

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MARCH 7TH, 2021 // BOOK OF ROMANS

## CONSEQUENCES (ROMANS 1:18-20)

### BUT, WHAT IF WE DON'T LIVE RIGHTEOUSLY

Paul tells us that we are to live by the moral standard of the Bible and by faith in Jesus in all things. V18-20 tells us the consequence of not living the way we should: we face the wrath of God.

- God's wrath is a neglected subject in American Christianity, but **without righteous anger and judgment, God wouldn't be just.**

### "BY THEIR UNRIGHTEOUSNESS SUPPRESS THE TRUTH"

The reason we have the Bible and the call from Jesus to share the truth and standard of righteousness according to God, is because living selfishly in sin suppresses the truth of the gospel that saves us.

- **Left to our own devices, we destroy.** This is why God revealed the truth to some to share it with many by the power of His Spirit.

### WE MUST KNOW THE BAD TO UNDERSTAND THE GOOD

God makes His goodness known by allowing us to witness what happens when we don't follow Him. In other words, His wrath actually reveals His righteousness.

- **It is by knowing the destruction we are heading for that we see the love of God through salvation.** Not just eternal damnation, but wrath in this life.

### REVEALED IN CREATION

Atheism, as we know it, is fairly new when it comes to a society. Paul says that creation and the order and complexity of nature should at least point to something bigger than mankind.

- For those humble enough to seek the truth, God will reveal Himself. Even if they don't know everything about Him, **we must trust that God's grace is sufficient.**

### "PEOPLE ARE WITHOUT EXCUSE"

Suppression of the truth is never accidental; rather it is intentional. Ps. 14:1 says, "Only a fool says there is no God." **It takes a humble posture to say that we are not the supreme being.**

- The fact that we're in a universe outside of our understanding on a planet perfectly suited for immensely complex humans should point towards something bigger.

### LOVE IS MARRIED TO JUSTICE

When we willingly live against the truth of Jesus, we subject ourselves to the wrath of God. The reason God's love must include wrath is because the evil that has hurt God's children must be held in account.

- **Look at the effects of sin in society. Not just violence, but sexual deviance, lies, greed, and slander.**

### IDOLS (ROMANS 1:21-25)

#### THE REASON FOR WRATH

Without God we are headed towards destruction. We start the path to destruction by placing idols in our lives. Paul says that many people have "exchanged...the immortal God for images resembling mortal" things.

- In other words, **whatever captivates us more than God is an idol, and idolatry leads us to destruction.**

### THEY ALSO "DID NOT SHOW...GRATITUDE"

This means that if they did believe in God, they didn't honor Him appropriately or live in a manner that appreciates God.

- There are only two entities in the universe, the creation and the Creator. **Haven't we seen a shift, even in many churches, to an arrogance that defies God and feels entitled?**

### "CLAIMING TO BE WISE, THEY BECAME FOOLS"

In our day and age, our idols are less so "birds, four-footed animals, and reptiles" and more so the individual.

- The wrath of God has been revealed in the results of a people that act as individual gods. **The "me-ism" of our culture is tearing us apart, yet in our foolishness we claim to be wise and enlightened.**

### THE 1ST OF 2 WARNINGS ABOUT IDOLATRY

Because of arrogance, idolatry, and refusal to pursue truth, God will give people over to their selfish desires. In His wisdom, Jesus knows when one has grown so cold to the truth that they're to be given to their idolatry.

- In this, the person is "degraded" and headed towards God's wrath. **This is ultimately their choice.**

### "THEY EXCHANGED THE TRUTH OF GOD FOR A LIE"

The lie that says we are our own gods began in Gen. 3 and has been the greatest tactic of Satan ever since. We have bought into the lie that we can be like the Creator.

- **It is easy to point fingers, but have we slid into believing that we can justify our sin and live however we please? Have we acted as gods?**

### DEPRAVITY (ROMANS 1:26-32)

#### WHAT DID GOD GIVE THEM OVER TO?

Paul says that when one is given over to the "desires of their heart" they are given over to the depravity that comes with sin. In Rome (and in America), idolatry and sexual sin often went hand in hand.

- Idolatry always leads to immorality and immorality has consequences in this life and in eternity.

### "EXCHANGED NATURAL SEXUAL RELATIONS"

In Rome, sexual immorality and homosexuality were cultural norms. Paul makes it clear several times in the NT that same-sex unions go against the design of God.

- This is a very debated and sensitive topic, not because of the clarity of the Word, but if **all "Christians" believe the Bible is the infallible authority.**

### WE NEED TO ADDRESS ALL SEXUAL SIN

Over 85% of Christians lose their virginity before marriage and 64% of Christians look at porn monthly. Sexuality outside of one man and one woman for life is sin.

- Temptation isn't sinning, but if we give in to temptation, we step into sin. **We may also struggle our whole lives, but our allegiance to God is worth it!**

### THE 2ND WARNING ABOUT IDOLATRY

V28 is a passage that should disturb us. Again, Paul indicates that once our minds have willingly become closed to the truth and we pursue ourselves over God, God will give us over to a "corrupt mind."

- We can reach a point where our conscience is so upside down that we desire the depravity of this world. **It is the insanity of sin.**

### MAKING SURE WE DON'T ELEVATE CERTAIN SINS

Of course Paul speaks of the sin of same-sex relationships, but he also mentions greed, hateful thoughts, gossip, arrogance, disobedience to parents, unloving, and unmerciful as practices "worthy of death."

- If we're doing church right, we will be sitting by people that struggle with sin, loving them, and showing them the truth.

### IT ALL BOILS DOWN TO IDOL WORSHIP

When we worship others or our individualism that manifests itself in the ways mentioned in this chapter, we grow so evil that we even celebrate rebellion to God's commands.

- **Jesus tells us to "lose our lives for [His] sake." When we do this, we become humble followers of Christ that lead others to follow Him.**

### GOD LOVES PEOPLE!

- Without God we are all heading towards destruction. In His love for us, He sent His Son to die and give us a path to salvation.
- God is also just, and with justice comes punishment for evil. True love always rewards righteousness and holds evil into account because sin hurts people.

### "...SOME OF YOU USED TO BE LIKE THIS"

- 1 Cor. 6 mirrors Rom. 1:18-32 in many ways. Paul clearly addresses sin and the consequence of eternal separation from God if we live in sin.
- Paul also writes that we can be delivered from the sin that incurs God's wrath! Though we have all rebelled against God, we can be forgiven and changed!

### TAKING AN INVENTORY

- Do we take Jesus for all He is, both a loving Savior and a righteous Judge?
- Are we going to choose to be Christians that welcome all people? We don't condone all lifestyles, but we do love people where they are at in the hopes that God will touch their hearts.
- Before we judge, do we remember that we were once lost because of our sin?
- Do we comprehend the damage of unrepented sin? Have we become numb to sin, even at times applauding it?
- Are we honest with ourselves about sin?
- If there is anyone struggling with any sin, do you want to address and be free of it?