

# NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL

— A Study of Romans —

Lesson Three

Romans 1:24-32

*... they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.*

*Romans 1:25*

## Day 1

### Pray:

*Father, please give me wisdom and insight to understand as I study your words. May I see your love and grace reflected in your truths and may I live that out for your glory.*

**Read:** Romans 1:24-32. Read it again in another translation such as NLT.

### Observe:

- Write key words and themes, repeated words or phrases. Circle on your Scripture pages any transition words (therefore, but, because, if/then etc.)
- Are there any commands to be obeyed, or truths to be trusted?
- What questions do you have about the text?

## Day 2- Romans 1:24

1. Three times in this passage we see the phrase, *God gave them up* and each time we are also shown the reason for this judicial abandonment. The word *therefore* in verse 24 points us back to 18-23 as the reason God gave them up. Summarize in one sentence why God gave them up.

### Picture and Ponder

"A history of the world confirms that idolatry tends to immorality. A false image of God tends to a false understanding of sex."<sup>1</sup>

2. What did God give the unrighteous up to, according to verse 24?

### Digging Deeper:

Paul is describing what becomes of those who reject God, but we who love God and follow Jesus still struggle with sin. Read the verses below. Highlight the gospel truths in these verses that motivate us to fight sexual temptation. What do you learn about how to think about your body and how to fight sexual sin?

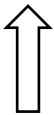
1 Corinthians 6:18-20 <sup>18</sup>Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body. <sup>19</sup>Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, <sup>20</sup>for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body. (NLT)

3. "The word that the ESV renders "lusts" is *epithumia*. Literally, it means "over-desire," an all-controlling drive and longing."<sup>2</sup> Where do these "over desires" come from according to verse 24?



God's wrath is shown to those who reject him by taking his hands off and letting them go their own way to experience the consequences that follow their actions. What could be more frightening than being untethered from God? 1 Samuel 8 tells the story of God's people demanding their own way and God giving it to them. The rest of the Old Testament portrays the sad consequences of God giving them their desire.

- ◆ What are ways you can keep from the trap of demanding your own way with God?
- ◆ Spend time in prayer asking God if there are areas in your life that you are demanding your own way.



*Father, please don't let me go my own way! Keep me close to you whatever it takes.*

### **Day 3- Romans 1:25-27**

1. In verse 25 Paul reiterates the reason for God's judicial abandonment. Look back to verse 23a and along with verse 25a, what exchanges did people make?

- How is idolatry the ultimate lie?

2. What exchange did believing a lie lead to in verse 26?

3. When God gave them up, what did men give up according to verse 27?

Scholar's Note: "The word *natural* means God's created order. To act against nature means to violate the order which God has established, whereas to act *according to nature* means to behave in accordance with the intention of the Creator."<sup>3</sup> By citing creation, Paul prohibits same-sex intimacy in every age, because the basis for his teaching is God's created order or plan".<sup>4</sup>

#### Digging Deeper:

The *intention of the Creator* in our Scholar's Note means God's original intention.<sup>5</sup> Read Matthew 19:4-6 below. Jesus is quoting Genesis 2:24. What does he say was God's original intention? Why does God's original intention matter?

Matthew 19:4-6 <sup>4</sup>He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, <sup>5</sup>and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? <sup>6</sup>So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."

- What purposes did God have in creating male and female according to the verses below?

Genesis 1:27-28a <sup>27</sup> So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. <sup>28</sup> Then God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. (NLT)

#### For Discussion:

- God created humankind male and female.
- God instituted marriage as a heterosexual union.
- What God has thus united, we have no liberty to separate.

How does this line of reasoning from Jesus in Matthew 19 help you think through the issue of homosexuality?



Verse 25 tells us that God is worthy to be praised forever. When we veer off the path of God's original design and purpose for his creation and give our hearts to worshipping something other than God, order in our lives and the world around us begins to crumble and decay. It may take some time to see the effects of not worshipping God—who alone is worthy of worship—but God is merciful, allowing people time to turn back to him in repentance.

- ◆ Worshipping God is the most important thing we do. What does it look like to worship God?
- ◆ How do you see things start to fall apart in your life when God is not at the center of all you do? What does it look like to turn back to God?
- ◆ How does the gospel motivate and empower us to worship God?

## Day 4- Romans 1:28-31

1. How does verse 28 express the reason God gave them up?

- Verse 28 tells us God gave them up to a debased mind. What does a debased mind lead to according to this verse?

2. Write a definition of the word *debased*.

3. Sexual impurity is not the only outcome of suppressing the knowledge of God and worshipping other things. In verse 29-31 we are given more consequences of this suppression and the havoc it wreaks across the spectrum. Try and put as many of these sins as you can into the following categories:

Economic disorder

Social disorder

Family breakdown

Relational breakdown

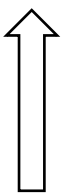
Scholar's Note: "This is not an exhaustive list of the results of not acknowledging God, but this is what theologians call the doctrine of total depravity: while not everything we do is always completely sinful, nothing we do is completely untouched by sin."<sup>6</sup>



We tend to rank sin in our lives and the lives of others. Some sins we consider "really bad", while other sins we foolishly tolerate. It is true that some sins carry more severe consequences to our lives than others, but any and all sin, no matter how seemingly inconsequential to us, separates us from God and condemns us to death—if not for

the glorious intervention of God's grace and mercy in the form of Jesus the perfect Savior.

- ◆ Why is it necessary to be aware that nothing we do is completely untouched by sin?
  
- ◆ What sins do you tolerate in your life because you don't consider them that bad?



God my need for you is absolute. Even any goodness I might try and find in myself is tainted by sin. Without your saving grace I am lost and hopeless. Thank you for pouring out your grace on me in Jesus my wonderful Savior!

### **Day 5- Romans 1:32**

1. What do those filled with unrighteousness know according to verse 32?
  
2. Look back to verse 29. What words or phrases depict how much unrighteousness ruled the lives of those who do not acknowledge God?

Scholar's Note: The word *practice* (*prasso*)—in the phrase, *those who practice such things*, means: to perform repeatedly or habitually.

3. What do they do despite their knowledge?

### For Discussion:

We see a demand for approval of sin in our society today. Why do you think those who have rejected God demand approval of their sin?



Reflect on this: Do you seek out people who will approve your sin?

### Digging Deeper:

The truths Paul is teaching in Romans reflect God's unchanging character and his divine ordering of the universe and are described in the Old Testament as well. Highlight the words or phrases that describe those who reject God and his wisdom. Underline the words or phrases that show the results of this.

#### *Psalm 14:1-3*

*The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."*

*They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds;  
there is none who does good.*

*The LORD looks down from heaven on the children of man,  
to see if there are any who understand  
who seek after God.*

*They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt;  
there is none who does good,  
not even one.*

#### *Proverbs 1 :28-32 Wisdom speaking:*

*"When they cry for help, I will not answer.*

*Though they anxiously search for me, they will not find me.*

*For they hated knowledge  
and chose not to fear the LORD.*

*They rejected my advice  
and paid no attention when I corrected them.*

*Therefore, they must eat the bitter fruit of living their own way,  
choking on their own schemes.*

*For simpletons turn away from me—to death.*

*Fools are destroyed by their own complacency.(NLT)*





1 Corinthians 6:9-11 <sup>9</sup> Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

**<sup>11</sup> And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**

Even though we are in the bad news section we need to take a minute to remember the good news right now. In Romans 1 Paul is showing us life without God. As believers, we are looking back on that life—and *such were some of you*—and now, instead of being filled with unrighteousness we have been made new and are filled with the Spirit of Jesus. Praise God!

- ◆ How can remembering that we were at one time enemies of God— not acknowledging, honoring, or worshipping him— help us to think about the sinfulness of the world and act toward those who are rejecting God?



Father help me to have compassion and love for those who are rejecting you. Help me not to be “shocked” by the sin out in the world as if I could not be capable of those same sins without your gracious intervention in my life. Thank you for your forgiveness and mercy to me.

### *One Thing:*

What is one thing from this week’s study that God has impressed on your heart, or convicted you about; is there something new that you learned or is there a verse you want to ponder and meditate on?

Praise God for this and thank him for the work he is doing in your life. Ask him to help you remember this and live it out for his glory.

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<sup>1</sup> Stott, John R.W. The Message of Romans. P. 76. Intersity Press USA

<sup>2</sup> Keller, Timothy. Romans 1-7 For You: For reading, for feeding, for leading (God's Word For You - Romans Series) (p. 30). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

<sup>3</sup> Richard B. Hayes as quoted in Stott, John R.W. The Message of Romans. P. 78. Intersity Press USA

<sup>4</sup> Doriani, Daniel M.. Romans (p. 77). P&R Publishing. Kindle Edition.

<sup>5</sup> Stott, John R.W. The Message of Romans. P. 78. Intersity Press USA

<sup>6</sup> Keller, Timothy. Romans 1-7 For You: For reading, for feeding, for leading (God's Word For You - Romans Series) (p. 37). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

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