

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

ROMANS 1:18-32

GOD'S WRATH AGAINST MANKIND

March 14, 2021

INTRODUCTION:

1:14-17 The Gospel stirred Paul with a deep sense of indebtedness and a readiness to reach all men. He says he's a debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; the wise and the unwise (1:14). He's ready to preach the gospel to those in Rome (1:15). And he's not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for the gospel is the power of God to bring salvation (deliverance from being lost) to every one that believes; to the Jews first, then to the Greek (1:16). For in the Gospel is the righteousness of God revealed, from faith to faith, for it's faith that the just shall live by (1:17)

LESSON: I. THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN ROMANS 1:18-23

1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;— God's attitude toward the sin of mankind is not one of tolerance. He does not simply hold man accountable for what may be reasonably expected of him in view of man's nature as a sinner. But, God hates man's sin! The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against **all** ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. The wrath of God is twofold: We look at...

- I. Men who are ungodly and unrighteous.
 - a. **Ungodliness** has to do with religion—our relation to a sovereign God. It is sin against the being of God.
 - o The ungodly man lives as if there were no God at all. He fails to love and obey God; they do not live as God lives. They are not holy, not righteous, or pure; don't honor God by word or deed; don't reverence God by doing what He says. They do what they want when they want; and may give lip-service to God, ignoring Him in their day to day lives. The ungodly man lives as though there is no God at all.
 - b. **Unrighteousness** has to do with morality—our relation to our fellowman. It is sin against the Will of God. The unrighteous man lives as if there was no Will of God revealed.
- II. Men who hold the truth in unrighteousness.
 - a. The meaning of "*hold*" means to hold down, keep back or suppress, repress, stifle, and hinder. Yet, despite having access to the truth, men restrain, ignore, neglect, and even push the truth aside, doing all they can to avoid and get rid of the truth of God's righteousness. Why? Because they want to live as they wish, and not as God says. They want to live unrighteous lives, taste, feel, see, and have all the stimulating things they want.

The point is clear— just like Creation is made known to us, the wrath of God is also revealed from heaven against all who are both a religious sinner (ungodly) and a moral sinner (unrighteous). Therefore, the ungodly and unrighteous have had the righteousness of God revealed to them, yet, they choose to hold; suppress and hinder the truth of God righteousness which is the first reason God reveals and shows His wrath. That's what sin does. It deceives and misleads. God's wrath is essential to divine righteousness, just as love and mercy are too.

1:19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. A question arises: If these ungodly men do not have full knowledge of God, are they then really lost? The key words are: "Because that which may be known..." Therefore, the little these ungodly men do know, God manifested it in them. How? - Because God has sovereignly planted evidence of His existence in the very nature of man by reason and moral law. You want to do good however, you know when you've sinned. They know what is right, but won't do it. Who else can fill them with knowledge of right, but God? The only living

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE



and true God can be known, and can be manifest in their conscious, their thought, and reasoning. He has revealed and shown these things to men, including His wrath!

1:20 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:— So, Paul is saying that man has a sufficient knowledge of God to make him responsible to God. We didn't see how the world was made, but it's here— outer space, plants, animals, man and woman; the seasons, and much more. But they are clearly seen and understood that they were made. And even His eternal power of the Godhead; His deity; or even His Spirit have resigned and suggested that there is a "Higher Power." The whole universe, its presence and its nature declares God! Man's knowledge is to such a degree which makes Him without excuse. The atheists may put all their knowledge together and come up with how this or that was made, but they are also without excuse of the evidence of God's power at work in Creation. Therefore, the ungodly and unrighteous have had the righteousness of God revealed to them, yet, they choose to reject the knowledge of God within creation which is the **second reason** God reveals and shows his wrath.

1:21 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. This would be a **third reason why God reveals and shows His wrath!** Men knew of God, but still did not glorify Him; was not even thankful, but became useless in their thoughts and their irrational hearts were darkened (rejecting Light).

- The word "**vain**" means empty, futile, useless, unsuccessful, senseless, worthless.
- The word "**imagination**s" means thoughts, reasonings, deliberations, conclusions, speculations.
- The word "**foolish**" means senseless, without understanding, unintelligent.
- The word "**darkened**" means blinded, unable to see.

When man push God out of their minds, their minds are void and empty of God, and God is not in their reasoning. Their minds are being filled with some other god or supremacy. So, men suffer empty imaginations and darkened hearts because when they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, and did not even offer thanks to Him. This surely leads the people down to the path of idolatry.

1:22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,— Men professed themselves to be wise, but in so doing they really became fools. • Too wise to believe in God • Too intelligent to depend upon the fables of the Bible.

1:23 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. And in men professing themselves to be wise, they became fools and exchange the incorruptible God for some corruptible idol.

- God is "*incorruptible*" (non-decaying, imperishable, unchanging, un-aging, and incorruptible) which means that God is not subject to passing away. He is eternal. God will always exist!
- Men swapped and exchanged God for corruptible man, that is, for the image, the idea, the thought that man is his own god. Men swapped God for humanism.
- Men swapped God for corruptible creatures. They turn from God and make their own gods whether mental images and thoughts or some grotesque image, or carving wood and stone idols of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things; (ill. the Israelites made a molded calf to worship in the wilderness).

Men professed themselves to be wise, but in so doing they really became fools, changing the glory of the incorruptible God into man-made corruptible images. This would be a **fourth reason why God reveals and shows His wrath!**

II. THE DISTORTING POWER OF SIN ROMANS 1:24-27

1:24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

their own bodies between themselves:— In this lesson we find that God *"gave these people up"* at least three times (1:24, 26, 28). Why? – They had chosen to give up on Him, therefore His gracious restraints were loosened. People chose to reject God. He lets us declare our supposed independence from Him even though He knows that in time we will become slaves to our own rebellious choices. The verse says (1st) **God gave them up to uncleanness** (impurity, or moral defilement). This led the people down to the path of sexual immorality (lusts of the heart to dishonor their own bodies between themselves). God will let man follow the lusts (passionate cravings and urges) of their own hearts, and give them up to live immorally, and dishonor their own bodies among themselves.

1:25 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. Paul says who changed the truth of God into a lie. Who would turn the truth about God into a lie and worship and serve the creature more than the Creator. This someone did not and could not make man, would not worship the Creator who created man internally and externally. Our worship cannot change to a corruptible image. This means the distorting; *"altered"* power of sin has *"corrupted the true meaning"* of our worship to where one worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator; worshiped and served the things God made, but wouldn't obey the Creator who is blessed forever who made these things. Our worship is to be toward the glory of the incorruptible God who created us!

1:26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:— And so, when the truth of God was turned into a lie, for this cause (2nd) **God gave them up to their vile affections**. This led the people down to the path of sexual perversion (distortion; misrepresentation). It's man's choice to travel that route, and God does not override man's Will. The apostle goes on to explain that their women turned against God's natural plan for them and began to indulge in sex sin with each other.

1:27 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 recompence of their error which was meet. And likewise, also the men leaving the natural use of the female were consumed with lustful passions with each other. *"Thou shall not lie with mankind as with womankind. It is an abomination"* Lev.18:22. The men were committing shameless acts of abomination with men, and received the inevitable penalty; the pay back; the punishment which was due of their error. It is only fit that they be given what they so passionately craved.

Note: sexual perversion always accompanies idolatry. Homosexuality is likewise the result of idolatry. Increased homosexuality is a sign of the soon return of the Lord (II Timothy 3:2). The sin takes place in the heart. Men burn within and crave the sin before they commit the act.

I. THE DEPRAVITY OF SIN ROMANS 1:28-32

1:28 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;— (3rd) **God gave them over to a reprobate mind**. The word *"reprobate"* means unapproving or undiscerning; rejected, depraved, degraded; a mind that cannot stand the test of judgment. Reprobate simply is rejected after testing. Therefore, God gives them over to a *"reprobate mind"*, which is a mind that is totally corrupt (depraved); doing exactly what they choose. This has led the people down to the path of total moral depravity (corruption; wickedness). As the scripture says, they did not want to retain the knowledge of God; did not want to acknowledge God or recognize God. They simply did not want God to have anything to do with their lives, therefore, they push Him out of their minds. **...to do those things which are not convenient** means which are neither agreeably to the light of nature, nor convenient to, or becoming the honour of human nature. They ignored and refused to accept God's presence. The effects of their abandonment result solely from the corruption of the human heart.

1:29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE



of envy murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,— So the things which had become so disgraceful, they did. They were filled with all wrongdoing and evildoing because God gave them over to a reprobate mind:

- **Unrighteousness:** injustice, wrongdoing, every kind of evil, which is opposite of righteousness.
 - Mistreating God and man, acting unjustly toward both.
 - Failing to treat God and man as a person should honor God and respect man.
- **Fornication:** all forms and kinds of immoral and sexual acts; pre-marital sex, adultery, and abnormal sex.
- **Wickedness:** to be depraved and actively evil; doing mischief; to be malicious, dangerous, and destructive; desire within the heart to do harm; actually pursuing others to seduce or to injure them.
- **Covetousness:** a lust for more and more; an appetite for something; a cry of give; a grasping; a craving after and for possessions, pleasure, power, and fame.
 - Covetousness lacks restraints. It wants to have in order to spend in pleasure and luxury.
 - Covetousness is an insatiable lust and craving of the flesh that cannot be satisfied.
 - Covetousness is idolatry where a person finds his happiness in things and pleasure instead of God.
- **Maliciousness:** malice, viciousness, ill-will, spite, a grudge; a man has turned his heart completely over to evil.
 - He no longer has any good within—none whatsoever.
 - He is actively pursuing evil with a vengeance.
- **Full of envy:** goes beyond jealousy. It is a spirit...
 - that wants not only the things that another person has, but begrudges the fact that the person has them. Every thought expresses grief that another person has something whether honor, recognition, or position.
 - that wants not only the things to be taken away from the person, but wants him to suffer through the loss of them.
- **Murder:** to kill, to take the life of another. Murder is a sin against the sixth commandment.
- **Debate:** strife, quarreling, discord, contention, fighting, struggling, dissension, wrangling. It means that a man fights against another person in order to get something: position, promotion, property, honor, recognition. This is when he fights in a dishonest and evil way.
- **Deceit:** to bait, snare, mislead, beguile; to be crafty and deceitful; to mislead or to give a false impression by word act, or influence. It is a man who convinces and twists the truth to get his own way. He plots and deceives by doing whatever has to be done to get what he is after.
- **Malignity:** evil disposition, evil in nature.
 - It is a spirit full of evil and malice and injury, a character that is as evil as it can be.
 - It is a person who always looks for the worst in other people and always passes on the worst about them.
 - It is the person on who so often ruins other people both in reputation and body and in mind and spirit. It is a person so full of evil that he is always ruining others either by word or violence.
- **Whisperers:** secret gossipers, secret slanders, backbiters, murmurers. It is a person...
 - who whispers behind another person's back, chewing and tearing him up.
 - who passes on tales about others, whether true or not.
 - who destroys the reputation of others.

1:30 Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,—

- **Backbiters:** slanders. It is a loud, open slander, a person who broadcasts the tale, whether the tale is true or not. It does not matter; burns within to tell the gossip to everyone.
- **Haters of God:** hating and being hateful of God. it is a person with a spirit...
 - who dislikes the commandments and restraints of God.
 - who wants nothing to do with God and His restrictions and laws.
 - who wants the license to do exactly as he wishes.
 - who wants to be the god of his own life, doing his own thing as he wishes, determining both what he should and should not do.

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE



- **Despiteful**: insolent, insulting, and defying. It is a spirit of spite, of attack and assault, verbally or physically; despising and attacking, inflicting injury either by word or act. It is a man with a spirit who...
 - lives his own life as he wishes, ignoring both God and man.
 - lives as though his rights and affairs are the only rights and affairs which matter.
 - stands toe to toe with both God and men, acting as though he needs neither.
 - acts so independent in life that he dares God or men to get in his way.
 - does what he wants when he wants, even if it hurts and harms others in order to do what one wants.
- **Proud**: self-exaltation, conceit, arrogance, being haughty, putting oneself above others, and looking down upon others; scorn, contempt. It means to show oneself to lift one's head above another, to hold contempt for another, to compare oneself with others. Pride can be hidden in the heart as well as openly displayed. God resists the proud.
- **Boasters**: braggarts, pretenders, vaunters. It is a person who...
 - boasts in what he has. ○ boasts in what he can do.
 - pretends to have what he does not have or pretends to have done what he has not done.
- **Inventors of evil things**: inventors of new sins, of more sensational forms of excitement and vice. It is a person who is tired of the old forms of sin and who feels the need to seek out new ways and forms of vice.
- **Disobedient to parents**: refusing to do what one's parents say, rebelling against one's parents; showing disrespect to parents; rejecting parental instruction, dishonoring parental example. A child who disobeys his parents is wide open to all forms of evil.

1:31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:—

- **Without understanding**: senseless, foolish, without conscience. It is a person who...
 - ignores experience. ○ will not learn no matter who the teacher is. ○ refuses to heed the truth. ○ closes his mind and eyes to the truth. ○ rejects conscience.
- **Covenant-breakers**: breakers of promises or agreements, untrustworthy, faithless, treacherous, untruthful. It is a man who tragically does not keep his word or promise.
- **Without natural affection**: abnormal affection and love, heartless, without human emotion or love, a lack of feeling for others, abuse of normal affection and love. Others become little more than pawns for a man's own use and benefit, pleasure and purposes, excitement and stimulation. Abnormal affection, sex and perversion prevail.
- **Implacable**: incapable of giving in, of being appeased or purified. A person is just unwilling to make peace or come to an agreement.
- **Unmerciful**: without pity; unwilling to show mercy. It is a person...
 - Craving to have and to possess others regardless of their welfare.
 - Craving to use others as one wills regardless of hurt and shame.
 - Craving to satisfy one's own pleasure even if it means the hurt or death of others. It is an absence of consideration or feelings for others. What matters is one's own pleasure and rights, not the pleasure and rights of others.

1:32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them. "Who knowing" means people do not generally sin in innocent ignorance, for they know God's decree (at least in an instinctive way) that their evil deserves the blame and condemnation. Committing such things and taking pleasure in the sins of others, they shall die; they are worthy of death, and that is, to be separated from God eternally.

- Men will be judged because they sin and take pleasure in others who sin by doing the same things



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

(vv.29-31). Men have appetites, desires, and lusts, and they spend their lives seeking to fulfill them.

- Men will be judged because they are without excuse: they know through an inner sense that the judgment of God is coming upon the world.

Taking pleasure reminds me of the saying: *"Wanna be like the Jones."* No matter what *the Jones* do, they want to do like him; be like them. People follow some movie stars and athletes because they like their lifestyles and so they strive to pattern their lives after them, knowing the ungodliness and unrighteousness they may do, they likewise condone, and wanna do to be like them.

SUMMARY:

1:18-23 The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. By their unrighteousness they suppress the truth. What can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. His invisible attributes, namely, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So, they are without excuse, for although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks to Him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

1:24-27 False religious systems enslave people both sensually and spiritually. Paul describes the sensual enslavement when he said, *"God gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves"* (1:24). Paul then moves on from describing sensual enslavement to describing spiritual enslavement which results from idolatry when he says that *"God gave them up unto vile affections"* when the truth of God was changed into a lie, and they worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator (1:25-26). In other words, a man becomes a slave to his idols (1:24-32).

Paul describes the wicked behavior of the heathen (1:26-32):

1. **They become morally perverted** - Widespread Homosexuality (1:26-27). He describes how those who turn away from God give themselves over to shameful and unnatural vices. This was true then, and is still true today as we see this becoming more blatant, more aggressive, and more evident all the time.

1:28-32

2. **They become mentally perverted** - Total Moral Depravity (1:28-32). Three times in this chapter we are told that God gives up those who give Him up (1:24, 26, 28). This clearly shows what happens to a man when he leaves God out of his life.