

When God Gives Up - Roman 1 : 24-32 - 10 April-2011

Immorality

Homosexuality

Depravity

Well, this morning let us come to the Bible and if you have brought your Bibles, please turn with me to Romans chapter 1, and we are going to look at a very difficult passage of Scriptures, difficult because it is rather dark in a sense. Let's look at Romans one and I like us to consider verses 24 all the way to verse 32.

Let's look at Romans 1:24-32. The Bible says

24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

26 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:

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 recompense of their error which was meet.

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;

29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

31 Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, 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.

There are some passages in the Bible that if a preacher is given a choice, he would rather not preach and such is one of them. As I have mentioned, this is a dark and somber passage, it is as black as midnight because there is no way of light within, because this is a passage about the judgment of God upon a world that

has gone mad with sin. Donald Grey Barnhouse, one of the preachers, say that this is one of the most terrible passage of all Scriptures because it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an angry God. We have been looking at the theme of God's wrath. God is a God of amazing love and yet at the same time, Scripture declares to us, God is a God of wrath, of anger against the sins of the world. God's wrath is manifested in different ways, God's wrath is manifested in cataclysmic ways, in other words, it is manifested in catastrophes. We read of the catastrophes of the worldwide flood during the days of Noah. We read of the fire that burned up Sodom and Gomorrah, those were evidences and manifestations of the wrath of God in catastrophes.

God's wrath is also manifested in a great way in the not-too-distant future. When Jesus spoke in Matthew chapters 24 and 25, he was alluding to a future tribulation; He calls it the tribulation times, where there will be great trials, where there will be a concentration of the wrath of God for seven years upon this whole world. That is an eschatological wrath, in other words, something that would happen in the future, that's the word eschatological wrath, something that happens in the future.

So, God's wrath is manifested in catastrophes, God's wrath is manifested and will be manifested in the times of the tribulations and God's wrath is also manifested eternity in the fires of hell where there is fire and brimstone, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Those are ways whereby God's wrath is manifested.

But, God's wrath is also manifested today, in fact every day. You say, how, how is God's wrath manifested today and in every day. The Bible tells us, in Romans 1:18, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness." The words "is revealed" in the Greek is better translated, "is being revealed", in other words, it is a present tense reality. God's wrath is consistently, constantly being manifested in the world today. You say how pastor? In this, and that's why we read in verses 24 to 32 this morning. God's wrath is revealed every day in verse 24, how He gave men up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, and if you don't get it, he says this again in verse 26, when God gave them up unto vile affections and again, if you don't get it, he says in verse 28, God gave them over.

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This morning, we are going to look at the subject, or the title of the message, "When God gives up".

God gives us up over to sin because, that is one of the manifestations of the wrath of God. The word gave up, or give over in verses 24, 26 and 28 is the same word in the Greek. It is a judicial word, it is the word that means, someone yielding another person, over to punishment or judgment. And God is saying, this is how My wrath is manifested, I am going to hand man over to his sins, that he may go down in that spiral and pressed that self-destruct button. God is going to manifest His wrath, and that He is going to withhold His restraining grace. And, when man is left alone, without the restraining grace of God, he indulges in his sins, he plunges into a downward spiral and he eventually reap the consequences, the sad and painful consequences of their sins. This is what happened when God gives up.

1. Immorality

What will transpire, when God gives up on men? Several things. In this passage, we learned that when God gives up, man falls into immorality, man falls into sexual sins, you see that's what the Bible says in v24 "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:" they fall into sexual sins.

A key word in verse 24, is the first word that you see here, "wherefore". The word "wherefore" connects us with what has gone before. What is verse 23? Verse 23 is speaking about idolatry; it is this, that men changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

This is man steeping in idolatry and because they steep themselves in idolatry, they are just a short step away from immorality. Therefore, as they commit idolatry, as they misrepresent God, as they insult and shame God, God now gives them over to their own lusts and they indulge themselves in sexual sins. The Bible tells us that immorality and idolatry are very closely linked together.

Let me give you a few examples. Remember, in the days of Exodus, the days of Moses, when the people of Israel decided to make for themselves a golden calf, this is what happened.

Exo 32:6

And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.

The word play here, rose up to play here, refers to sex play. This is not ordinary dancing, this is sexual orgies. This is what happens in the pagan feasts; they drink themselves to be drunk and they get involved in sexual orgies and this is not unclear, because again in verse 25.

Exo 32:25

And when Moses saw that the people were naked; (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies:)

Immorality and idolatry, they are just a short step away.

1Cor 10:7

Neither be ye idolaters

They worship the idols called the golden calf and therefore they rose up to play. It makes sense because when man casts off God in their minds and create a false God, they are given over to the lusts of their own hearts. Idolatry leads quickly to immorality.

1Cor 10:7

Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

Another example given to you in the Bible is in

Num 25:1

And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.

Immorality and idolatry. We know this is immorality because in

1Cor 10:8

Neither let us commit fornication.

So there was that sexual sin and then there was that spiritual sin of idolatry that is involved.

1Cor 10:8

Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

You can recall, often times you read of the worship of Baal, that false God and in the worship of Baal, there are often temple prostitution that is involved. It's not very far away. The Bible is true, that when man decides to desecrate God with idolatry, God gave them over to immorality, because, in case you forget, men changed the truth of God into a lie and served the creature more than the Creator.

Man decides that he will run away from God. He denies God, he therefore is plunged into a state of darkness but because of the instinct for worship, he creates a false god which he can control, which he makes and he deceives himself and now he has casts off all restraints personally and God has also given him over to his own lust and therefore he slips into immorality.

When I was young, I would think about the countries all around Singapore, Southeast Asia. This region is a region that is filled with idolatry, isn't it? Just think of the countries all around us. It is a region of the world that is steeped in idolatry. I have been to countries like this, you must have been, you can walk the streets of these countries and you see huge temples, with massive idols and statues and monuments of worship and you would think that people go to such religious places would be a moral people but no. It is exactly in such countries that sexual sins are prevalent, it is in such lands that prostitution is high. It is such lands where there is child prostitution and HIV and you wonder to yourself, why? So many statues, so many religious structures and yet the people are living in such sins.

Some places are even called the wonders of the world. It is only when we come to the Scriptures that we can understand why; because when they have idols and religious structures, it is not a sign of man seeking God but it is a sign of men running away from God, refusing God and in their darkness, they created false idols. No wonder, God gave them up over to the uncleanness of their own hearts.

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God did not make them sin by the way. The Bible tells us, it is through the lusts of their own hearts. Isn't this what the Scriptures teaches? That the heart is desperately wicked. Isn't this what Jesus said "It is out of the heart that we have evil thoughts, murders and fornication." So, God did not tempt man to sin but when God

withdraws His restraining grace and hands man over judicially to sin, man indulges and he comes into immorality.

By the way, the message is a little bit PG and RA. (Laughter in the congregation).

It will get worse later on. But I'm not here trying to be sordid, but this is exactly what Scripture says. So, if you feel your child, I am serious, alright, if you feel your child who may be here, this is not suitable for him or her, feel free to bring him out. But this is what Scripture teaches us. Man is just a short step away from immorality when he commits idolatry and God gave them up over to the lusts of their own hearts.

But, immorality is not enough for men. Sexual sins is not enough because sexual lust could never be easily satisfied this way and man would want more. He would do more to get the same level of satisfaction and so he began to push the limits. He begins to try more things and eventually, he crosses the line and the next stage whereby God gives man over to, is the sin of homosexuality. Again, there are three "give overs" in verses 24 to 32.

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2. Homosexuality

The first giving over is when God gives them over to immorality. The second giving over found in verse 26 and 27 is that God gives them over now to homosexuality. This is what it says, that God gave them up, judicially sends them over, in a sense for self-destruction unto vile affections, women changing the natural use into that which is against nature, men leaving the natural use of the women and burned in their lust one towards another, men with men, working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.

What is homosexuality, what's wrong with homosexuality? If you polled this question amongst the church, that is Christians today, I would dare say there will be a whole range of answers that come up. What is homosexuality?

In 1992, there was a Newsweek cover page article. It asked a question, this is child gay. A picture of a baby and asking the simple question, "Is this child gay?" This is the best picture I can get, forgive me, that resolution is not great. But, there is a line here that tells you what this article is about. This line is this, "Born or Bred: The Origins of Homosexuality" The article is asking this question, "Is homosexuality genetic, is this what we are born with or is this what we acquire in

life?" This article is a pro-gay article. It seeks to suggest that homosexuality is somewhat found in your genes. In other words, you are born this way. So, if you are born this way, then, don't try to fight it. Accept it, because that's the way you are made. So, instead of saying that you have decided to be a homosexual, they are trying to say, you have been decided by God to be a homosexual.

So, accept the way you are, live the homosexual life because it is found in your genes. The last statement, or one of the last statement in this article goes like this. "Many people have welcomed the indication that gayness begins in the chromosomes."

After the first service this morning, some of the young people came up to me and say, Pastor, do you know that Lady Gaga has a new song? (Laughter in the congregation). Of course I won't know. But, do you know that Lady Gaga has a new song called "Born this way", and it is a song that subtly hints that homosexuality is the way we are born. I immediately went to my phone. I took out the film already, alright. (Laughter in the congregation). Came to this phone, googled it, and these are the lyrics of what she sings and a lot of young people are singing today, I'm told.

No matter gay, straight or bi
Lesbian, transgendered life
I'm on the right track, baby
I was born to survive

No matter black, white or beige
Chola or orient made
I'm on the right track, baby
I was born to be brave

I'm beautiful in my way
'Cause God makes no mistakes
I'm on the right track, baby
I was born this way.

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That's what young people are singing. That's what young people will believe that I am born this way, just like my color, just like my race, just like right-handed, left-handed, I am a homosexual, a gay, straight, or bi or lesbian because I am born this way. That's what Newsweek, 1992 tells you, you are born this way.

Now, I agree, that there may be predisposing factors that make a person gay, just like they are predisposing factors that makes a person have problem with anger management, or alcoholism or sexual sins. There are predisposing factors in different people. Some people say for homosexuality, it's because of his genes, some people think it's because of the size of the hypothalamus, a part of the brain. Some people think it's because of an abusive childhood. Some people think it's because of an overprotective mother or an absent father or because of some traumatic childhood experience. These are predisposing factors, but these are not the real reasons, why a person is gay. It's not in your genes. I did not say this, but Scripture declares it so. Look at the verses that are before you and look at the way Paul is clear and God is clear that homosexuality is not primarily a medical, a biological social problem, it is primarily a spiritual problem.

He says, "God gave them up." It's a word that means God gives these people over for judgment. If it is found in your genes, if it is the way you are, it is not fair in a sense for God to hand you over for judgment for homosexuality when it is already decided for you. But, it is a form of judgment when God handed them over to indulge the lusts of their own hearts.

The Bible describes homosexuality not as an alternative lifestyle but as a vile affections. The word vile here means disgraceful or shameful. It's not a medical thing, it's a spiritual thing. The Bible goes on to say, it is against nature when man forsakes the Author of nature, he would now goes against the order of nature. Because, nature as God defines it in Genesis is that he makes man and woman, male and female and the two shall join together and be as one. That is nature, one man and one woman. God made Adam and Eve not Adam and Steve (Laughter in the congregation).

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But man, when given over to their lust, thwarts nature. The distinction between the man and the woman is now obliterated. Man has not only gone perverted, but has gone inverted, totally upside down. The Bible goes on to say, it is unseemly. It is the word that means indecent. The Bible continues to say, it is an error. The word error means it's astray. It strays from the right path, it strays from God's design. You are not a homosexual because God made you one, but because you chose so, because of the moral darkness in your hearts.

It is a sign that society is degenerating when we no more know the truth. It is a sign that mankind is degenerating when we want to approve what God has disapproved.

Remember, some years ago there was a saga over the Penal Code, S 377A. Shall we abolish this law or should we continue with this law. Let me tell you, the reality is that the world, is constantly taking the axe to chop down homosexuality as a crime. They are saying, no, you have got to be more accepting. These are normal people like we are. We cannot be so homophobic, you've got to be accepting to an alternative lifestyle, this is their rights. This is a world that is craving for the pink dollar. Because of the money that homosexuals can bring, they say let's accept them, let's welcome them and maybe this is the direction that nations around us and even our nation may be tempted to take.

I am told by Pastor Mike that in the United States, you cannot preach against homosexuality. If a pastor stands up on the pulpit and preaches against homosexuality, it is deemed to be discriminatory. It is almost like saying you are preaching against the blacks or the whites or the Latin Americans, you are preaching against people who are made that way and that Pastor, that preacher can be cast into that jail for that reason. It is a sign that it is a decaying, degenerating world that we live in today.

But friends, not only is this world decaying, it is also creeping into the church, do you know that? I read of how pastors and churches, allow gay marriages in their church, man and man as one. You see, even the kids are shocked (in response to a child making a noise in the congregation) (Laughter in the congregation).

Now, if anyone of you want to have a gay marriage, please don't look for me. (Laughter in the congregation). It's not because I do not love you, but because I cannot endorse what God says is wrong. But, it's creeping into the church. Read the newspapers, I think, almost a few times each month, there would be a report that says "Gay pastor is ordained" or the church is going to ordain a gay bishop. It's horrendous, that even the church, doesn't know that it is a sin against God. The church has come to believe what the world tells us, it is found in the genes. And we are not willing to stand on the Scriptures that God has given.

My friends, as a church here we are not called to be popular with the world. Jesus has never told us to be popular with the world. God has always called us to be faithful to His Word and we often times called to be counter cultural. The world says, this is the way, but the Bible says, that is the way. And we must be willing to swim against the

tide. You're called to be the salt and the light, we are not here to follow the world and they may come a day when your pastor or your future pastor, who preaches the word in the GLCC pulpit may be hauled into prison. Please visit him. (Loud laughter in the congregation).

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But he is doing what is right. Not that he purposely antagonizes, but if that is what God calls for us to declare, that is what we declare, unashamedly for the truth.

God is very clear about the sin of homosexuality.

Lev 18:22

Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.

And if you still don't get it,

Lev 20:13

If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

A graphic reminder against the hatred of God against homosexuality is found in:

Jude 1:7

Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to (Added by Pastor : They have lost it, they have gone so far into sin that they have lost it, they are entirely dominated by) fornication (Added by Pastor : And because that never satisfies, they push the limits and crossed the line and they), going after strange flesh (Added by Pastor : Homosexuality) , are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

That's the way it is, God is clear. Homosexuality is not a lifestyle choice because your genes determine it to be so. It's a moral decision man makes. It is a path that he decides to track because he has denied God, he desecrates God and God in His judgment, hands him over to immorality and then to homosexuality. But it is a choice of sin he makes in his own life. There are consequences friends. The consequences are hinted of in verse 27.

They will receive, the recompense of their error which was meet. Recompense means a reward, a payment. The word meet here means right or necessary. And homosexuals suffer, they suffer physically. But you know they have the highest rates of STDs, sexually transmitted diseases. It's a recompense of the error which is right or necessary. But don't you know that homosexuals suffer with confusion of identity. They have self-doubt, self-hatred, they have frustrations, they have guilt, they have denial, they have so much going on in their minds. They suffer emotionally.

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The Bible tells us, they burned in their lust one word another. There's a level of passion amongst homosexual that is not seen among heterosexuals. It is a perverse, intense, burning desire. This gets a bit RA, but it doesn't come from me.

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 recompense of their error which was meet.

I read about a commentary, I read the commentary of John MacArthur about this verse, this phrase. Mind you, it's written in 1981, 30 years ago and if that was the description then, I cannot think of what the description would be today, but this is it. He says

"There is a level of lust among homosexuals that is not known among heterosexuals. There is a burning that is beyond description. And I'm not going to get too graphic with all of this because I think I'd send you screaming for air. But you really have to understand that there is a lust level that is incomprehensible.

It is not uncommon, for example, for the average homosexual male to have 300 partners per year. It is not uncommon for them to have to go to the hospital and have all manner of articles extracted from deep within them. Sometimes doctors have to be brought in to separate them, to take limbs out from each other.

.....the coroner for the city of New York who is not a Christian but just a secular coroner (Added by Pastor : Someone who performs autopsies) wrote a book after retiring and said, "I did 60 thousand autopsies and I am not one to make a judgment on life style but I would warn anyone who chooses a homosexual life style to get ready for the consequences.

In 60 thousand autopsies," he said, "I can take one look at a corpse and tell you if it was killed by a homosexual because of the massive mutilations." There is a burning level of lust that is beyond anything that a heterosexual understands.

I think there is one word that is a great misnomer in our society today. It's a sad paradox and that is the word gay, because a gay is anything but gay. There is no joy in homosexuality, there is no joy. All it leaves you is chains of lust, all it leaves you are not tears of joy but tears of sorrow, of frustrations, of guilt, of self-hatred, of ambiguity in life. It doesn't pay, it is not right, because there is a recompense of the error which is meet or necessary.

But my friends, there is hope in Scriptures you know, hope thou in God.

1Cor 6:9-11 tells us

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate (Added by Pastor : The word effeminate here refers to male prostitutes or man who subject themselves to lewdness and then there is this word or phrase), nor abusers of themselves with mankind (Added by Pastor : In the Greek it is simply translated "A sodomite or a homosexual),

these people, who indulge in such sins, shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But as I have mentioned, there is hope in Scripture.

V11, Paul gloriously declares:

And such were some of you....

You know what's the most precious words in all of this passage, is the word "were", it's past tense. You were a homosexual, but now you are not because you are washed, you are sanctified and you are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

1Cor 6:9-11

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of

you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

The world tells you, you cannot be helped from homosexuality, just accept it, because it is in your genes. The world tells you, it's a sickness that is beyond your ability. The world tells you, because the devil has a lie from the pit of hell, that says, it is already decided for you. But the Scripture declares, "You don't have to be a gay, you don't have to remain in the sin of homosexuality, because you can be washed, cleansed, justified by Jesus Christ our Lord.

You know something, Jesus died for homosexuals, He died for thieves, He died for murderers, He died for adulterers, He died for homosexuals too, He died for all our sins and you can be washed, you can be changed.

I am not surprised that right here in this room, there are people who are in the sin of homosexuality. But this is not a message to condemn, this is a message to call you, to faith and repentance in Jesus and He can change your life. That's what we're supposed to do friends, as a church. I hope none of us, I fear a message like this would go out and laugh at our homosexual friends. Ha, ha, ha, you are gay. I hope none of us will walk out of this place and think that we are on the ivory tower and look at all the people stricken with this problem and say, why are you so depraved ?

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If Jesus were here in our world today, He would reach out even to the homosexuals. I recall once, in our church, there was a man who dressed up as a lady, I have mentioned this before. Our church members met this person on the streets, they brought him back to the church building, loved him, gave him drinks, food, talked with him, shared with him, wanted to reach him with the gospel of Jesus Christ. I was amazed, I was blessed by the spiritual maturity of all people. None of them gave him a dirty look, none of them avoided him as if he's the plague. None of them felt that he had some disease and we have to run away. No, everyone crowded around, gathered around him and loved him. Isn't this the way the church is to be, to be leading people into a life-changing relationship with Jesus. We are not a country club, we are a Christian church that has a mission given by God, to make disciples of all groups of people, even the homosexuals.

We are called to bring the life-changing message to them. Let us not despise, let us not laugh, let us not scorn but let us love them to the cross of Calvary, because there is hope for them. And friends, as a church, as the people of God, let us stand up for

what is right. The world can tell you, let's be tolerant of the homosexual alternative lifestyles, but friends, because of what the Word of God says, it is not an alternative lifestyle, it is a sinful lifestyle, and all it takes for this society to crumble is for the godly to do nothing, to say nothing, to stand up on nothing and you can be sure this world will crash and crumble.

If you today are stricken with this problem, can I encourage you practically, healing begins, when first of all, you recognize this is a sin, because, the moment you say it is because of my father who did this to me or my mum who did this to me or that person who did this to me when I was a child, the moment you think it is because of something else and not because of your own moral choice, there will be no hope. It begins with a recognition, it is a choice we make. And then you need to repent, you need to rely on Jesus, you need to re-orientate your life, that it is not so much about your partner but it is about Jesus, it's about His Glory and then you need to rebuild healthy relationships with people all around.

Depravity

My friends, there is tremendous hope. So when God gives us up over to sin, it is a scary picture. He first goes to immorality, he then hops on to homosexuality and because of time, he now enters into utter depravity, he is so depraved, so utterly corrupt and not again is this from me, it's from the Word. The Bible says

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;

What does it mean, it says here, did not like, the word "like" here is to deem worthy, they did not think it is worthwhile for them to retain, or to hold or to have God in their knowledge. They chose to suppress the knowledge of God. God gave them over the third time. Gave them over to a reprobate mind, this is a worthless mind, to do those things which are not convenient or not becoming. And what happens, is that they now get filled with all unrighteousness, their whole life is only evil, perpetually. Doesn't it remind you of Genesis chapter 6, where the thoughts of men are only evil continually. And you read the whole list, you just read it visually. It sounds so much like our newspapers. Every day, this morning, later on in the afternoon, go back open your Sunday Times and you read all these things, every single day, because it describes man, man that has given up on God and where God has given us up over to sin.

29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,³⁰ Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,³¹ Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, 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.

These are sins that destroy every segment of society, marriages, homes, families, workplace, country. It has pervaded every single corner of society. And the worst thing, verse 32

"When men know the judgment of God, they know because they are filled with guilt and fears and anxieties when they come in such sins. But even though they know of the judgment of God, they which commit such sins are worthy of death, they not only will continue to do the same, but they have pleasure in them that do them.

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.

They have pleasures in others who commit such crimes, they cheer, they applaud, they irk you to do more.

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And that is a sign of the utter depravity of man; they rejoice in iniquity, they rejoice in their sins.

Kent Hughes says this:

What a telling application this has on our media-captivated society. Millions sit in their living rooms watching debauchery, violence, deceit and many other vices—and applaud what they see!

You know what are the popular programs today? I guarantee you, they would have such things, plus sexual sins of course, top rated movies, programs? Why? Because man is depraved and have pleasure in them that do them. He goes on to say:

It makes little difference whether the vices are real or portrayed, the effect is much the same—an increasingly depraved mind on the part of the viewer. Approving another's sin is a sign that life has reached its lowest dimension.

It is a terrible thing when God gives us up over to sins. It all begins, you remember, when man knowing God, chooses to reject God. He denies God. He does not give God the glory nor gratitude and because of the denial, he is plunged into darkness and soon out of the midst of darkness, he imagines for himself a god and he desecrates God's name and because of that, God gives men up over to defilement, to corrupt themselves, first with immorality and then with homosexuality and then with utter depravity in all manner of sins. Men have been allowed to press the self-destruct button because he has first given up on God.

But my friends, my purpose here is not to preach a message to condemn and it is neither the intent of Paul to write these words for the intention of condemnation. Paul is writing these words as a means of mercy so that in the context of a midnight like this, a context of a passage that is so dark as night, that the gospel message will shine as bright. It is when it is so dark that we can see the gospel so bright. You know, by the time we reach chapter 3, I believe people will be screaming out, can you save me God. But before that, he is saying, you've got to understand why you need the gospel, the good news of man being reconciled to God, because man is living in such darkness.

I think of this passage like God, who allowed the prodigal, to run, to rebel and to indulge in his ways. It is when the prodigal goes far away from God and lives his life worse than a pig that he is eventually cured of his rebellion, that he would know his folly and turn and seek and realize that the Heavenly Father has always been looking out of the windows of mercy, awaiting His son's return.

And Paul is saying, this is where you are, you are depraved, you are living in immorality, you are stricken with homosexuality, but there is hope for you. You know, when Paul wrote this to Rome, Rome is the center of wickedness of society at that time. Rome is a nation that commits gross idolatry. Who do they worship? Caesar, Caesar be your god. They are a nation that is engrossed in immorality. You read that in the annals and you hear of the Caesar's life. Rome is the place that is rampant with homosexuality. Homosexuality is not a 21st-century problem, it's always been there. And in the time of Rome, it is said that fourteen out of fifteen Roman emperors were homosexuals and some of them blatantly so. Rome was the center of wickedness in unseen cruelty. They treat their slaves worse than animals.

Rome is a place where the father can put his thumb up and allow his son to live or to put his thumb down and his son or daughter would be put to death. It is a place of wickedness and darkness, but it is to this city that Paul says in verse 15

So, as much as in me is, I am ready (Added by Pastor : I am eager) to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

Rom 1:15

So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

Paul knows that it is in the dark city like Rome that the gospel light will shine bright. Paul knows.

He is not ashamed of the gospel, the good news, of God reconciling sinful man to Himself because it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. Paul, is eager to go because this is a life-changing message. Jesus can change the lives of the Roman citizens. My friends, Jesus paid it all, upon the cross, the wrath of God is poured out upon His Son, the sin of immorality, sexual sins, one night stands, cheap sex, homosexuality, murders, every sin that ought to be paid, is paid by Jesus upon that cross. That's why today, it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believe.

Rom 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

The message this morning, calls you to respond to God, in repentance and faith. Would you do that, would you take Christ to be your own. Let's bow for a word of prayer.

Father, we thank You, once again for Your Word. We trust and we ask, your blessed Spirit, even right now, to work in hearts, to convict men of sins, to convince us of the Scriptures, to turn us from our sins that we may return unto Your fold. Lord, You are amazing, it is when we appreciate Your wrath, that we can really see Your love, that behind those judgments, is the heart of God that poured out upon His own Son that we today may be reconciled. Lord, call Your people to salvation and life and free those today who are in the sin of lust and homosexuality. Thank You, that Your Word says we shall know the truth and the truth shall set us free. So, do that Lord, which

man cannot do, we thank You, we thank You that Jesus paid it all. Bless Your people with Your precious Word, we ask this now in Jesus name, amen.