

## Why Is God Angry With Men - Romans 1 :21-23 – 3 April 2011

For 3 reasons:

1. Denial
2. Darkness
3. Desecration

Well, this morning I like us to look again at the book of Romans. So, if you have your Bibles, please turn with me to the book of Romans as we studied this wonderful book. Romans chapter 1.

We have been taking it, a section at a time. Some people are asked me, how long will this journey in the book of Romans be, I do not know. He can take very, very long. But, the privilege is not the finish the book quickly, but to understand it deeply, because, in the book of Romans, God gave to us wonderful theology, not just theoretical truths, but truths that will change our lives.

The book of Romans is really the golden book of the Bible. It's really about the good news of how God is reconciling sinful man to a Holy God through the Lord Jesus Christ. But, we realized that in this book of Romans, if we are to recognize the good news, it must begin with an understanding of the bad news. What is the bad news you say? Well, the bad news is this, Romans 1:18 tells us that God is angry with sinful man. The Bible says, for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.

People ask, how am I going to share the gospel with my father, because my father is a self-sufficient man. He has handled everything in life, he is capable, he is successful, he has made it a life, he feels that he needs nothing. How will he appreciate the gospel? I say, it begins right here; when a man recognizes that he sits under the wrath of God, that God is angry with sinful man.

Oh, we don't like to preach about the wrath of God. We like to preach about the love of God, because love is so positive. Joy and peace and mercy and grace; these are things that are often preached from the pulpits of churches. But what has happened is that man had run away from the people understanding of the wrath of God. And

Paul the apostle begins rightly here. There is no appreciation of the gospel until man realizes that he faces condemnation because of the wrath of God against our sins.

Preachers don't like to be viewed as narrow minded or judgmental or being a fire and brimstone preacher. But this is the reality we have to grasp. God is no Santa Claus, He is not someone who is seen like a old grandpa, indulgent with his children and grandchildren. The Bible tells us of a Holy God whose eyes, whose eyes are purer than to behold iniquity or sin.

He is a God of justice, of holiness, of righteousness and He must judge sin. By the way, as I have mentioned, the love of God and the wrath of God is not contradicting. In fact, it is when you understand the wrath of God that you can't fully appreciate the love of God. It is only when we see how much God hates sin that we can start to comprehend how much God loves us when He sent His Son to die for us. He hates sin so much and yet He is willing to send His Son to die for you. You see, it is when we correctly appreciate the wrath of God, the holiness of God that we can then plunge the depth of the love of God.

The question is today, why is God angry with men? The title of today's message is a very simple one, "Why is God angry with man?"

Paul, in verses 21-23 would tell you the reason why. Paul says in verse 21

Because that, 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. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

You say, "Why is God angry with man?" Paul tells you in verses 21 to 23, why God is angry with us. By the way, in these verses, you trace the descent, you trace the downfall of man. A step at a time, you trace how they degrade themselves, how man falls further and further and further away from God. That's why God is angry with man.

## 1. Denial

Can I trace with you the descent or the degradation or the decline of man?

First of all in these verses, we see that man first come into a state of denial. Why is God angry at me, because man came into a state of denial. He rejects God, he refuses God. How do we know that? Verse 21 says:

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful;

The problem with man is not ignorance. God is angry with man not because we are ignorant, but because we deny Him, we refuse Him, we reject Him. Look at the phrase here "Because that, when they knew God." They know God! Man, we know God.

You say pastor, you must be kidding, I have been to Africa before and in Africa, nobody has heard about God, nobody has heard about Jesus Christ, there has been no pastor, no preacher, no church sent there, how can they know God, where do they get the news from?

Paul says, don't you worry, they know God. Early on, two weeks ago we look at the verses here.

Rom 1:19-20

Because that which may be known of God is manifest (Added by Pastor : It's clear, it revealed) in them; for God hath showed it unto them (Added by Pastor : Yes, they may not have a preacher sent from GLCC, they may not have a pastor, they may not have a church, but God Himself has showed it unto them, it is clear in them. Why? Because) .For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made (Added by Pastor : By creation, and they know this about God), even his eternal power and Godhead (Added by Pastor : Or divinity); so that they are without excuse:

The Bible tells us, the problem of man is not ignorance because God has already revealed it unto man, from creation. There is no human preacher, nor human pastor, but creation because to them every single day. Pastor, are you over emphasizing? No. The book of Psalms tells me that creation is that preacher God has ordained to every single human being, whether you are in New York or Timbuktu, the Bible says:

Psa 19:1-3

The heavens (Added by Pastor : Anyone today can lift up our eyes and see the heavens and heavens are shouting out declaring) declare the glory of God (Added by Pastor : The word glory of the manifested attributes of God, God is seen in the heavens) ; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

There is no people group, there is no language, no culture where they cannot understand the preacher called creation. If I go to Korea, nobody would understand me. If I go to Brazil, very few would understand me because I speak English. But, when creation preaches everyone hears, everyone knows and yet everyone today rejects God, because when they knew God they rejected Him.

God is angry with man, because the problem is not ignorance, the problem is rejection.

Remember, in verse 18 of Romans 1, how Paul says, man today hold down the truth in unrighteousness. Man knows it, but what he does is that he instinctively suppresses the truth in unrighteousness. It is a choice that man makes to say "I reject God." And therefore, Paul tells us, even though they knew God, they choose to give Him no glory, glorified Him not as God.

You know, this world is created for one purpose. There is only this one purpose. This entire universe, the whole of creation is for one purpose. What is that purpose you say? The book of revelations tells us that the purpose is this:

Rev 4:11

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Things, lives, people, creation is given so that God may be glorified.

Rev 14:6,7

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

What's the message of the entire history of time; give glory to God.

Rev 15:4

Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

What is the purpose of creation? Very simple, God tells us it is created for His glory and so, when man chooses, despite sufficient revelation to reject God, God's wrath is incurred. It's very logical.

Everything is created for God. Everything is created for God, that's from the divine perspective but man chooses to go against Him. We choose not to give Him the glory, that is the chief sin of man and we chose not to give Him gratitude.

You know what man does? Man enjoys the food, man enjoys rain, man enjoys the air, man enjoys life and family but you know what man says? Man says, it is all due to luck, it is all due to fortune, it is all due to nature, it's all due to my efforts and we forget that every good and perfect gift comes from the Father of Light. It comes from God.

So, with sufficient revelation, man rejects God, denies Him and that's why God 's wrath is incurred.

The Bible, reminds me of a man, a man who typifies the whole of human nature. This man is found in the book of Daniel and his name is king Nebuchadnezzar. Let's look at king Nebuchadnezzar. These verses, you just read it and you would see how king Nebuchadnezzar is a picture of the human race. The Bible says in Daniel:

Dan 4:30

The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?

Ah, this is man talking. I built it, I did it and it is for me. You know something, king Nebuchadnezzar knows God, because all men know God but he chooses not to glorify God nor to give thanks to God. And he says "It is by me and for me."

What happened to this man? The Bible tells us:

Dan 4:31-37

While the word was in the king's mouth (Added by Pastor : In other words, while it was in the midst of emitting the words), there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee.

And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.

The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar (Added by Pastor : At the time when he speaks these lofty words, this was what happened to him): and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.

And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:

And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou (Added by Pastor : God, You are sovereign) ?

At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me.

Now I Nebuchadnezzar (Added by Pastor : Have learnt my lesson, I want to) praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

Why is God angry with man, because man slips into a state, he chooses to go into a state of denial. He knows God, but he would not give glory to God, nor give thanks to God. But let's move on.

## 2. Darkness

The Bible tells us that man goes into a state of denial and because he rejected God, he is going to go into a state of darkness. He goes into a state of blindedness.

Paul says

"but (Added by Pastor : These men, because they rejected God) became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,"

Let me take the word one at a time.

The Bible here says vain, it means to be emptied, to be meaningless, to be purposeless, to be pointless. The word imaginations mean thought or thinking. The word darkened here means to be obscured. Putting it together, it simply means that when man rejects God, he goes into a state of confusion, of darkness and he cannot see the truth and the light. He can't, why, because he has first rejected the knowledge of God. He has held down and suppressed the truth in unrighteousness.

A story is told of a man, in Hyde Park, England, who is an atheist. He stood up on a soapbox, in those days they stand on boxes and they preach and they declare. And this man, in Hyde Park stood up on a soapbox and he wanted to scorn Christianity and so this is what he said "People tell me that there is a God but I have never seen him. People say that there is life after death, but I have never seen it. People say that there is judgment after death, but I have never seen it. People tell me that there is heaven and hell but I have never seen it. He said that with a scornful tone and he step down from the soapbox to some cheap applause." There were some people who said "Yah, there is no God, we should not obey him."

And then there was another man now who struggled up that soapbox. He stood on the box and he said "People tell me that there is a sky, but I can't see. People tell me that there are green grass all around, but I cannot see. People tell me that there are trees but I cannot see, you see because I am blind." And it is so true, people say I cannot know God, I cannot see God, I cannot see judgment, I cannot see heaven and hell, you know why, because man has chosen to reject God and he is now plunged into a state of darkness. Man is blind, he is foolish in his ways, he is pointless in his thinking. My friends, there are a lot of people who are very intelligent on this Earth. Brilliant academicians, they are brilliant scientists, they are brilliant, successful businessmen all around, but do you know what, if they do not obey and do not glorify God, the Bible says, "They became fools."

The word fools here, in the Greek is mo-rah'-ee-no from which we get the word moron. Not very complimenting, moron. I was a moron and all of us, before we came to know Jesus Christ in a spiritual sense, in an eternal sense, we are all mo-rah'-ee-no, moron. Because our thinking is pointless and fruitless and purposeless apart from God. Is this world is created for the purpose of glorifying God and a man rejects God, cuts off from God, everything he does under the sun, is pointless and meaningless isn't it? He can be smart, he can be successful in business, but he really matters for nothing in the light of eternity and in the eyes of God.

And you know what is the saddest thing about this? He doesn't know he is blind. He is like a blind man looking up into the sky and says it is green, it is green, it is green. No, it is blue. No, he says it is green. There is no God, there is no judgment, there is no hell, there is no Jesus Christ. He is in blindness and he doesn't even know it. He professes himself to be wise but actually he has become a fool. The greatest fool today is the man who deceives himself. But, you can't help it because this man has first denied God and now he is plunged into a state of darkness.

### 3. Desecration

But let's see to the stage that this man would fall into, after denial, after darkness, this man is going into a state of desecration. The word desecration is a big sounding word but what he means is that it shames God, it insults God, it is a profanity, it is a misrepresentation of God and that is what man does. When they reject the knowledge of the true God, he is plunged into darkness and now he shames God. What do you mean, pastor?

I think, men can reject the knowledge of God, he can, but he cannot deny an instinct in his heart and that instinct is the instinct for worship, because we are all created for worship. We all worship someone or something today, let me tell you that. We are all created to worship. Some worship soccer stars, some worship movie stars, some worship graven images, some worship the true God, but man is created for worship and man is created for worship, but he rejects the true God and what he will do now is that in darkness, in blindness, in its folly, he would start to create his own God.

So, what he does, is that he would go to the rocks, hews out a large boulder and he starts to chisel away and to form a statue or an image and say "This be my God." Why? Because he has a natural instinct to worship, but he doesn't know the True God or he doesn't want to acknowledge the True God.



This man, would go to a tree and chop and hew down a tree and start to fashion and idol out of that tree because man is created for worship, but in the process, he desecrates God's name.

That's what Paul says in verse 23, man, after denying God, after plunging in darkness, he comes to a state of desecration. He changes the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four footed beasts and creeping things.

Rom 1:23

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.

If you look at this verse and as you consider it, don't you think this is the most foolish thing man has come up with. But I tell you, it is not intellectual, it is spiritual. Intelligent man today worship idols, because this is not about IQ, it is about SQ, spiritual quotient. It is a spiritual problem. Why, would man bowed themselves to an image that he makes with his hands? Because he's darkened, in his mind as a result of the rejection of the True God and Living God. And, it is so foolish. The Word says it is foolish.

Habakkuk chapter 2, it says here:

Hab 2:18,19

What profiteth (Added by Pastor : What's is the use of ) the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; (Added by Pastor : What is the use of ) the molten image (Added by Pastor : That metallic image, that gold, that silver) that you make of, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols? (Added by Pastor : Strange, that you would trust in something you make, it defies logic. But you see, man is in darkness), Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it.

Useless, can I put it to you even more simply in Psalms:

Psa 135:15-17

The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. 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.

We live in a world that is surrounded by idolatry, worshiping of idols. It is a spiritual problem. The worship of idols does not represent man seeking God, I say that again. We look at so many idol worshipers and we think that they are trying to find the real God. Let me tell you, according to Romans, they're not trying to find out, they are trying to run away from God because they first rejected the True God and now they're fashioning, counterfeits and poor substitutes for God. It is not a picture of man at his best, it is a picture of man at his worst.

Remember, in Genesis chapter 4, man began to cry unto God, there is no idols there, but with the process of time and when the hearts became darkened man began to fashion for himself some idols. It is a picture of a sad state of human behavior, running away from the True God. And Paul says here therefore, they changed the glory, they exchanged and it is a very poor exchange, don't you think?

Some years ago, amazing, I remembered this story in the news. I think it was about five years ago. I read about this man called Kyle MacDonald and he had a dream, he wanted to barter, you know what is barter, you trade what you have, with something someone else has. You barter, you trade, you exchange what you have and he wanted to barter his way up to a house and so he thought to himself, what can I exchange for a house. He says "Let me think" and as he was thinking he looked down and he saw a small red paperclip, like this. This is the exact clip he had on his table. And he said, I am going to take this red paperclip and barter my way up to a house. You say real or not, are you sure. Let me tell you this is what he did. He puts it up on the web, it's on the craigslist. In America, one thing that is very popular is craigslist, you put up things that you do not want to exchange for things you want. And so, he puts up the red paperclip on craigslist. Sometime later, a couple of ladies, saw the red paperclip, thought it was fun and say alright, I will barter something for your red paperclip and they said, I will give you this, you can't see very well, but this is a fish shaped pen. Hey, quite a good deal isn't it to a fish shaped pen. He continued to up trade, alright, up change and the next trade he did was to change this fish shaped pen to a smiley face doorknob. I don't know who would ever want a doorknob like this but he did make that trade and changed the pen to the doorknob. Sometime later, he made his third trade and this is a fuel box, a camp fuel box where you use for camping purposes. So, someone wanted a doorknob and gave him this fuel box. The next trade he made was for a Honda generator. Well, this is gathering momentum isn't it? Now,

it seems that some things worth something. Red paperclip, who would want it? He was gathering a lot of publicity. People were getting to know about this website called one red paperclip. It's true, you can find it still today. He continued to trade this Honda generator and got a keg of Budweiser beer and some alcoholic wanted the keg of Budweiser beer and change it for a snowmobile. (Laughter in the congregation) quite cool.

Now, I'm not going to show you all the trades he did. In total he traded 14 times in various parts of Canada. Eventually, this is what he got. This is a real story alright, it is a true story, I am not smoking you, you can find it in the web and this is the man, Kyle MacDonald, one red paperclip. Wow, this guy is brilliant. I mean, so many of us are working so hard just to get a house. All you need to do is know how to change and barter and trade well, that's all you need to do. Ah, but we may do so in the commercial realm, but when it comes to the spiritual realm, people make a poor exchange. We exchange very poorly.

We got the short end of the deal by far. What you mean pastor? Now, look at this, this is the language of Paul, he says:

You trade the glory of the incorruptible God, to the image made like to corruptible man. It is stupid, it is mo-rah'-ee-nos.

And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

Why?

1. You trade something that Someone who is on corruptible to something that is corruptible- that is stupidity number one.

Stupidity number two is this:

2. God is traded to be an image made like to corruptible man.

Consider a little bit what this means. Man is made in whose image? Man is made in God's image. So Paul is saying, you are exchanging God, the real God, for an image, of an image that is like unto God. You see that? You are exchanging God for an image that is in the likeness of the image of God. You are exchanging the Real God, for the shadow of a shadow of the Real God.

It pales in comparison; you have made a very poor trade. It's almost like a man, coming to you within his house or you going to a man with your house and say, can I have your red paperclip. I mean, we laughed at that, it's so stupid, but that's what man does? Why, because he first denies God, he is now plunged into darkness and now he makes a poor choice to desecrate God's name. Shames God, misrepresents God, insults God. That's not who God is.

Look at the decline. Of course, we know in Greek mythology, there are gods that are made like man, Zeus, and so on and so forth. Man, even in our Chinese culture, there are, in many cultures there are images, God fashioned after the image of man.

But, man doesn't stop there. He tries to look for other objects to worship and so when he sees a monkey and an elephant or whatever other creature, according to the Bible, he fashions his God after them, birds, four footed beasts and creeping things. Creeping things here is a word that means reptiles, snakes. And you see, from a glorious God, he changes to an image of the likeness of an image of God, that is man and he doesn't stop there, he continues to plunge deeper to birds and bees and reptiles. That is the decline of man.

The idolatry we see around us, reminds us of the tremendous darkness the world is in today. And by the way, idolatry does not stop only at material things. Oh, you say pastor, I am so glad I don't have idols in my home. I have cleared them from my shelves. I used to have them, but now no more. But let me say, idolatry is not only material, it is also mental, because the Bible says in Colossians 3:5 that covetousness is idolatry.

Col 3:5

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

You say, why? Covetousness is a desire to worship, what? Covetousness is the worship of wealth, mammon, riches, and a man today instead worshiping and glorifying God he worships and glorifies wealth. Ah, when I have my first million bucks I will have made it in life. His dependence is on wealth. His goal is wealth, he serves wealth, he wants wealth, wealth gives him the joy, his god is wealth. And Paul says, that is idolatry because idolatry is not just material, what you hold in your hands, it is what you have in your hearts. It's mental and even Christians today can sin in idolatry.

Yes, you may have trusted the Lord Jesus but practically, in your life, you are looking to something else other than God for your joy, something else other than God for your goal in life and we have fallen into the sin of idolatry.

You say, why is God angry, why is God angry at man? I think it is absolutely reasonable because man first rejects God even though he knows Him. He's now plunged into darkness and instead of glorifying God, he shames God, insults God, misrepresents God and represents God as man, as thirds birds, as beasts and as reptiles. Can you imagine what it would it would have been like? Can you imagine your son coming to you and says daddy, you are no daddy, you are a beast, I mean, I cannot take that but imagine, and this is what man does God all the time. Profanes His Name. And this is the sin that God warns against, isn't it?

Remember the 10 Commandments? What's the first commandment? Bible quiz time. (Laughter in the congregation) and I am ashamed. First commandment is, "Thou shalt have no other gods." The second commandment "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God?" No. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath or that is in the water under the earth." The second commandment is a commandment against idolatry; not to represent God with any graven images and to bow and worship that image.

You say why? You say, it helps me you know, God, I need to have a focus, I need to see something and focus on it to worship. I can't see you God so let me make an image. Wrong, wrong thinking! Why? Because this is the question you need to ask yourself, to whom, if you say you want an image to represent God. God 's question to you is "To whom then would you liken God or to what likeness will you compare unto Him?" Is there anything that is like God, is there anything that can suitably represents God? The answer is this, "No, because there is nothing in heaven, nothing in the earth and nothing in the waters beneath that suitably represents God. Nothing!" So, if you say you want an image to help me in worship, the answer is no, because it actually distracts you from true worship. It is not a representation, it is a misrepresentation of who God is and that is why God says "No, no to idolatry."

Isa 42:8

I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

No! You say, why God is angry? Because we misrepresent God.

The people of Israel learned this lesson hard and that evil wicked desire to have idols is so real. When Moses went up to the mountain to meet with the Lord, the people of Israel, at the bottom of the mountain began to allow their hearts to manifest itself. They said, "We want to make a golden calf."

Let's look at that episode in the Bible. The Bible tells us:

Exo 32:1-5

And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us (Added by Pastor : We want something to represent God to go ahead of us); for as for this Moses (Added by Pastor : Not much respect for their leader), the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not (Added by Pastor : We know not ) what is become of him (Added by Pastor : Maybe he has died, so let us make our own gods).

And Aaron said unto them (Added by Pastor : Alright, let's do it), Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. (Added by Pastor :You know, that desire to worship idols is so strong that they are willing to give up their jewelry, maybe their heirlooms and wealthy possessions.)

And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron.

And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. (Added by Pastor : Let this represent the God who brought you out. This, this ugly looking thing? Yes, this is what we made with our hands, yes, this is what we meet with your earrings, this is the one who led us out, let's worship this, they said)

And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD.

Ah, this is what will represent, Jehovah. You see, they did not break the first commandment in a sense, it's still Jehovah. But they break the second commandment, in making substitute images of God and the Lord said unto Moses:

Exo 32:7-10

And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves:

They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

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.

Exo 32:33,35

And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. And the LORD plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made.

God's fierce wrath is ignited against graven images, against idolatry. It is so serious that I think I need to warn you that in Exodus chapter 20 whether 10 Commandments are given, God says:

Exo 20:5

Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me;

Your sin of idolatry will pay back in your third and fourth generation, that's how serious it is. Believe it or not at your own risk. And God says, this sin of idolatry is a manifestation of how they hate me.

You say, is that so God? Is making an idol, a symbol, a representation that I hate You. Yes, why? Understand the whole logic and theology behind it. It begins when we know God but reject Him and then it moves on to the state of darkness and in their own blind state, they create for themselves, a desecration of God. That's why, I think in Exodus 20:5, making graven images to worship God is not a sign that I'm coming to God, but is a sign that I'm running from God and they hate the Lord.

You see, that's the reasoning in Scriptures and that's the reality as you walk out on this place and you go to the places of worship, you go to people's houses and you see that they're actually not drawing near to God; they are running away from the True God.

God is angry not because of ignorance, but because of rejection and when man is left to himself, he does not draw near to God, he slips further and further and further and further away from God. Intelligent people today worship idols because it is a spiritual problem. Idolatry represents a running away from God.

Let me give you a preview or what will happens when man slips into idolatry. He has not reached the bottom yet. It began with a rejection of God. They lived in darkness, they desecrate God and it will manifest itself in verses 24 onwards. I just want to read these verses. I am now going to explain them. The task is for us to look at these verses next week onwards, but when man runs away from God, this is what's going to happen. This is what explains the world we live in today. The mess in the world today, why? Because it begins with a rejection of God and man will face this, wherefore God also gave them up. There is a time when God gives up. The Bible says:

Rom 1:24-31

Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour 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 God gave them up (Added by Pastor : Can you see how many times God gave them up? They have cast of restraint by rejecting God and so God says "I gave you up." To what,) unto vile (Added by Pastor : dirty, filthy) 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, 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 (Added by Pastor : Or appropriate). 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 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, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: The list goes on!

Why is man so wicked? Why are we full of sins? It began with the rejection of the knowledge of God.

That's where Paul begins, in his treatise, in his golden book. "I am going to give you the good news" Paul says "But before I start, this is what you need to understand, God is angry with sinful men and He is just, He is absolutely righteous to be angry with sinful men because men when they knew God, cast off that knowledge, plunged into darkness and desecrate His Name. And that's why, you need the gospel, you need the Light of the gospel to shine in your dark and evil hearts."

Rom 1:21-23

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God,

Rom 1:21-23

Because that, 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. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

Rom 1:21-23

Because that, 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. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, 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.

That's why 2 Corinthians 4:6 says

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness (Added by Pastor : He's saying like creation, the world was in darkness, but God gave light.)

And your heart today is in darkness until God gives light and what is the light? The light is the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Cor 4:6

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Why do you need Jesus, why do we sing, "People need the Lord", because man is in darkness until the light of Jesus comes into our lives. Because Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by me.

John 14:6

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

You don't go to God by your graven images, you go to God by Jesus who came and died for the sins of the world. Who came to redeem men, who came to reconcile sinful man who deserves nothing but the wrath of God, to a Holy God.

If you're here today, and you do not know Jesus, this is the declaration of God's Word. You have got to make a choice. Would you submit to Jesus Christ or would you want to continue in the darkness and the deception of your hearts.

My friends, I end also for all my Christian brothers and sisters. There is a judgment against idolatry in our lives, covetousness and any other things we depend upon other than God. But if you obey God today, there is blessings for you, because Exodus 20:5,6 tells us, while there is a curse, there is also a comfort: "And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my Commandments."

If God be your God, love Him with all your heart. Keep His Commandments and God will bless.

Exo 20:5,6

Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

The last message I want to share with you is about a man who obeyed God I love Him and God blessed. His name is Hezekiah. King Hezekiah, in 2 Kings, he removed the high places. These places were places where people set up the altars to worship other

gods and when he came into the rule, he says this cannot continue. He removed the high places, he breaks the images. A courageous king to do so, it goes counter culture to the entire nation. But, he was a godly, spiritual man. He took away the high places, the images, he cut down the groves, break it in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days, the children of Israel did burn incense to it and he called it Nehustan.

This brazen serpent is what God commanded Moses to make in the wilderness. It saved Israel from the plague but instead of glorifying God, they now glorify the brazen serpent and even that which God commanded to make, is not for worship. And King Hezekiah, break it, destroyed it and he trusted in the Lord God of Israel so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah nor any that were before him for he clave to the Lord and departed not from following Him but kept His commandments which the Lord commanded Moses and the Lord was with him and he prospered withersoever he went forth.

2 Kin 18:4-7

He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan.

He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him.

For he clave to the LORD, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses. And the LORD was with him; and he prospered whithersoever he went forth:

Friends, life is simple, choose God, choose life, choose anything else, reject Him and you face the judgment of a God who is angry at sinful man. Let's bow for a word of prayer.

I know, this has been a heavy going message, but it is not my message, it's God's Word and I say it with great compassion, that if you today are rejecting the knowledge of God in your life, you face a perilous situation. Without you knowing it, you are living in darkness. But God is merciful. I believe you can hear the message today because does intend to shine His Light into your darkened hearts. And this light is found in Jesus Christ, our Savior. Jesus, the Son of God who came that He

may die on the cross to bear away our sins. Jesus, who rose again the third day, because He is victorious over sin, is willing to save you.

My dear friends, would you, would you, consider the claims of Christ and receive the gospel, to repent from your sins and to come and trust Jesus to be your own, because otherwise, we stand condemned, we stand incurring the wrath of a Holy God.

My dear friends, my fellow Gospeliters, brothers and sisters-in-Christ. God hates idolatry and there is sure judgment for idolatry. Is your heart today loving Jesus, loving God and keeping His Commandments? Ah, my friends, God has a promise to bless you, God has a promise to prosper you if you will keep His Commandments.

Father, we thank you today for Your Word, thank you, that we do not need to apologize for Scripture because it is all about You. Restore Your people today, when we can glorify You in our lives. We pray for those who need to be saved, those who need to make the decisions to take Christ to be their Savior that Your Spirit would so convict and convince. We pray for Christians today who are drifting away from you. Lord, show Thyself strong and revive us again. We thank You, we pray all these things humbly in Jesus name. Amen. God bless.