

When God Gives Up (*Part 3*) ***Romans 1:24-32***

Sermon-in-a-Sentence: When individuals or a society persist in rejecting God and suppressing the truth of His Word, God allows them to indulge their evil desires without restraint and then suffer the inevitable consequences of their sin.

The rejection of God and His truth results in a downward spiral of the individual and the society that ends in total moral depravity and spiritual death. God abandons man to his sins; sin and its terrible consequences become the judgment of God. He does this so that people might come to their senses, repent of their sin and cry out to Him for forgiveness, cleansing and empowerment to overcome sin in their lives.

I. The Reality of God's Wrath (1:18a) – God's wrath is a present reality for those who are rejecting the Lord Jesus Christ.

II. The Recipients of God's Wrath (1:18b) – God is pouring out His wrath on those who refuse to submit to His truth and who pursue a lifestyle of wickedness and sin.

III. The Reason for God's Wrath (1:18c) – God is pouring out His wrath on those who deliberately and systematically seek to remove Him from every aspect of their lives and society.

IV. The Reasonableness of God's Wrath (1:19-23) – God's wrath is reasonable and Man is without excuse because he has willfully rejected the clear and understandable revelation of God's existence, power and nature. Man's rejection of God and His truth leads invariably to spiritual blindness and moral depravity. He then creates false gods made in his own likeness and the image of created things.

V. The Revelation of God's Wrath (1:24-32)

...God gave them up / over...

A. To sexual impurity resulting in degradation and idolatry (1:24-25)

- When people reject God and His truth, He allows them to indulge the "sinful desires of their hearts" resulting in sexual perversion and spiritual idolatry.
- "Physical intimacy between one man and one woman in marriage is the only sexual relationship that has divine approval (Gen. 2:24, Matt. 19:4-6)." (*Charles Swindoll, Coming to Terms with Sin, p. 18*)
- Man, male and female, *is* the image of God. Human sexuality and gender are expressions and manifestations of the image of God. Therefore, the perversion and abuse of human sexuality and gender are direct attacks on the image of God. That's why sexual sins are such an abomination to God. (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:18-24)

B. To shameful lusts resulting in homosexuality and perversion (1:26-27)

- According to the Bible, homosexuality is a sin, not a sickness or an innate, sexual orientation. (Genesis 18:20; Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Jude 7)

- "People are born not as homosexuals but as heterosexuals. The 'natural' or biological function of a man or woman is to have sexual relations with someone of the opposite sex, not with a member of the same sex. Neither is homosexuality an illness that requires treatment. If it were a physical disease, then it is the only sickness in Scripture that God says is worthy of everlasting damnation...The biblical view of homosexuality is that it's a sin. And like any other sin, it's committed freely by creatures who are in rebellion against God." *(Swindoll, Terms, p. 19)*
- "Since homosexuality is a sin, it can be forgiven and overcome. Some people seem to think that...practicing homosexuals...are beyond God's forgiveness. This simply is not so...(1 Cor. 6:9-11)...God can and will forgive the sin of homosexuality and help a person to overcome it. But first, an individual must acknowledge that his or her homosexuality is wrong, and then confess it to God (1 John 1:7-9)." *(Swindoll, Terms, pp. 19-20)*
- Homosexuality is "unnatural...indecent...perversion"; it is contrary to and against God's design for Man.
- "In this passage, the point is not that homosexuality is a sin that should be punished. Rather *homosexuality itself is the punishment.*" *(The New King James Study Bible, p. 1880. Emphasis added)*
 - "...sin brings its own punishment in the form of more shameful sins and...the yielding to wrong desire always results in bondage to passions even more perverse and 'vile'." *(Charles Erdman, Romans, p.35)*
- "Throughout history, one of the marks of a society in decline has been an increased tolerance of and participation in homosexual activity. It has always been a strong indicator that the foundational unit of a culture—the family—was breaking down." *(Swindoll, Terms, p. 19)*
- "God created the human body with the capacity to enjoy intense sexual pleasure within the context of a life-long covenant between a man and a woman. Far from being something shameful or degrading, sex as God intended honors the gift and the Giver. But humankind has twisted this wonderful gift into something subhuman." *(Swindoll, Insights on Romans, p. 48)*

Dealing with Homosexual Desires

"If you have [homosexual] desires, you can and must resist acting upon them. Consciously avoid places or activities you know will kindle temptations of this kind. Don't underestimate the power of Satan to tempt you, nor the potential for serious harm if you yield to these temptations. Remember, God can and will forgive sexual sins just as he forgives other sins. Surrender yourself to the grace and mercy of God, asking him to show you the way out of sin and into the light of his freedom and his love. Prayer, Bible study, and strong support in a Christian church can help you to gain strength to resist these powerful temptations. If you are already deeply involved in homosexual behavior, seek help from a trustworthy, professional, pastoral counselor." *(The Life Application Study Bible, p. 2029)*