

Rooting Through Romans Pt 5 Romans 1:18-25, God's Wrath On Unrighteousness

A sermon series by Pastor Byron Chesney at Porchlight Baptist Church, 11/15/2020

Romans 1:18-25†

†18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold 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:

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.

22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

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

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.

Thus far we have looked at Paul's introduction to the Church at Rome, his stated intentions to come there and visit them, and unashamed desire to preach the Gospel.

He spends the rest of this chapter and the next two chapters describing the righteousness of God and the unrighteousness of man and God's wrath on the unholy and unrighteous.

I think to put this in proper context we need to also read **verse 17** here in Romans chapter 1. We looked at it some last week but it really goes along with what we are studying tonight and the reason for Paul writing these next verses:

Romans 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

There are two kinds of people in this world – the Just and the Unjust – the Saved and the Unsaved – the Righteous and the Unrighteous – the Godly and the Ungodly – you're either going to Heaven or you are going to Hell – there is no other option.

Paul knew and we know that the only way a man or woman can be saved and justified before God is if he or she hears and believes the Gospel.

Those that practice sin and live ungodly lives are going to experience God's full undiluted wrath, and that is why it is so important that they hear the Gospel and be saved.

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

First of all, I want you to pay attention to the word "**wrath**" that is used here. Paul says that God has wrath. To us, when we think of the word wrath, we immediately picture someone taking out revenge on someone for something they have done to us. And, for man, that is what we do. You see, our wrath and God's wrath are very different. God's wrath is a righteous, holy wrath, whereas ours is usually selfish and fleshly wrath. There are over 600 passages that deal directly with God's wrath.

The Bible doctrine of God's wrath is not a popular subject that many men preach on. I guarantee you will not hear Joel Osteen ever get up in front of his 50,000-member congregation seated in his 600,000 square foot basketball arena and preach on God's wrath because his congregation does not want to hear about it.

Today's men and women only want to hear about God's love, his grace, his mercy, his tenderness, his long suffering, and He is all those things, however, he is also a God of wrath.

I heard someone say one time that the God of the Old Testament was an angry God and the God of the New Testament was only a God of love. I've got news for you, the God of the O.T. is the same God of the N.T. and the Bible says that he is the same yesterday, to day, and forever. God has not, is not, and never will change in his view on sin. He will not condone sin, he will not pet sin, he will not dismiss your sin.

A lot of people think that God is going to reserve his wrath and punishment against sin until the end of times with the Great White Throne judgement and the Lake of Fire. Believe me, those things are going to happen but he is not going to withhold his judgement and wrath until then. No, he is actively pouring his wrath out upon those that are unholy and unrighteous right now at this very moment in time. We are going to see that as these next verses unfold.

19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them.

We can safely say that God has revealed himself to everyone. Every man and woman is born with the knowledge that there is a God and he is to be feared. It doesn't matter if they are born on an island somewhere in the middle of the Amazon forest and has never had contact with the outside world, they know there is a God. They may not understand exactly Who God is but they know he exists. That's why you will find natives in the jungle worshipping some god.

It's the same as Paul found when he visited Athens and found hundreds of idols erected to gods and we read this in the Book of **Acts 17:22-24** Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. 23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. 24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

Those Greeks in Athens knew there was a Supreme God and they even built an altar to him but didn't know His name. Paul said that he can tell them what his name is, it is the Lord God of Heaven.

So, God has manifested himself unto men but they refuse to believe in him. That's why Paul writes in the next verse back in **Romans 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:

There is no excuse for man not to acknowledge who God is – it is clearly seen, even through nature. Believe me, there will be those that will stand before God in the judgement and try to make up every excuse in the book for why they did not believe and he's going to tell them WRONG! There's no excuse, you knew it!

God is revealed to man **through nature and his creation:**

Psalms 8:3-4 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; 4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Psalms 19:1-6

1 **To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.** The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

3 *There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.*

4 Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,

5 Which *is* as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *and* rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

6 His going forth *is* from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

Psalms 97:6 The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.

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.

You see, they knew God (not in a personal relationship) but they knew God and his existence and their need to believe on him but they refused to except. They knew they should glorify him as God but due to their un-thankfulness, they refused to and instead became vain in their imaginations.

We have a lot of men and women today with vain imaginations. It is like those today that try to claim that this world was created through evolution and a big bang. They know that's not true yet they want to imagine that it is because if they didn't, they would have to admit to the existence of God.

I was watching a television show the other day and there was a court case where a school principal wanted the history teachers to teach Creation as a possibility of how the world began. He was sued by the school system claiming that there was no scientific evidence of creation and said that he was trying to force religion in the classroom. Yet, they wanted to teach Evolution to the children because they claimed there was scientific evidence for that but none whatsoever of God. The fact is, there is absolutely no scientific proof of evolution. The school system knows in their heart that God is real but they refuse to accept Him, therefore in their **vain imaginations** they decided Evolution was how the world came to be. The Bible says that people like that are **foolish and their hearts are darkened**.

How do you think their hearts became darkened? I'll tell you how, God in his righteous anger against unholiness and unrighteousness darkened their hearts.

It is the same thing that we read about in the Book of Exodus when Pharaoh kept refusing to let the Children of Israel go and over and over it kept saying that Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not let them go, but then suddenly we start reading that **God hardened Pharaoh's heart**. What was the result? God in his wrath against unholiness and unrighteousness destroyed Pharaoh and his army as they chased the Children of Israel across the Red Sea and God loosened all their chariot wheels and then drowned them in the sea. That was God's righteous wrath on display.

22 **Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,**

Notice in verse 22 the Bible says that these people were "**Professing themselves to be wise.**" God wasn't professing them to be wise, they were professing themselves to be. Who does that remind you of? Take one look around you today and you will see men professing themselves to be wise.

I'm not trying to preach politics but take these Democratic mayors of these liberal left-wing cities and how they stand up on the news and make all these ridiculous claims and pass laws and ordinances that protect wickedness and sinful activity and they hate everything that is good.

Those like the wicked, **vial homosexual mayor of Chicago, Lori Lightfoot**, (who looks like someone that just crawled out of a grave) standing up for everything wicked and allowing crime to take over the city, defund the police and protect rioters and looters.

Don't even get me started on **Bill de Blasio, the wicked Mayor of New York City** who joined pro-abortion activists and stood on camera making a speech in which he said "**I want to salute an organization that was started in New York ... Lets us thank, let us embrace, let us praise Planned Parenthood.**"

Planned Parenthood is the largest abortion provider in the United States and he wants to praise them for murdering little babies???

Or how about **New York Governor, Andrew Cuomo**, as he signed an abortion bill into law that allows the murder of babies all the way up to birth and everyone in the room applauded and even gave a standing ovation for passing it.

Yet, if you ask these people they will tell you that they are the wisest people in the world. "**Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools**"

23 **And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.**

Then Paul describes that these fools refused to bow down to the uncorruptible God and instead bowed down to images made in the form of corruptible man and birds, fourfooted beasts and creeping things.

We see examples of this all through history. One look at the Egyptian culture and their worship of animals. You see the hieroglyphics in the tombs of the Pyramids in forms of animals.

All cultures have their corruptible images they bow down to instead of God. The Greeks with their gods and altars, the same with the Romans and their worship of statutes of gods and their Roman Emperors.

The Roman Catholic Church today is no different with their idols of Mary and the so-called Saints and angels. Look inside a Catholic church sometime and you will be shocked.

But, look what the Bible says that God does to these fools: 24 **Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: 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.**

Those are some of the scariest words you'll read in all the Bible. "God also gave them up."

Down in verse 26 it says: **26a** For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections:..

On down in verse 28 it says: **28b** ...God gave them over to a reprobate mind,...

This is not some "new" concept – this has been God's M.O. from the beginning.

Listen to what he said to the Children of Israel in **2 Chronicles 30:7** And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers, **who therefore gave them up to desolation**, as ye see.

The Psalmist writes in **Psalms 81:11-12** But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. 12 So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels.

We find in the Book of Acts, Stephen standing before the council preaching to them Christ and he said this: **Acts 7:41-43** And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. 42 Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness? 43 Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.

The children of Israel were doing the same thing the Romans were doing, the same thing the American's are doing today – chang(ing) the truth of God into a lie, and worshipp(ing) and serv(ing) the creature more than the Creator

And just like he did the Children of Israel and the Romans, he will do the same to men and women today that refuse to acknowledge him, refuse to worship him, refuse to accept him – he will GIVE THEM OVER! He will GIVE THEM UP!

You hear me and hear me well, the last thing you ever want to hear is that God gave you over and gave you up, because once that happens it is too late. There is no coming back from being given over and given up.

I'm afraid there are many people in this world today that think they are so smart, they have it all figured out. They think they don't need God, they don't need his saving grace – but you better believe there will be a day when they wish they had:

Romans 14:11-12 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. 12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Hebrews 4:13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

The truth is, God's wrath is real and it is coming for those who remain in their sin and refuse him. Fortunately for us, we have a way out:

Romans 5:6-11

6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

Not only is God's wrath real but so is His love. He is willing, ready, and able to accept you today, this very minute. Would you turn to him today?

† All Scripture from Authorized King James Bible

‡ Color Code: Blue = Main text, Dark Orange = Other Scripture, Red = Words of Christ, Black = Pastor Byron commentary