at the gospel and thinks it's foolish. Churches, in order to appease those who think the gospel is foolish, they begin to make adjustments and before long, they have a false gospel, all in the name of getting people in. You got people in but now you have nothing to preach because you've corrupted the gospel. That's where much of the religious world is today.

The world considers the gospel foolishness and for the most part hates the gospel. It's very offensive to the natural man, because the gospel is Christ Jesus came to save sinners. Therefore, man has to be confronted with a sin, and that his righteousness is unacceptable to God, and it goes only one way to God. Man finds this very offensive.

Today the masses are frantically trying to fill the void, fill the emptiness, fill the insecurities that sin causes. They try to fill these things with things that only increase these things. They place their hope in that which is false, looking for answers where there are no answers. They look for answers amongst humanism, intellectualism, pragmatism, materialism, and on and on we could go, and they reject the gospel. The message is their only hope. That's the world we live in and Satan does everything he can to oppose the gospel.

But, Satan cannot prevent the reception of the gospel. The gospel must be received not just in the mind, the intellect, it must be received in the heart, where it becomes the part of that person. It has to be received. I didn't say

accepted. People accept a lot of things that won't save you. You must receive. Accepting Jesus Christ will not save your soul, but receiving Jesus Christ will save your soul. "All you have to do is accept Christ." That's just another way of watering down the gospel. There's a lot of people who accept what the Bible says about Christ, but they don't know Him. You have to receive Him. There is a big difference.

Let's consider the miraculous reception of the gospel. In 2nd Corinthians 4, we see that in spite of Satan's efforts to keep the gospel hidden, to keep the sinner ignorant and deceived concerning the gospel, he does everything he can to prevent the light of the glorious gospel of Christ from signing into the heart of the sinner. But then there's 2nd Corinthians 4:6. Here is Satan doing everything he can. Then we read, "*For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness,...*" That takes us back to creation. God caused the light to shine out of darkness. How did He do that? He said "let there be light" and there was light. Not difficult with God. This God, a God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, creator God, "*hath*". Let's just take three words now. "*For God,*" skip several words, "*hath.*" *For God hath*, in spite of what Satan does. This changes everything. For God hath. It's not the sinner has, God hath. He is speaking of something that God has done. That means that God is the doer. For God hath "*shined in our hearts, to [give] the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*" Satan does everything he can to prevent that light of the glorious gospel from shining in the heart. For God hath. God has made the difference.

Those who corrupt the gospel will use the following illustration and people say, "Wow, that is really deep!" No, it's foolishness. Here's the illustration; God wants to save the sinner. Satan wants to keep the sinner from being saved. The sinner cast the final vote. That gospel message is, "a sinner saves himself." For God hath! God has done the saving, and if anyone is going to be saved it will be "God hath". Yes, Satan will fight hard, but he cannot overcome

and he cannot stop “For God hath.”

There's the unsaved sinner, living life under the dominion of an enemy power, helplessly trapped under the weight of sin, bound and trapped to a life of enmity against God, a life of darkness, ignorance, blindness with Satan doing everything he can to keep them there. Trapped in a life of rebellion and resistance against God. The unsaved sinner is bound and trapped to a life of ungodliness, a life of unrighteousness; stuck in the contamination of sin, in a life of spiritual bankruptcy and spiritual ruin; in gloom, chaos, and defeat; hanging over their head is God's condemnation, “*The soul that sinneth shall die.*” There is Satan and all the forces of hell fighting fiercely to keep the light of the glorious gospel from the heart of the sinner. Just as in creation, God speaks, “*Let there be light.*” Guess what? There was light. God hath and there is nothing that Satan can do to prevent it. Nothing! Satan cannot stop God from saving the sinner He desires to save. He causes the light to shine.

The light of the gospel pierces through the prison walls. It pierces through the dense darkness and ignorance of the sinner and shines in the heart. That light shines upon the fact that the sinner is a violator of God's holy law. Remember when that light first shined in your heart. For the first time you saw clearly that you were a violator of God's holy law. You may have known it intellectually, but the light of the Gospel shines upon that fact. “I am a violator of God's law, guilty and bankrupt before God with nothing to offer.” The light shines upon Christ Jesus the Lord, making Himself, out of love for the sinner, accountable for their sins.

The light shines upon the fact that He arose victoriously over death and the grave on the sinner's behalf, for God hath shined in our hearts. No one else. God hath. It's not the teaching of others, God may use the teaching of others, but it's not the teaching of others that causes the light of the glorious gospel to shine in your hearts. God did that. It's not your own personal study. God may use your personal

study, but it's God who causes the light to shine in our hearts. God hath shined in our hearts. He has signed in our hearts the gospel, the heavenly news, that Christ Jesus the Lord came to this sin cursed earth from the glories and majesties of heaven to save the sinner. He made himself accountable for the sinner's sin and paid the sin debt in full, died and rose again for the sinner. That is the gospel. If He ever has caused it to shine in your heart, it still does.

I don't believe that you can be saved, receiving the Gospel and then deny it down the road. If you deny it down the road it only shows you never were saved and received it to begin with.

If we go back to Romans 1:16-17, Paul says, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for [This is the reason I'm not ashamed.] it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. [The gospel is for everyone.] For therein [That is the gospel.] is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just [The justified.] shall live by faith.*"

Men, women, boys, and girls need the gospel. It doesn't matter what color their skin is, what their language is, whether they are rich, poor, or in between, they need the gospel.

Beginning in Romans 10:12, "*For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: [That is still true today. There is no difference. All need the gospel.] for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.: For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*" Paul goes on by asking a question; "*How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, [Isaiah 53:1] Lord, who*

hath believed our report? [Isaiah 53 is the gospel.] So then faith [cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” This is the remedy, the gospel.

Social programs are not the remedy for society today. The gospel is the remedy. Social programs may put a band-aid on “a sore”, but it doesn't heal. The gospel transforms. In 2nd Thessalonians 2:13-14, “*But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, [Here is why they give thanks unto God.] because God hath [Not because you have.] from the beginning chosen you to salvation [You can not get plainer than that.] through sanctification of the Spirit [That is salvation is through sanctification of the spirit.] and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” God uses the gospel, it is the power of God unto salvation. People who are caught up in the dysfunction of society, the craziness of society, need the gospel. That's what they need. They need something that will transform their lives. That's the gospel.

We were to take the gospel to all peoples. You may have different opinions concerning different races of people or different classes of people. I suppose you can have your opinions, but if it keeps you from declaring the gospel to them you're dead wrong. There's nothing right about it. We're to realize that all nationalities, all classes of people need the gospel. That's what they need. We'll finish this series up by next looking at an example of the gospel transforming a society.

Looking at Romans 1 again, the remedy for verses 18-32 is the gospel; that's the remedy; the Lord using His word to save an individual will bring that individual out of what is described in Romans 1:18-32. A good example of this is in Acts 8:1-14, where Phillip is taking the message of the gospel, the word of God into Samaria. Samaria very much mirrors our modern day society and culture, very much mirrors what is going on in the United States and very much mirrors what we read Romans 1:18-32.

Samaria was, like the United States, a very blended society. Most people look at a blended society that is made up of all races and cultures as a wonderful thing. Perhaps it is, depending how you want to look at it. It's also a very dangerous thing. It's always a very dangerous thing to have a blended society.

By way of background of Samaritan society, in 2nd Kings 17, we read that after 250 years of rebellion against God the northern kingdom of Israel was taken captive by Assyria. After Assyria deported the most influential, the most gifted of the people, they brought in other nations and caused them to intermingle with God's people or the Jews. As a result of that blending, Jew and gentile were mixed together to where the Jews hated the Samaritans, they looked at them as half-breeds.

You have these other nations, they now dwell together with God's people. They eventually would intermarry and the result was a people who were partly Jewish partly gentile. It was a mixture of different religions. Not only do you have the mixture of different races, that's really not the big issue here; the issue is you now have a mixture of religion, philosophies, and cultures. What happens when you put all those together, you take a little bit of all. That's the history of the United States. As a result, the Samaritans, racially mixed Jews and gentiles, professed a belief in God, but they worshiped at the altars of paganism. It was to these people that Philip went, a very blended society.

It was also a society in which demonic activity was very prevalent. We read in Acts 8:7, "*For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed [with them]: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.*" It was a society where many were under the control and under the sway of demons. Today people laugh at the idea of demons. Demons are real, demon possession is very real. I believe we have a society that is demon possessed. Demon possession is the only thing that can explain a lot of things today. As a result of this demon possession, the Samaritans were very vile and their language, in their thoughts, their imaginations, and their acts. As a result this satanic influence, that which is repulsive, loathsome, and shameful was very prevalent and was a way of life in Samaria. It was to these people that Phillip took the message of God.

We also see in Acts 8:7 that it was a society of great wretchedness. It says, "*and many taken [They were held, they were captured.] with palsies, ...*" They came under the dominion of these things. *Palsies* means various forms of paralysis. We have a paralyzed society. A lot of people, their brains are paralyzed. It's a result of all these other things. We read that they would lame, that is they were disabled, they were incapacitated. It's a very good picture of the misery, distress, gloom, and devastation that our society has sunk to. Nevertheless, it was to these people that Phillip took the message of God.

There were all these things going on in this society of Samaria; and then they were being offered false remedies. They were a society, they were a culture that had been inundated with a wide range of religion, philosophy and they were entangled in such, they were enslaved in such. You see religious liberty has caused a lot of religions to come to the United States. Religious liberty is a wonderful thing, but it can also be a problem, because these things begin to intermingle. Then you have a mess.

They were engulfed in, submerged in a variety of

religions. But, someone always has a solution. They don't even know what the problem is, but to have a solution. Samaria began to be offered false remedies, which are typified in this man named Simon in Acts 8:9, "*But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, [Sorcery in the Bible is a combination of drugs and demonism.] and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one:*" The remedies being offered or typified in this man Simon. You have a blended society, overrun with demon possession, that is a mess and the solution that was being offered was sorcery. That's the solution. Look at it today. What are the solutions being offered? We have a pill for everything, it doesn't matter. It was to these people that Philip went.

We see also, it was a society that was bewitched. Verse 9 says that Simon bewitched the people, he deceived the people. In the midst of all these problems, all the confusion, all the chaos, in the midst of absolute wretchedness, Simon, who used sorcery, had captured the people with his so-called remedies. There are people today, I don't care if it's Democrat or Republican, who honestly believe that their party will fix everything that's wrong with our country. There isn't a human being alive that can fix everything that is wrong with this country. Man does not have the solution. People get so captured with the remedies that are being offered. We see that the society and culture of Samaria was spellbound with what Simon was offering. What Simon was offering was not going to fix the demon possession. What Simon was offering was not going to work. What is being offered today isn't going to fix our society and it's not going to work. That's what happens if people get spellbound with that which never has worked, but for some reason they think it will now. It never has, it's never going to. They get spellbound, they're deceived. It was to these people that Philip went.

They placed great confidence in that which would not work. In verse 10, it says, "*To whom* [That would be

Simon.] *they all gave heed,*” They listen to him. Basically, he's saying, “I've got a pill for that. I've got a remedy for that.” He used sorcery and they gave him heed, *“from the least to the greatest,”* The entire society gave heed, they listened to this man. Be careful who you listen to. In a very blended society, people will say, “Well everybody has an equal voice. Everyone has a right to speak.” That's a good thing, but you don't have to listen. Be careful who you listen to. “I just feel like I ought to listen to what they have to say.” You might get yourself in trouble. You better listen to the Lord.

They held this man in esteem, in adoration. Be careful who you hold in esteem. “I know he's wrong. But he's been a friend and I have a lot of respect.” You better be careful. The people believe that Simon with his sorcery could set everything right and lead them to a better life. Everybody wants a better life, a more enjoyable life. Someone stands up and says, “I'll make life better.” OH yes! He didn't tell you how, and if he does tell you how, if you have any sense, you'll know, “Well that's not going to make my life better.” They just bought into what he had to say.

They were a people looking for peace, for contentment, for answers, for solutions to their problems, and they believed and held to the lies and deceits that only increased their problems. It was to this people that Philip went.

All of this is a mirror of our society today. A society that is spellbound with modern-day sorcery. A society and culture looking for solutions, answers, and that which is futile, empty, and hopeless. It was to this people that Philip went.

Notice Acts 8:4, *“Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.”* Philip was one of those that were scattered abroad and he went into Samaria. What did he go into Samaria doing? Preaching the word. This is further explained in Acts 8:5. *“Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto*

them.” He took the message of Christ unto Samaria. Then in Acts 8:12, we find, *“But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”* Philip did not go to Samaria with the message that was popular, with a message that people wanted to hear, with the message of carnal philosophy, with a message of easy believism, the message of political correctness, or a message of self-esteem. He went to Samaria and stood in the midst of a mess and he proclaimed Christ; he preached a message of Christ, he preached the gospel.

I believe he did so in a very explicit, distinct, unmistakable way. He did not go there to make the people feel at ease and comfortable, to entertain them. He went there with a message of Jesus Christ. That's the remedy. If you're worried about what people want to hear, you're not going to offer them the solution, because what people want to hear is not going to solve their problems, it's only going to increase their problems. That's what a lot of the religions of today think, “We have to give the people what they want.” What they want will destroy them, will bring them further into ruin. You do not want to give them what they want, you need to give them what they need, which is the message of Christ.

Philip went in the midst of mixed up people, very vile and wretched people, people who had been duped, who were clinging to that which would never work. He preached a message that was contrary to their thinking, contrary to their ways of life. He preached Christ; a message that was radically different to their philosophies, radically different from the sorcery of Simon, radically different from the so-called solutions that they were clinging to. He went and preached the word. He went and preached Christ. It was a message that basically called people to leave their own ways. Called upon them to leave the waves of Simon Magus and to turn wholeheartedly to God and His way. Philip went and he stood in the midst of a mess and he preached the solution, the

answer, the remedy for what plagued Samaria.

I believe he did so very plainly. Nobody had to ask, "Well I wonder what he means?" He preached the message very plainly, directly, with fervor, enthusiasm, boldness, courage, and diligence. Then in verse 12, we read that they believed Philip's preaching. Those who believed were baptized.

We see they left the sorcery of Simon. When you truly believe you leave the other things. You'll leave that which is contrary. A lot of people today want to say they're a believer, but they don't leave anything, nothing changes. But here, this belief caused a change. They that had laid hold of the message of Simon now laid hold of the message of Phillip. They were convinced of it, received it, they accepted it, they had confidence in it. It became a part of them. That was the solution. That is the solution today as well.

We can't make people believe, we can't cause people to believe, but we know the one who can. Our responsibility is simply to declare the message, to declare Jesus Christ. It's not for me to try and persuade people, it is just to declare the message. It's God's work to do the persuading, to cause them to believe. God doesn't need my help or your help. We are simply to declare the message. That's what Phillip did and he did so in a very straightforward, firm, and steadfast way, and the people believed. It was a message rooted in this book [The BIBLE]. It was the answer and it's still the answer today.

Romans 1:18-32, shows the mess that our society is in. The remedy is still the same. People say, "Things are changing so fast." The remedy is still the same. We don't need a new solution. We don't need a new remedy. We don't need new hymns. The old ones are just fine. We don't need new Bibles. The King James version is fine. We don't need any of those things. The remedy is the same. The word of God, the gospel.

Don't get caught up in all the intermingling that goes on in society today. America has been called the boiling pot

and, like I said, you can look at that and think that is wonderful. It gives people of all different nationalities opportunity. That's true. But beware of the danger of a blended society. We are very much a blended society. There is nothing that's going to change that, but we have to beware of the dangers of such a society. When you see all the intermingling, that's never a good thing in the word of God. It weakens.

This is the remedy; may we always remember that the remedy for today is Christ. That's the solution.