

## **The Heathen Without Excuse – Part 2**

**Romans 1:24-32**

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I want you to follow with me beginning in verse 18. Paul says, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold..." down or suppress "...the truth in unrighteousness; 19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse..." notice that phrase, that statement, they are without excuse. The whole intention of this section, all the way down to chapter 3 and verse 20 is to show that the world is without excuse, that they are without righteousness, and they need the righteousness of God that comes by faith in Jesus Christ contained in the gospel that we preach. They are without excuse. Verse 21, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain..." or empty "...in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." Their whole intellectual man, their whole psyche, the whole interior of their life became foolish, and they were living in darkness. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, 23 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."

We've come to our study of Romans, the doctrinal section, beginning in verse 18 of Romans chapter 1. This section is known as "Condemnation." Paul is answering the question, "Is the world lost?" The answer that he gives in this section of Romans is: Yes, all the world is guilty before God. The first group that he calls before the judgment bar of God is the Gentile world. At that time the world was broken into two groups, the Jews and the Gentiles. The Jews consider the religious world, the Gentiles the irreligious world or the pagan world. He says the Gentiles are guilty, then we are going to see the Jews are guilty, and even moral people that may not be religious but try to live good lives are guilty before God and need salvation. Paul makes it clear that the whole world, all of mankind, is without excuse and in need of the righteousness of God. Paul had just stated that the righteousness of God is contained in the gospel. He says in verse 17, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed." In the gospel, God's righteousness is revealed. God's righteousness is given to us as a free gift through faith in Jesus Christ, but before we can understand and appreciate the gospel, we need to also understand the bad news. The gospel is the good news. We need to understand the bad news. Before we go to the doctor, we need to understand that we are sick. Before we turn to Jesus, we need to see our need of a savior. Amen? One of the great weaknesses in the so-called preaching of the gospel today in the church is we are light on sin and the need for the gospel. Why? Because, even in the church we have taken on political correctness. We've become intimidated by the world, and we will not stand for truth. We don't want to offend people. We just want everyone to be happy and to like us. Let's all hold hands and sing "Kumbaya." It undermines the need for the gospel. Man is a sinner, he needs a savior. That's the gospel. Man is not only sick, he is dead in trespasses and sins, and he needs new life. He

needs spiritual life. He doesn't just need reformation. He doesn't need religion. He needs a spiritual transformation. Spiritual life given to him through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In verse 18, Paul the apostle, as we saw last week (we didn't finish the entire text last week), actually said that they knew God, but they suppressed the truth. Now, I don't have time to go into it again, obviously or we'll never even get to our text for tonight and we will be stuck in this for a couple of weeks, but notice verse 18. It says, "For the wrath of God is revealed..." in the Greek it literally is being revealed, and God's wrath isn't just His capricious anger, where He gets mad at people and judges them. It is God's hatred of sin because of His love for the sinner. God is angry at sin because it hurts the sinner. He loves you, and He is angry at anything that would hurt or destroy you or defame His name. As a result of that, God will judge sin. The judgement of God is different than the wrath of God. The wrath of God is His feelings towards sin. The judgement of God is the retribution that God brings upon sin. The Bible says, "The wages of sin is death." The Bible says, "The soul who sins will surely die." We are going to see that in the gospel God played by His own rules, for His own Son had to die for our sin. Thus, God can become just and the justifier of all those who believe.

Notice in verse 18 that, "The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men..." and this is the key phrase at the end of verse 18, "...they hold the truth in unrighteousness." That phrase "hold" literally means to suppress, to hold down. They know the truth, but they suppress it or they hold it down, so they are without excuse. They start with the knowledge of God, they know the truth, but they suppress it or they hold it down. The unbelieving sinful heart of man does not want to come to the truth, he wants to rebel against God and follow his own sinful heart. They knew God, but they suppressed the truth, verse 18, and then verses 19 and 20, they glorified Him not as God, so they perverted the truth. There are two things they did; they suppressed the truth and they perverted the truth, and God is revealed in their conscience and in creation. We talked about that. So they come up with evolution to get rid of God so they can live however they want. Morality cannot exist without God. I don't care what you think or what you say, no God, no standard for morality. You just have to arbitrarily decide this is what is right, this is what is wrong. I mean, how do the atheists have any ultimate point for truth, any fixed point where they can say, "This is wrong. We can go no further in society. This is unacceptable, this behavior is wrong," yet there is no higher authority to appeal to. You just feel like we vote on that, or we just all get together and whatever we want our might becomes right, or whatever we decide to be in America we vote on what is moral?

Let me throw this out too, (we may not get that far tonight). What is legal is not necessarily right. Don't you forget that. Just because some behavior has been legalized in the United States of America doesn't mean it is right. You say, "Well, who says?" God. How's that? It's like, "Put that in your pipe and smoke it." I mean, try to go above God. God is the highest court of appeal. If you don't have Him, you have no fixed point. It's just, "Well, I'm stronger than you are, and this is what I say is right so you're gonna do it or I'm going to beat you up." They just arbitrarily, willy-nilly kind of have their own standards, and there is really no right or wrong. That's why ultimately the atheist can't really say anything is right or anything is really

intrinsically wrong. It's just a social kind of a construct that they develop. There is no fixed point beyond our culture that we can anchor to for what is truly right or wrong. I need to move on.

In verse 21, and I will just point out what we covered, the steps begin downward. They knew God, they suppressed the truth, they perverted the truth. They perverted the truth by doing this. They became indifferent. In verse 21 it says, "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." The heart that is darkened is their inner man, so they became foolish. I pointed out that word foolish is where we get our word "moron" from. It means moronic. A little footnote, I know that you may think, "Well, that's really rude," or "Why would you say that?" That's what the word actually is. You need to understand the word. The word actually means someone who is not living a moral life, someone who doesn't know right from wrong. A person can have a PhD and still be moronic in their thinking because they don't think morally. They don't think in the context of what is right or righteous before God. That's how the Bible describes them, so they became indifferent. They wouldn't give thanks to God, and then they had ingratitude, "neither were thankful." In verse 22, they became ignorant of God, notice in verse 22, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools," and notice in verse 23 it led to idolatry. "And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man." They suppress the truth, they pervert the truth, and then they go into idolatry. Here's another important point you need to understand. When you reject the truth, there is nowhere for you to go but to a lie. You can't float around in neutral land. You reject the truth, you reject light. There is only one direction for you to go, into darkness and lies. That's why the Bible says, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. 23 And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man," the first idols that they begin to make.

Unlike in the Theory of Evolution, they say that man started low and developed upwards in his understanding of God and that religion started very primitive and then came up. The Bible teaches the opposite, that man started with the knowledge of God and that he went downward. All this neanderthal apeman stuff is totally insane. You do your research, you do your studying. They find a piece of a skull from a monkey, and they draw a neanderthal man and call it the "missing link." Every one of these finds that they have, how do they know how much hair the dude had? Isn't it funny? They find a piece of a skull years later, if they would admit the truth, it's a chimpanzee or a monkey or a gorilla, or they'll find part of a skull of a man, part of the skull of an ape, they'll put them together and say, "We found the missing link." You haven't found any "missing link"—they're still looking for the whole chain. They find a piece of a skull, put things together, then they draw an entire man. They figure out how tall he is, the shape of his body, and how much hair he had on his body. Pray tell me how do you know that? It's insane. That's because they don't want to believe in God. They have to suppress the truth. God didn't create everything, we evolved.

Then, they turn from the true and living God, who is revealed in creation, and they make themselves god. They carve a little statue of their god, and it has eyes because we have eyes. They have a little mouth on their statue, because we have a mouth. They have little ears, little

feet, and little hands, so they carve their little god. Then they have to pick their little god up and carry it around with them, being careful not to drop and break or lose it. What a sad degeneration man has gone to. The first activity of idolatry is that man worships himself and creates an image of himself. That first image a man makes for an exchange of God became corruptible man instead of the incorruptible God. Someone said, "They begin to sing glory to man in the highest." They become worshipers of themselves and their own intellect. So what does God do? Here we go.

In verse 24 it says, "Therefore..." whenever you find a therefore, ask what it's there for. It's therefore because there is a result to their suppression of truth, their perversion of truth and their idolatry. I said this last week, idolatry will lead to immorality. Idolatry and the rejection of God will lead to immorality. Why is it that immoral behavior or a lack of morality in the United States, why is it decreasing? It's decreasing because of the lack of Christian influence. You get rid of God, you get rid of Christianity and you find that immorality, murder, divorce, rape, all the social ills of our culture today are due to the lack of our fear of God and our understanding of God. It is so sad that we don't see that. We have rejected God, and then we bemoan the evils of our culture. We teach evolution in the public schools, and when the kids act like monkeys we freak out. I see these politicians, "Why is everyone killing each other? Why all the mass shootings and the murders and all this stuff that is going on?" You've been telling them that they are accidents, that there is no God and life doesn't matter, there's no life beyond the grave, there is no fixed point, there is no real ultimate standard for right or wrong, and they act it out. You sow to the wind, you're going to reap the whirlwind. We are getting what we deserve. The wrath of God is being revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. "Therefore God also gave them up..." now you're going to find this three times. It's in verse 24, look in verse 26, "For this cause God gave them up..." and again we find it in verse 28. It says that, "... God gave them over to a reprobate mind." Three times God gives them up or God let them go.

There are two main points I want to make in closing out this chapter, if you're taking notes. The first one is that God gave them up to depraved hearts and bodies. Anybody that knows Romans and knows this section, knows that this is not an enjoyable passage from the Bible. We are going to walk through a moral cesspool for a couple of minutes here, but it's necessary for us to understand the need for the gospel. This should motivate us as Christians to get the gospel out and also to appreciate the fact that God saved us in our sinful, guilty, wretched condition. Again, verse 24, "God also gave them unto uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves. 25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie..." in the Greek it is "the" lie, "...and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen." So, again, "For this cause God gave them up..." or turned them over "...unto vile affections; for even their women did change the natural use into that which is..." and here's a key word "...against nature." So, their activity was not natural. " 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." Now God's judgment on man's idolatry was to give them over to uncleanness through the lust of their own hearts. The New Living Translation (verse 24) reads like this. "So God abandoned them to do whatever shameful

things their hearts desired. As a result, they did vile and degrading things with each other's bodies." The idea is that they rejected God, they suppressed the truth. They changed God into an idol and then went into idolatry because God was basically saying, "If you want to run from Me and go into your sin, then I will allow that because I love you and want you to suffer the results and the consequences so that you will see your need of Me, or that it will awaken you to turn back to Me, or at least you will understand the need for the gospel." So you think, "Well, why did God take His hands off?" Because we, speaking of humanity, Gentile pagan humanity, rejected the truth. It's funny how man will shake his fist at God and want to go his own way. When God lets him, then he gets mad at God, that God let him do that.

Do you know what the greatest judgement is that God could allow you to do? It's have your own way. It's to live however you want. No rules. Take a parent with young children, you have toddlers in the home. What would you think of a parent that let the kids do whatever they wanted, whenever they wanted, ate whatever they wanted, stay up as late as they wanted, watch whatever they wanted, go outside and play where ever they wanted, just free. You'd think, "Those parents need to be put in jail." Right? Somehow when God allows us to go our way because He has a purpose and a design to let us experience our need for Him, we rebel against Him. We get all upset with God. I believe that God is love as well as God is holy, and we need to understand the love of God in light of the holiness of God, that He hates and judges sin.

John Stott said, "The history of the world confirms that idolatry tends to immorality. A false image of God leads to a false understanding of sex." Now, anyone that knows this passage in Romans knows that the primary indictment in this passage is man's sexual deviancy. They are not the only sins in this passage, but they are dealt with very clearly and powerfully. Why does Paul deal with man's sexual sin and sexual deviancy? Let me say something very clear. Sex is a gift from God. I don't say that for shock value. I don't say that to get your attention. It is a gift from God. Someone says, "Praise God. I'm glad I came tonight. Did you hear what the preacher just said?" I realize that this could be lifted out of context on YouTube or somebody could take it, but whatever. It is a gift from God. Like all gifts from God, Satan hates God and hates His gifts and wants to destroy it, pervert it, and drag it through the mud. It's happening in our world right now. A wonderful, marvelous, glorious gift from God is being dragged through the gutter a hundred times over. Just turn your television on any evening and what do you have? Sex, sex, sex outside the will of God. It's flippant, perverted and disgusting. Degrading God's precious gift.

If you have a garden at home and you have soil in the garden. It is really nice in the garden. If I came over to your house and grabbed the dirt of your garden and threw it into your house, you'd say, "Hey! That doesn't belong here." With sex, God's gift belongs where God has ordained that it belongs, in the covenant relationship of marriage—one man, one woman, a monogamous heterosexual relationship. That's the only place that God has ordained for sex as that gift to be had and to be experienced. Anything outside that covenant relationship is a perversion of a God-given gift.

Paul doesn't tell us what kind of sexual sin, verse 24, but most likely at this point in the text it is heterosexual. Let me be very very clear. Sex outside of marriage is sin. What is marriage? One man, one woman, and we'll see that in just a moment. So, premarital sex is sin, fornication. Extramarital sex is sin, adultery. Lewdness, prostitution, pornography, the list could go on and on. These are all perversions of a God-given, God-ordained gift. It's any sex outside the covenant relationship of marriage. In 1 Thessalonians 4:3, Paul makes it very clear, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication." In the book of Hebrews, chapter 13:4, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." Paul does say in verse 24 that this behavior degrades our bodies. I want you to go back to verse 24. "God gave them up to uncleanness...", this is sexual immorality, "...through the lusts of their own hearts...", and what does it do? It "...dishonours their own bodies between themselves." It's dishonoring to God, and it's dishonoring to your own bodies. It's subhuman. It's not something that human beings should be engaged in, but the opposite is true that sex in marriage as God intended it ennoble sex and the covenant relationship of marriage. Then notice verse 25, "Who changed the truth of God into a lie...", do not buy the lie. "But we love each other." "Well, it's natural." "We're not hurting anybody." "We're just following the natural inclinations of our sex drive." And, we have the lies that are being permeated today by Satan through the culture. In verse 25, the word "lie" is "the lie." Not a lie, but the lie. Satan lied in the garden of Eden and said, "You shall be as gods," so you can call your own shots and live however you want. But we also live in a culture today that has lied, lied, lied, lied to a lot of people, a lot of people who as a young person became sexually active before marriage. If you're a Christian tonight, and you were sexually active before you got married, I can promise you God has forgiven your sins, but I can also promise you that if I were to interview you, and you had to go back and do it all over again, you wouldn't do it. I've never met any married person that said, "Oh, I'm so glad that I slept around before I got married. You know, you gotta test drive the car before you buy one," kind of thing. I've heard all kinds of stupid stuff. I've never met anyone that says, "Yeah, yeah I'm really glad, but now I want to settle down and get married." Maybe if you're a pagan, not a Christian. Do you understand that this is a very precious thing, a very wonderful thing. If you're a young person here right now, I didn't plan on saying this, but if you haven't gotten married, and you haven't yet lost your virginity, don't lose your virginity. Stay pure. Then, five or ten years from now, after you get married, come back and thank me. I know you're going to because it's worth more than anything. What a fresh blessing thing that is.

So you have all the lies that are floating around in our culture today. In verses 26 and 27, Paul now specifies that their sin went into homosexuality and lesbianism. Now you're saying, "Man! I can't believe the topics tonight." It's right here in the Bible. I promised myself I'd try to keep it simple and keep as close to the text as I could because I don't want to get in trouble. I hope you have a Bible open, and I hope you're following along with me. I want you to read verses 26 and 27. "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections...", some have shameful lusts, "...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...", or unrighteous or unnatural, "...and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet." Verse 26, women with

women, and verse 27, men with men. So, in verse 26 you have lesbianism, and verse 27 you have homosexuality. We can spend a whole night talking about that subject. I've dealt with it some before. I'm hoping to get Charlie Campbell here in the next few weeks. He is actually teaching on this subject right now, and he does a masterful job on answering all the questions of our culture with a full powerpoint presentation.

Let me point this out. In the Greek, in verse 26, where it says, "...their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature," the word there is "female." It is the Greek word that actually would be used for "female." Then, when it says, "...men with men..." it's the actual word that would be used for "male." I think this is interesting because Jesus in Matthew 19, quoting from Genesis, all the way back in the beginning. It says, "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh." And then when you come to Matthew 19, when Jesus is questioned about this, Jesus said, "...that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female..." He uses the very same words that Paul used here in this text, "...made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh." One of the arguments that the homosexual community, so called gay community, brings up is that Jesus never specifically condemned homosexuality. Jesus very clearly endorsed marriage as being between a man and a woman. There are multitudes of verses that do condemn this behavior as sin.

Now, let me stick to my notes again, or we won't get through this. God loves homosexuals. God loves homosexuals, but God hates sin, and their homosexual behavior is indeed sinful behavior. Let me give you some verses to write down that you can look up on your leisure. Leviticus 18:22, Leviticus 20:13, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. Some of the Corinthians had been involved in homosexuality, and they got saved and God delivered them from it. And, in 1 Timothy 1:9-10, again is a condemnation of homosexuality, not to mention God's destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Their sin was homosexuality. Their sin wasn't a lack of hospitality. This is not a sickness, it is a sin. That's good. Do you want to know why? You're supposed to say, "Yes." Because some sicknesses do not have a cure, but sin has a cure. Sin always has a cure! Amen? Do you know what the cure is? The blood of Jesus Christ. It cleanses us from all sin. Paul also makes clear that it is sin. In verse 26, he uses the phrase, "...that which is against nature." It is against nature. Then, in verse 27, he says, "...men leaving the natural use of the woman...men with men." So, you hear the argument quite often today, "I was born that way," or "They were born that way." Obviously, if they were born that way, then you couldn't say they were sinning. Now, simply taking it from the truth. If God says it's sinful behavior, then it cannot be excused, "I was born that way." That's like saying, "I was born a liar." "I was born a thief." "I was born proud, I can't help it, I'm just proud." Sure we were born that way, we are born sinners, but there is no genetic or biological evidence that they were actually born that way, or physically or biologically that they are different than anyone else. You can go through all the reasons sociologically and so forth that influences a person in that direction, but to say that, "I was born that way," or they say, "It's a civil right," and they will argue (I wasn't going to go into some of these things), they say, "You know in America years ago, a black man couldn't marry a white woman." We couldn't have interracial marriages, but I want

you to note something. It was always a black man and a white woman, or a white man and a black woman. It wasn't two men. It was a male and a female. It doesn't matter what color your skin is. You're a male and a female.

Today in our culture, we are losing gender distinctions. We are absolutely losing gender distinctions. If you take a stand for gender distinctions, people freak out! God made them male and female because the Bible doesn't teach evolution. God created us. I believe that God created them male and female. To say it's a civil rights issue is simply a lie. It's not true, and I think it's tragic that they've stole the civil rights movement. On and on their argument goes. One of the arguments they use from this text is that it was against nature. This is their argument. What is happening is that a heterosexual is engaged in homosexual activity so then it's wrong because they weren't made that way. It's okay if you're made that way because then it's not against nature. That's why, I believe, Paul used the word male and female, and when he said against nature, it means against God's creative order. It doesn't mean against the inclination of your own sinful hearts. So, again, they try to argue. Some will say, "Well, this was a man-boy interaction here. This wasn't an adult with another adult. This was kind of a man-boy thing that Paul is condemning." That is not stated in the text. They are imposing that idea. It is nowhere to be found. Do your own homework. If you just read the text, it's very evident that Paul is saying that homosexuality is against nature and that they are under the judgment of God for their sinful behavior.

What we need to do as Christians is understand that all have sinned, all have fallen short of the glory of God. There is no one righteous, no not one, and there are sins of the flesh and there are sins of the spirit. Did you know that pride is a sin? Did you know that unforgiveness is a sin? Did you know that hatred and anger are sins? Do you know that gluttony is a sin? "Oh, wait a minute, Preacher." Do you know that laziness is a sin? You sit around and do nothing and eat doughnuts all day long, you sinner! We sometimes as Christians look down our nose at other people. The Bible says all of us have sinned. We have all come short of the glory of God. If God loves the sinner but hates the sin, we should do the same. There should be no hatred for any sinner, we're in the same boat. We are all sinners, and we all have to be saved by the grace of God. Don't exchange the truth for a lie. Don't buy the lie. Be guided by God's Word. God's Word will set you free. God's Word is true.

Now, note the natural use here does not mean my nature, as I pointed out, or what seems natural to me. It's God's created order, so it's an act that is in violation of nature, God's divine established order. God created marriage, He created sex, and those are two things that Satan is trying to eliminate and destroy, two things that God has ordained. I believe that marriage is a picture of the relationship between Christ and the church. Anything that weakens marriage, divorce, is not in God's plan or design. Cohabitation is not in God's design or plan. Anything that weakens marriage the way God designed it, dishonors God and is bad for the culture. Another argument is, "It's not hurting anybody. What we do behind locked doors doesn't hurt anybody." You pervert marriage, and it hurts everybody. It hurts culture. No one is talking about the adopted children that are going to be damaged. They need a biological father and a biological mother. The damage that ensues even when divorce takes place and kids are



damaged by that. Anything that weakens marriage is dishonoring to God, weakens the culture, and has a detrimental effect on others. So in Matthew 19, Jesus makes it very clear what marriage is.

In verse 27 of the New King James Bible uses this phrase at the end of the verse, "...receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due." In the New Living Translation it says, "... they suffered within themselves the penalty they deserved." I believe that sexual immorality has a natural, built-in consequence that brings suffering, emotional, physical, spiritual turmoil and destruction to a person's life. We are all aware of sexually transmitted diseases. You know you can kill sexually transmitted diseases in America if people would open their Bibles and just started doing what God said to do. It's pretty simple. Safe sex is waiting until you're married, and once you're married, being devoted to your spouse for life. That's safe, and that's God's ordained plan if you want to live safe. Anybody knows today that you are playing Russian roulette to live a fast and loose life getting some kind of a sexually transmitted disease. I won't talk about different kinds of sexually transmitted diseases, but do your homework. It's pretty devastating on people's lives and the psyche and the emotions and the problems that ensue when we disobey God. The point is that sin does and will have its consequences.

In closing, verses 28-32, we find that God gave them up to a depraved mind that when they suppressed the truth and they pervert the truth and are given to idolatry, God gives them up and they go into immorality, it affects their minds. They don't think clearly. They don't understand properly. Verse 28 says, "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind..." there's that term, "...to do those things which are not convenient..." or right, "Being filled with all..." now buckle your seatbelts, look at verse 29, "...unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, 30 Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things..." and believe it or not, "...disobedient to parents." That's pretty radical. "31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection..." or family love, "...implacable, unmerciful: 32 Who knowing the judgment of God," they know that God is going to judge them for their sin, "...that they which commit such things are..." catch this phrase, "...worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them," or in the Greek it's giving hearty approval to others that do them. They clap for them on television talk shows. We have television talk shows with people with reprobate minds, and they're clapping for each other. This is a radical, radical list of man's degeneration, and it's perverted and inverted. Look up the word inverted. Inverted love. It's not true. When we talk about love today, "Well, you know, if you love each other..." but no one is defining love, what true love is. What love is really all about. Anybody can use the word "love." What is love? True love, God's love, is holy. True love, God's love, thinks of others not of itself. True love, God's love, is obedient to His Word.

So, notice the play on words in verse 28. "They did not like to retain God..." so "God gave them over." In the Greek it's like, they rejected God, God gave them up. God let them go. God let them follow their own path. Then they experience, verse 28, what is called a reprobate mind. Do you know what a reprobate mind is? It means that it has been tested and found to be no

good. It's a mind that doesn't work. It's a mind that does not know right from wrong. Have you noticed that in our culture today a lot of people have no concept of right or wrong? It's everything goes. They say it with a smile on their face, and they take pleasure in other people doing things that are sinful and wicked. A reprobate mind is a mind that cannot discern right from wrong. It's a mind that doesn't function properly. It can't be thinking of what is right or wrong. It doesn't work, it's broken.

Paul's list in verses 29-31, there are 21 sins. Every one of these sins are antisocial. All of them. When we reject God and turn to idolatry and immorality, guess what happens? All kinds of antisocial behavior takes place in our culture. Just look at verse 31 for just a moment, "Without understanding..." it means that they are senseless. "...covenantbreakers..." which means they are faithless, "...without natural affection..." which means they are heartless, "...implacable, unmerciful..." which means they are ruthless. They are senseless, faithless, heartless and ruthless. Does that not describe the culture that we live in today? In 2 Timothy 3 says that they will love self, they will love money, they will not love family, and they will love pleasure more than they actually love God. Radical. Now, we don't have the time to talk individually about every one of these sins, but I want you to notice, in conclusion, verse 32, "Who knowing..." what do they know? Well, they know from their conscience and they know from creation that God is all powerful, all wise, that He is a transcendent invisible God, all powerful, all loving God. Knowing the truth about God, "...knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death..." so again, he's basically saying they have been found guilty, and we are among them, "...not only do the same, but give their hearty approval to others that do them." We are actually encouraging young people to experiment sexually before they are married. You are worthy of the judgment of God. They not only do those things, but they clap for other people that do that. They encourage that. We have music that encourages it. We have movies that encourage it. We have magazines that encourage it. We have television programs that encourage it, and it says that they are worthy of death. They are worthy of death.

Now, not all people have committed all these sins, and not all pagan people are as sinful as they could be, but all have sinned. All people have committed some of these sins, so we are all guilty before the judgment bar of God, but there is a remedy for that sin and that remedy is the gospel. We haven't gotten there yet, we got it in chapter 1:16-17 where Paul says, "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." So, there is a remedy for sin, and that remedy for sin is the gospel. The gospel is that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him will never perish but have everlasting life.

Now, we just went Biblically from man starting with the knowledge of God into the depths of sin and degeneration, but Jesus Christ came from heaven down to earth, went to a cross and took our sin. All the sin that we just read about in this portion of Romans, all of it was laid on Jesus Christ when He died on the cross. All of it. This is why Jesus cried on the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me?" He drank the cup of God's wrath. He was separated from the Father, and there was a darkness and an earthquake and the rocks cracked, the earth

shook and the veil of the temple was ripped, meaning that there was a way that access had been made now through the blood of Jesus Christ, and He was buried in the grave and three days later He rose from the dead. He died for your sins, and He rose for your salvation, but you must trust Him and receive Him as your savior. You must invite Jesus Christ to come into your heart and forgive your sins. Remember when they brought a woman that had been caught in adultery to Jesus, caught in the very act. They said, "Moses commands that she should be stoned, what do you say?" Do you know what Jesus said, after stooping down and writing on the ground with His fingers? They all started to leave and Jesus said, "He that is without sin among you, let him throw the first stone." And the woman, standing alone with Jesus, and Jesus said, "Where are your accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?" And she said, "No man, Lord." Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you." Then He said, "Go and sin no more." He didn't say, "Be careful, don't get caught next time." "Lady, I can't be doing this every week." Do you know that God forgives your sins because of His grace, because of the cross, but He calls you to live a life of holiness and sanctification? The Bible says, "If anyone be in Christ he is a new creation, old things pass away, all things become new." Maybe you haven't involved yourself in sexual immorality, but maybe you've lied, maybe you've stolen, maybe you're proud, maybe you have hatred or anger or you have rebelled against God. Maybe you are disobedient to your parents, it was in the text. Whatever it might be, we've all sinned and the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen?

I want you to know tonight, I am going to give you this opportunity. I haven't done this for a long time on Wednesday night, but if you're in the sanctuary right now, right here you can be forgiven. You can be forgiven, you can be saved. Your heart can be washed and made clean and you can become a new person in Christ, old things will pass away, all things will become new. You don't need to leave here tonight with any sin in your heart, any stain in your life. God will wash you and make you clean, and He'll also set you free. Whom the Son sets free is free indeed! So let's bow our heads in a word of prayer.