

eries through Romans: TRUTH: UNASHAMED, PART I

Sermon Title: Week 2, The essence of sin

Principal Scripture: Romans 1:18-32

Date: June 10, 2018

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- **Welcome! Week two of Romans. Jumping right in**
- **LAST WEEK we ended with Paul's thesis statement...**

*<sup>16</sup>For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. <sup>17</sup>For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."*

† **A necessary diagnosis. 1:18-20**

- **This is the message that Paul will fully lay out. BUT before we can move into the REDEMPTION, Grace, New life, and freedom that is to come, we first must face a necessary diagnosis of where we are now.**
- **Where every human is apart from Christ, where we were, and where we all too easily can go still now...**
- **HUMANITIES FATAL DISEASE OF SIN.**
- **HEAR! Not an easy passage. Obsessed over or ignored. For most people, even as Christians, we don't like hearing things that could convict us, call us into account. GOD KNOWS THIS, PAUL KNEW...**
- **SO PAUL is writing into a mindset that is very parallel to prevailing culture today. We don't deny the idea of morality in and of itself, but we deny an authoritative SOURCE of morality, and we have all but written off the idea of personal sin that makes us accountable before God, AND, RIGHT NOW, is destroying our lives!**
- **INTO THIS CULTURE of moral relativism and the exaltation of self, Paul very carefully makes his case that humanity suffers from the inherited disease of SIN. He does this by stating the problem- essential attributes of sin, and then presenting his evidence- 'just look around you'...**
- **BEGIN! GOD'S TRUTH IS GOOD, even when HARD**

*<sup>18</sup>The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, (**Sin is against GOD, and against PEOPLE. Opposite of God's heart**) who suppress the truth by their wickedness, <sup>19</sup>since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. <sup>20</sup>For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.*

• We suppress God's TRUTH

- **We don't want to hear it. WHY? Because recognition of our sin nature takes us off the throne of our lives. It forces us to recognize that we are not God, and that we NEED redemption from God. This is the original sin of Adam and Eve- to replace God's wisdom with our own. We have fought to do this ever since.**

• God's nature is SELF-EVIDENT

- **Idea of 'general' or natural revelation.**
- **Nature around us...**
- **Nature of people... JOY... universal moral code (CS LEWIS, others)**

• We have no EXCUSE

- **SO MUCH Here... but bottom line- if a person is intellectually and emotionally honest, self-evident that GOD EXISTS, HE IS GOOD, WE ARE FALLEN. By our nature, we are work against His nature.**

**Word View Reality! Humanity, by our very nature, is deserving of God's WRATH.**

- **WRATH- God hasn't lost control- picture of how God is Steadfastly, and actively, opposed to sin.**

† **Making the case: The evidence of sin's essential nature**

**Exhibit A: We exchanged the Glory of GOD for the Glory of OURSELVES (1:21-23)**

<sup>21</sup> For although they knew God, **they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him**, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

- **Essential attribute? We refuse to Glorify God- to recognize that HE IS GOD and we are not. Because we do not honor him, we have no gratitude to Him, we turn away from him and Glorify ourselves**

**The Result? DISASTROUS!**

- **Our thinking become futile. Worthless, to no avail**
- **Our hearts are darkened. We fail to recognize Good**
- **Trusting in our own wisdom, we become fools**

Psalm 14:1 The fool-says in his heart, "There is no God."

- **We worship ourselves. When we worship ourselves, we elevate ourselves above others. At the root of the suffering of mankind, through history, is men and women who elevate themselves above others. When our hearts glorify self, we inevitably will denigrate others.**

**Exhibit B: We exchanged the Truth of God for a LIE. (1:24-25)**

<sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. <sup>25</sup> They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

- **First of four instances- "God gave them over". Frightening reality- As humanity, when we reject God enough, he will allow us to turn from him and fully follow our own minds. Result is not good.**
- **First reference to sexual immorality, but the ESSENTIAL attribute of sin her is TRUTH FOR LIE. What is the lie? THAT WE ARE GOD! WE DON'T NEED HIM. Again, we worship ourselves. We vest our lives in temporary things.**
- **THINK! How do we trade God's truth for a Lie?**

**The Result?**

- **First reference to sexual immorality. We degrade ourselves. This leads to Paul's next exhibit.**

**Exhibit C: We abandoned God's gift of sexuality for the shame of LUST. (1:26-27)**

<sup>26</sup> Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. <sup>27</sup> In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.

- **OKAY. This is the most referenced paragraph of this passage. We look at this, in the context of big idea of SIN, results of turning from God... leads to??? Homosexuality. If a person wants to make a Biblical case against homosexuality, this is exhibit A. AND, you can't remove what Paul says here. BUT CHURCH... HEAR HERE!!! This point here is not to isolated condemnation of homosexuality. IT IS TO WARN AGAINST THE DESTRUCTION OF SEXUAL IMMORALITY as a whole.**

- **Gave them over.... SHAMEFUL LUSTS. EVEN**
- **Inflamed with Lust. QUESTION. If you assess the totality of sexual immorality, pornography, sexual exploitation, objectification... that happens in western society, how much of this is homosexual in nature, and how much is heterosexual? NOT EVEN CLOSE. Homosexuality IS a moral issue, and it is a HUGE political issue right now, BUT WE MUST BE HONEST! If we ask WHERE LIES THE DEADLY THREAT of sexual degradation in our culture, the overwhelming answer is HETERO. We CANNOT make this warning just against Homosexuality and give ourselves a pass.**

**The Result?**

- **Emotional devastation that comes from sexual immorality.**
- **Broken families. Broken lives. Abortion. Abuse. Exploitation. Objectification.**
- **HEAR! SEXUALITY IS A GIFT from God, it is GOOD, and if our culture is to reclaim this Gift as God intends it, it will NOT happen by our hatred of homosexuality, but by how we LOVE AND HONOR THE GOOD of sexuality in our own lives.**

**Exhibit D: We didn't consider God worthy of our MINDS. 1:28..**

<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, (NIV)

<sup>28</sup> And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer <sup>(NASB)</sup>

- **Worthy of our attention. Worthy of our time. Worthy of our respect and value.**
- **Its easy to look around and point how we are abandoning our knowledge/honor of God in society... but GOD IS SPEAKING TO YOU AND ME.**
- **HEAR! WHEN WE GIVE UP ON FOCUS OF GOD, HIS GOODNESS, HIS NATURE AND WORD AS FOUNDATION OF SOCIETY AND OUR LIVES... the result is again, devastating, and it is human history...**

**The Result?** <sup>28b</sup>so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. <sup>29</sup> They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, <sup>30</sup> slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; <sup>31</sup> they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy.

- **Every one of these attributes- results of turning from God- is how we inflict pain upon each other.**
- **Just as the primary expression of LOVE OF GOD is LOVE OF PEOPLE, so also the primary expression of REJECTION OF GOD is degradation of people.**

**Reality: Where we abolish God and His Goodness, that void will inevitably be filled by HUMANITY and our WEAKNESS.**

**† Why sin matters so much to God (1:32)**

- **Sin leads to DEATH, and GOD IS GOD OF LIFE. He loves us, and he hates sin because sin hurts people. It brings death. And when rejection of God defines a society- people- then death will reign.**

<sup>32</sup> Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death (**inevitable resut**), they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

**Proverbs 14:12** *There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.*

**The tragic irony: Seeking FREEDOM, we make ourselves SLAVES.**

- **God works in WRATH against sin because sin enslaves us, and God created us for FREEDOM.**
  
- **SO WHAT DO WE DO WITH THIS?? LENSES**
  - **Lens of focusing only on other people. NO!**
  - **Into our own lives... Lenses of legalism, toxic shame, pride, and self condemnation. NOT GOD'S INTENT**
  - **Rather, LENS OF THE GOSPEL. HOPE. THIS IS ALL TRUE, but there is a GREATER TRUTH.**
  
- **EPHESIANS 2:1-5 (emphasis verse 4-5)**