

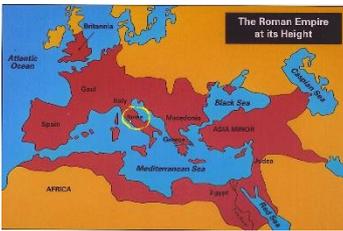
Romans 1.18-32

“Very Bad News”

May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. Romans 15.5-7

1 UNITY KILLER in a church is PRIDE – Individual or Group > acts Superior
Pride over Positions, Professions, Passports, Pedigree, or Popularity > IN & OUT

Historical Background to Letter to ROMANS



Sometime in the 40's AD of 1st C –

Jews were KICKED-OUT of ROME

"Since the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he [the Emperor Claudius] expelled them from Rome."
Divus Claudius 25

Secular History of Reign of Emperor Claudius > Agitation of CHRIST

CONFIRMED by Dr. Luke – Inspired by H.S. – in Inerrant History of Church...

Paul...went to Corinth. And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them Acts 18.1,2

Roman Church HAD been JEW & GENTILE church

With the DECREE & EXPULSION became a GENTILE ONLY church

In the early 50's Decree LIFTED – Jews allowed BACK into ROME

Challenge of RE-INTEGRATION to All SOCIETY, including the CHURCH

Letter Written 55 ca AD from Corinth, Paul INSIDE Story from Prisc. & Aquila

Paul finished APOSTOLIC Work in Eastern Med – 2 REASONS to come Rome

...my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you
Romans 1.10,11

Apostle of Gentiles – Wants church in Gentile Capital to be UNITED & Strong
 Wants this STRONG church to be SENDING church > him to SPAIN!

Romans, Paul's clearest Presentation of God's GOSPEL MEDICINE

If NOT SICK probably won't go to DOCTOR – No NEED for TREATMENT

To help Create UNITY – Paul FIRST tells Gentiles how MUCH They Need it!

Don't WORRY – as we'll see in next weeks – PANDEMIC – We All Sin-Sick!

SURPRISING SHIFT IN PAUL'S TEACHING

v. 17 “in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed” NO BETTER NEWS

v. 18 “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven” NO WORSE NEWS

MOST DREADFUL DESCRIPT. OF HUMAN RACE IN ALL LITERATURE

Paul would have FAILED course in MODERN EVANGELISM TECHNIQUES

No Making Relationships / No Warm Fuzzy Feelings / No Focus on Felt Needs

Blunt and Bold TALK ABOUT THE FIRES OF HELL & JUDGMENT

1.17 “in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed”

3.21 “now a righteousness from God, apart from Law, has been made known”

1.18–3.20 Who Needs this Righteousness? – Gentile, Religious, Jews, All

“Nothing keeps people away from Christ more than their inability to see their need of him or their unwillingness to admit it.”

John Stott

1st Step of Alcoholic's Anonymous 12 Step Prog. “I am powerless over alcohol”

1. God's Truth Concealed (2. God's Wrath Revealed)

a. Man(kind) Knows the True God

THESE PEOPLE "Gentiles" = OUTSIDE GOD'S COVENANT PROMISES

Some would say "PAGAN" = Irreligious Gentiles / EVEN THESE PEOPLE...

v. 19 what may be known about God is plain, because God has made it plain

THEIST – Believer in "Theos" / God

ATHEIST – There is NO God ('a' = Greek for Negation)

AGNOSTIC – Doubter

KNOW GOD BY NATURE – God's Finger Prints are ON US / Made in IMAGE

2.15 "requirements of the law are written on their hearts"

v. 19 God's invisible qualities --his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made

OXYMORON Invisible God seen by His Works/ Seen our Hearts / Conscience

GOD is Eternal / GOD is Divine / God the Creator = GOD IS GOD

"We are blind to God's revelation, but not so blind we can plead ignorance"

John Calvin

"NATURAL REVELATION" – Truth of God in Creation & Conscience

God is Better Known through Bible – But even without Bible people Know God

Paul spoke of THIS KNOWLEDGE to Pagan Gentiles in Lystra

"The living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them... He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy"

Acts 14.15-17

v. 21 they knew God

v. 32 they know God's righteous decree

IMPOSSIBILITY of ATHEISM – Paul strong point – MAN KNOWS GOD

NOT perfect, complete, or Exhaustive Knowledge / Partial at Best

“There is enough evidence of God in a flower to lead a child as well as a scientist to worship him. There is sufficient evidence in a tree, a pebble, a grain of sand, a fingerprint, to make us glorify God and thank Him.” James Boice

OBVIOUS – All People Know God – What do they do with this knowledge?

b. Refuses to Glorify God v. 21 “not glorified him”

NOT A PASSIVE IGNORANCE / CLEARLY A WILLFUL REBELLION

Man HATES GOD for His SOVEREIGNTY – His Most Basic Attribute

If God is not Sovereign / He is Not God // RULER OVER ALL THINGS

HATRED SEEN IN GARDEN OF EDEN – Total Freedom of Adam ALMOST

Thousands of Trees to Enjoy / Hundreds of Fruits to Eat / Whole Earth was His

FRUIT OF ONE TREE WAS OFF LIMITS / token of God’s Sovereign Rule

ADAM COULD NOT STAND LIMITING BOUNDARY / check on freedom

NOTHING WAS MORE FOOLISH OR IRRATIONAL THAN ADAM’S SIN

Nothing to Gain / Everything to Loose / But man WANTS TO BE SOVEREIGN

Man HATES GOD for His HOLINESS – exposes us, WE ARE NOT HOLY

HOLINESS IS ATTRIBUTE MOST OFTEN USED TO DESCRIBE GOD

WE ARE DRAWN TO HIS HOLINESS LIKE A MOTH TO A FLAME

Yet at the Same Time – God’s Holiness REPELLS US FROM HIM / Paradox

“Woe is me, for my eyes have seen the King – Holy, Holy, Holy”

Man HATES GOD for His OMNISCIENCE – God KNOWS everything, us too!

COVER OUR NAKEDNESS BEFORE GOD / Cover ourselves with Fig Leaves

HATE LIVING IN GOD'S FISHBOWL / EXPOSURE IS INTOLERABLE

Man HATES GOD for His IMMUTABILITY – God DOES NOT CHANGE
ATTRIBUTE MAKES ALL THE OTHERS SEEM MOST TERRIBLE TO US

SOVEREIGN – If He were Retiring Chairman of the Board WE COULD WAIT
WE ARE ETERNAL / WE COULD WAIT HIM OUT / THEN TAKE OVER
BUT HE WILL BE SOVEREIGN FOREVER AND EVER / NEVER RETIRES

HOLINESS – If He may TIRE OF HOLDING SUCH HIGH STANDARDS
IF HE MAY LOOSEN UP / WE CAN WAIT TO DO OUR SINNING
BUT HE WILL BE HOLY THROUGH ALL ETERNITY / Never Relents Ideals

OMNISCIENT – Maybe God's MEMORY FAIL with AGE / FORGET
IF OUR BAD DEEDS WILL BE FORGOTTEN / WE CAN LIVE WITH THAT
BUT HE IS UNCHANGABLY OMNISCIENT / NEVER EVER FORGETFUL

c. Neglects to be Thankful v. 21 “not give thanks to him”

“The man or woman of faith is one who gives thanks. Unbelief, on the other
hand, has a short and ungrateful memory.” Os Guinness

LACK OF THANKFULNESS – UNACCEPTABLE TO SECULAR MAN

Grandma /Aunty sends yearly B-Day Gift > Little Bobby or Bobby Jean

BUSY LITTLE BOBBY NEVER REMEMBERS TO SAY THANKS

Tolerated ONCE or TWICE – After that no more for Ungrateful Little Creep

“Man does not thank God for his mercy, for his goodness, for his dealings with
us in providence. We take the sunshine for granted; we are annoyed if we do not
get it. We take the rain for granted. How often do we thank God...the giver of
“every good and perfect gift.” Martyn Lloyd-Jones

d. Suppress Truth of God

v. 18 men who suppress the truth by their wickedness

“take” “hold” “hold fast” “hold back” “restrain” // holding Ball Underwater

NOT just a MISTAKE/ FALLING DOWN/ ACCIDENTAL FAILURE

DELIBERATE DECISION/ DETERMINED ACT/ PRE-MEDITATED EVIL

NEB “we STIFLE the truth” / Jerusalem Bible “keep the truth imprisoned”

People DO NOT KNOW GOD BECAUSE they do NOT WANT to KNOW HIM

ATHEISM – Not Man’s Ignorance of God but Man’s Dislike of God

The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One. "Let us break their chains," they say, "and throw off their fetters."
Psalm 2.2,3

WE WILL NOT HAVE THIS MAN RULE OVER US!

e. Exchanges the Truth for a Lie v. 25 exchanged the truth of God for a lie

THE ULTIMATE LIE / Falsehood of Idolatry / Worship creature not Creator

ALLOW GOD-SHAPED VACUUM in our LIVES to be FILLED W/ Substitutes

v. 28 they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God

“God, we do not want you. We want you to get out of our lives, to leave us alone. We want to do our own thing – WITHOUT YOUR INTERFERENCE”

IF WE REJECT GOD – who is All Reality, WE WILL HAVE UNREALITY

MODERN THEOLOGY – “Just Do It” / “If it feels good, do it” / by all means!

“New Freedom” / Liberation / Set free from Traditional Values / Sex Revolution

v. 21 their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

v. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools

“FOOL” NOT INTELLECTUAL BUT MORAL / “Fool says there is no God”

Truthiness is “What I say is right, and [nothing] anyone else says could possibly be true.” It’s not only that I *feel* it to be true, but that *I* feel it to be true”

Stephen Colbert

American Dialect Society chose “truthiness” as the 2005 Word of the Year

Merriam-Webster dictionary named truthiness its 2006 Word of the Year

“You have your way. I have my way. As for the right way, the correct way, and the only way, it does not exist.”

Friedrich Nietzsche

Open and inclusive religious pluralism on the matter of religions’ truth claims

“Who am I to judge?”

“If that’s what they choose, whatever”

“Each person decides for himself”

“If it works for them, fine”

f. Worships created things rather than Creator

v. 25 They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator--who is forever praised. Amen.

No one is Postmodern, when Balancing their Personal Financial Accounts

Reading the Directions on a Medicine Bottle

Looking both ways before you Cross the Street – unless you’re Chinese

“Religion is not considered an objective truth to which we submit, but only a matter of personal taste which we choose.”

Greg Koukl

g. Without Excuse v. 20 so that men are without excuse.

REVELATION OF GOD IS SUFFICIENT – man does not know all about God,

but he clearly knows enough to give Him glory, worship, and thanks

MOST OFTEN HEARD PHRASES “It wasn’t my fault” “I could not help it”
 “Nobody told me” “My intentions were good” “Do not be so critical”
 LEAST HEARD “I was wrong” “I am sorry”

GENTILES of ROME – No Excuse ONLY HAD WITNESS OF NATURE
 No Bible! No Churches! No Preachers! / we are 1000 X’s MORE GUILTY

2. God’s Wrath Revealed

v. 18. The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the
 godlessness and wickedness of men

WRATH of GOD –difficult concept– How can Righteous God be Wrathful God?

PROBLEM – If Honest – MOST CANNOT IMAGINE SINLESS ANGER
 RIGHTEOUS Anger – Theory we can Imagine / but NEVER EXPERIENCED
 MOST of our OUTBURSTS of ANGER – Much evidence of Unrighteousness

Remember – WE are MADE in GOD’S IMAGE / Don’t MAKE HIM into OURS
 We may not be able to Separate Sin and Anger BUT GOD CAN / AND DOES

GOD NOT ONLY is RIGHTEOUS / RIGHTEOUS in ALL HIS ACTIONS

“The wrath of God...is almost totally different from human anger. It does not mean that God loses his temper, flies into a rage, or is ever malicious, spiteful or vindictive. The alternative to wrath is not love but neutrality in the moral conflict. And God is not neutral. On the contrary, his wrath is his holy hostility to evil, his refusal to condone it or come to terms with it, his just judgment upon it.”

John Stott

OTHER PASSAGES – FUTURE WRATH OF GOD / PRESENT EVENT

Wrath of God “IS BEING Revealed Against” / DIRECTED AGAINST – Evil

FATHER OF PRODIGAL SON RELEASES HIM TO WANDER AND FALL

“When the gods wish to punish us, they answer our prayers” Oscar Wilde

MAN’S PRAYERS ARE ANSWERED – 3 X’s “God gave them over...”

“We think of God as a miser of happiness, keeping back from us all that would make us happy. We think that by running away from him we will be happy, wild, and free. But it doesn’t work that way. Instead of happiness we find misery. Instead of freedom we find debilitating bondage of sin.” James Boice

a. Given over to Sexual Impurity

v. 24 “degrading of their bodies with one another”

v. 25 “exchanged the truth of God for a lie”

GOD GAVE THEM OVER – OVER to Consequences of Heart-felt Choices

OVER to Principles of MORAL GRAVITY – Leaving God means Falling Down

WHY Paul CONCENTRATE on SEXUAL SINS? Visible? Painful? Tragic?

Sex ONE OF GOD’S GREATEST GIFTS FOR MAN /

TO BE CELEBRATED IN THE CONFINES OF MARRIAGE

GREAT GIFT OF GOD IS TRASHED BY WICKED PEOPLE

CONNECTION BTWN – People’s Reject God’s Truth and Moral Problems

HISTORY RECORDS – Numerous Secular Philosophers had Moral Deficiencies

Young Believer – Taught this at Seminar by man named Bill Gothard

Attended in So. Calif with young lady from Panama

TOOK HER HOME – FATHER WAS ANGRY AT OUR WASTE OF A DAY

BEGAN LISTING SECULAR ARGUMENTS AGAINST GOD & HIS WORD

“Learned those today, people with those ideas are hiding moral problems”

TECHNICOLOR DISPLAY OF PANAMANIAN RAGE!!

b. Given over to Shameful Lusts - downhill slide from Impurity to Perversion

v. 26 “God gave them over to shameful lusts”

v. 26 “Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones”

v. 26 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women & were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men

KEY IDEA – UNNATURALNESS OF SAME SEX RELATIONSHIPS

UNDERSTAND HOW PEOPLE WITHOUT SCRIPTURE PRACTICE

SEXUAL IMMORALITY –SEEMS Natural – Popular Song asks Question

“How could it be wrong, when it FEELS SO RIGHT?”

Tim Keller: VIKING Culture – Highly Valued to Break Things, Kill People

Young Man > Can’t Wait to Grow Up – Break Things, Kill People

Viking Moves to 21st C Western City – Sick, Therapy, Jail?

Viking Culture – No Feelings of having SEX with Fellow Vikings

DIFFERENT Cultures – Teach & Honor Different Values, Feelings

BUT EVEN NATURE TEACHES THE ABSURDITY OF HOMOSEXUALITY

Obvious that our Sexual Organs Designed for Another Kind of Union

((MAY BE OBVIOUS TO ME – NOT so Obvious Growing Gay Churches

HOMOSEXUAL THEOLOGIANS (oxymoron?) Interpretation of VERSES

1. Passage is about WRATH of God / NOT Sexual Ethics

TRUE – Primary meaning is to show Outworking of God’s Wrath

BUT THIS SEXUAL CONDUCT is Outworking of God’s Wrath / NEGATIVE

2. Paul Condemns PEDERASTY – Roman Men who preyed on Young Boys
 TEXT IS SILENT ABOUT THIS SIN / POPULAR IN 1st CENTURY ROME

3. “Nature” = It was wrong for Heterosexuals to perform Homosexual Acts
 IT IS NATURAL FOR THOSE BORN GAY, FOR THEM IT IS NORMAL
 MODERN DISTINCTION btwn Sexual Orientation & Practice / Not in Bible))

ALL ARE BORN INTO SIN AND CHRIST HAS COME TO SET US FREE
 HOMOSEXUAL Partnership – No matter how Loving and Committed
 AGAINST NATURE, SCRIPTURE & GOD’S BEST FOR MAN & WOMAN

v. 26 “received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion”

REFERENCE TO AIDS, STD’S? NO! Paul never heard of these Sex Diseases
 BUT CLEARLY SAYING – Sin has Severe Consequences – DANGEROUS

“It is after you have realized that there is a Moral Law and a Power behind that law, and that you have broken the law and put yourself wrong with that Power—it is after this and not a moment sooner, that Christianity begins to talk.”

C.S. Lewis

JOHN NEWTON – Slave trader, who himself became a Slave, wrote “Amazing Grace” – Anglican pastor and preacher – Chaplain to Queen of England

“I have never despaired for any man since God saved me” John Newton

ONLY REMEDY FOR EVIL IN GOD’S UNIVERSE IS JESUS CHRIST

c. Given over to a Depraved Mind

v. 28 “he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done”

ORDER 1. Immorality 2. Perverse Homosexuality 3. Depraved Mind WHY?

DETERMINATION TO BELIEVE FALSEHOOD, LIVE BY IT, PASS IT ON

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Isaiah 5.20

Pastors – Boy & Girl Scouts – Everyone should be LIKE Them & ENDORSE

Satan’s Promise in Eden “Your mind will be OPENED, you will be like God”

DEPRAVED MIND >leads to Dirty Laundry List > 21 Random Acts of Evil

Because of these all Standards Disappear, Society Disintegrates

SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS – academic support to our Moral Perversity

Finding Genes Showing that we are Born Gay, or Drunk, or Addicted

Gang Rape is Normal behavior for Ducks – why not man?

Infanticide is Normal behavior for Baboons – and selfish sophisticated man

WE ARE ALSO ANIMALS / WE CANNOT BE ACCOUNTABLE BEINGS

v. 29 “They have become filled with every kind of wickedness”

21 Item Catalogue Vices / CAN WE FACE SUCH DEVASTING UNMASKING

TOTAL DEPRAVITY – Every part of man is touched and twisted by Sin

NO DEFINITE ORDER / NOT Systematic List

SPEWS OUT LIKE A LAVA OF EVIL from Deep in Within the Heart of Man

“every kind of wickedness” (cf. v. 18) – everything opposed to God’s character

“evil” inclination to wickedness, takes pleasure in vicious & unprofitable actions

“greed” – passion for more, lust to advance > drives most national economies

“depravity” – maliciousness, deliberately doing other people harm

1st FOUR VICES “human race is filled with them” / Sins against PROPERTY

NEXT 5 VICES – Against PEOPLE / Owners of the PROPERTY

“envy” – goes beyond greed, chief source of greed is jealousy

“murder” – Gk. Word sounds like envy / Cain > How envy can lead to murder

“strife” – contention, quarrelling, wrangling

“deceit” – outright treachery, words set a trap for unwary, trap for personal gain

“malice” – customary or habitual evil, someone out to harm other people

NEXT SIX VICES – PRIDE IS AT THE CENTER

“gossips” – secrets which harm the reputation of another, deadly vice

“slanderers” – gossip done in secret, slander is done openly, to defame a person

“God haters” – to speak against man is to speak against His Maker

“HOW COULD GOD do THAT TO ME? HOW DARE HIM! I could kill Him”

“insolent” – pride that sets a person up against God, intolerable sin

“arrogant” – some today consider virtue, to regard others with utter contempt

“boastful” – seek admiration by false claims of what one is or does

“invent ways of doing evil” traditional evils not enough, Rome’s evil inventions

“disobey their parents” utter disregard for parent’s wishes, common all centuries

FOUR WORDS WHICH SOUND ALIKE IN GREEK AND ENGLISH

“senseless” without moral understanding, ignorant of God and His truth

“faithless” – breaking faith, people who cannot keep their promises, or be trusted

“heartless” – w/out natural affection, mother abandons child, or father his family

“ruthless” – without mercy, Screaming Mob in Coliseum, Corp. Hatchet Man

NOT EVERYONE is GUILTY of EVERY SIN / Corporate Portrait of Man

PICTURE OF HELL – Life FAR FROM God, far from any restraint or control

v. 32 “they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them”

CONCLUDING SUMMARY OF HUMAN PERVERSITY

We ENTHUSIASTICALLY APPROVES what GOD JUSTLY DISAPPROVES

LONG Message – but MUST Continue – Heard CRY of Dwight Moody

Sunday night, October 8, 1871, the well-known evangelist, D. L. Moody, preached to the largest congregation that he had yet addressed in Chicago.

Text: “What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?” Matthew 27.22

“I wish you would take this text home with you and turn it over in your minds during the week, and next Sabbath we will come to Calvary and the Cross, and we will decide what to do with Jesus of Nazareth.”

Ira D. Sankey began to lead in Singing Hymn > Never Finished the Hymn

Rush & Roar of Fire Engines whistled by the Church on Street Outside

By Morning - Much of Chicago lay in Ashes

300 people Died, 9 km² Downtown Chicago burned, more 100,000 Homeless

To Dying Day, Moody Deeply Regretted: Sent Congregation home w/out Gospel

“I have never since dared to give an audience a week to think of their salvation. If they were lost they might rise up in judgment against me. I have never seen that congregation since. I will never meet those people until I meet them in another world. But I want to tell you of one lesson that I learned that night which I have never forgotten, and that is, when I preach, to press Christ upon the people then and there and try to bring them to a decision on the spot. I would rather have that right hand cut off than to give an audience a week now to decide what to do with Jesus.”

D. L. Moody

ANOTHER DISPLAY OF THE WRATH OF GOD – CROSS OF CHRIST
SINLESS SON OF GOD – SAVIOR AND SUBSTITUTE – RIGHTEOUS ONE

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us

Galatians 3.13

SHINES > 1.16 “the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes”

NO WONDER Martin Luther found this verse “Door to Paradise” / SO CAN WE

18. The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19. since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.

20. 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 men are without excuse.

21. 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.

22. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23. and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

24. Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.

25. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, & worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator--who is forever praised. Amen.

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

28. Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. 29. 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, 30. slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; 31. they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

32. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.