

“The Descent Of Man”
Romans 1:24-32

Introduction:

1. **IE:** When I Served As A Youth Pastor In Illinois - Quite A Few Years Ago Now - I Was Given The Responsibility To Make A Mud Pit - For A Summer Outreach! After Getting Permission From A Farmer To Use The Edge Of His Field, One Of The Church Members Had A Back-Hoe & Started Digging! This Mud Pit Was Going To Be The Biggest & Best & Dirtiest Ever!
 - When It Finally Came Time For The Event - One Of The Activities We Had Around The Mud Pit - Was, Of Course - A Tug-Of-War! We Had Two Teams Of Teenagers - Around 25 On Each Team - Both Young Men & Young Ladies - And They Took Their Places On Both Sides Of The Pit! And - They Were Ready To Go!
 - As Soon As I Gave The Signal - You Can Imagine What Happened! Both Sides Pulled & Pulled & Pulled - Trying To Get The Other Team To Land In The Mud First!
 - Now - I Don't Remember Which Team One! But I Do Remember That **Both** Teams Ended Up Covered In Mud! Both The Losers & The Winners!
2. Well - As We Turn Back In Our Bibles:
 - To The First Chapter Of The Book Of Romans This Morning:
 - We Find A Different Kind Of:
 - Tug-Of-War - Taking Place Between:
 - All Of Mankind & God!
 - But - This War Is **Not** A Game!
 - And The Pit - Is **Not** A Pit Filled With Mud!
 - It Is A Pit Filled With **Sin**:
 - And The Dreadful Consequences Of Sin!
 - It Is A Pit Of Our Own Making:
 - That Leads To:
 - The Everlasting Pit Of God's Wrath!
 - And - At The Bottom Of This Pit:
 - Is The Fire Of Hell!
 - But - This Pit - Is Not **Between** Us & God!
 - It Is **Behind** Us!
 - And We Are Pulling **Ourselves** Into The Pit:
 - With All Of Our Might!
 - And Yet - All The While - God Still Has A Hold On Our Rope!
 - God Knows What Will Happen:
 - When He Lets Go Of His Rope Of Restraint!
 - But - The Sad Truth Is:
 - So Do We! And Yet:
 - We Keep Pulling! We Keep Tugging! We Keep Resisting!
 - 3. In The Verses We Come To This Morning:
 - We Find What Happens:
 - When God Begins To Let Go:
 - Of Our Rope!
 - 1:24-32 - “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. / 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: / 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. / 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; / 29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, / 30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, / 31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: / 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!”
 - In These Verses - We Find An Important Phrase:
 - Repeated 3 Times - 3 Times We Read:

- "God Gave Them Up!"
- 1:24 & 26 & 28!

4. Last Week - From 1:18-23 - We Learned:

- What Sinners Do:
 - With The Clear Knowledge Of God:
 - That He Has Given Them:
 - Through His Creation!
- They / And Even We - Apart From God's Intervention:
 - Wilfully - **Reject** God! We Reject:
 - His Truth, His Testimony & The Tribute He Is Due From Us:
 - As His Creation!
 - So - We All Deserve:
 - The Wrath & Judgment Of God!
- But - Even Worse - We Also:
 - Wilfully - **Replace** God! Or - We Try To!
 - With All Kinds Of Idols!
 - Idols Made With Our Hands - And:
 - Idols Set Up In Our Hearts!
 - So - We All Deserve:
 - The Wrath & Judgment Of God!
- But - Even Worse Than That - We Also:
 - Wilfully - **Resist** God!
 - With The Pit Behind Us:
 - We Keep Pulling & Tugging:
 - On The Rope Of His Restraint!

5. So - What Will Happen:

- If You Keep Doing This?
 - What Will Happen:
 - If You Keep Resisting God?
- **If You Keep Resisting God:**
 - **By Insisting On Your Sin:**
 - These Verses Teach - That - Eventually - God Will Let You Go!
 - God Will Give You Up!
- Now - For God To "Let Go" Of Something:
 - Or - To "Give Up" Something - Means:
 - That He Is **Still In Control!**
 - He Still Holds The Rope Of Restraint:
 - Without Which - This World Would Look More & More Like It Did Before The Flood - In Genesis 6:5 - When - "GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually!"
 - But - Even Then - The Time Came:
 - When - Genesis 6:3 - "The LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man!" - And He Gave Them Up!
- But - This Also Means:
 - That He Is **Still Compassionate!**
 - Even Though This World Continues:
 - To Reject & Replace & Resist:
 - God!
 - He Remains:
 - "Merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth!" (Exodus 34:6)
 - And So - True To His Character:
- This Also Means:
 - That He Is **Still Calling!**
 - "Softly & Tenderly Jesus Is Calling!
 - Ezekiel 33:11 - "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?"
- But - If Someone / Anyone Keeps **Resisting** God:

- By **Insisting** On Their Sin:
 - God **Will** Let You Go! And:
 - He Will Let You Go:

1. **To Follow Your Own Sinful Paths!**

- As We Are Told In 1:24 - "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness!"
 - "Uncleanness" Here - Is Your Own **Corrupt Desires!**
 - It Is A Spiritual Infection:
 - That Taints Your Mind, Your Heart, And Your Will!
 - Isaiah Describes It This Way:
 - Isaiah 1:6 - "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment!"
 - And - If You Keep Resisting God:
 - He Will Eventually **Let You Go:**
 - **To Follow Your Own Desires!**
 - **IE:** It's Like When You Put A Message In A Bottle & Throw It Into The Sea! You Have No Idea Where It Will End Up! It Just Gets Caught In The Currents! When God Begins To Release His Grip - You Will Be Left To:
 - The Currents Of Your Own Cravings!
 - As Paul Says In The Rest Of:
 - 1:24-25 - "Through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: / Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator!"
 - When God Lets You Go:
 - He Will Let You Live According To:
 - "The Lusts Of [Your] Own Heart!"
 - He Will Let You Follow:
 - The Path Of Your Own Pleasure!
 - But - This Is A Tragic Place To Be!
 - Because - This Is Just One Way:
 - That "The Wrath Of God Is Being Revealed From Heaven!"
 - He Will Also Leave You To:
 - The Currents Of Your Own Character!
 - One Way You Can See The Rope Of God's Restraint:
 - Being Loosened - Is What People Do:
 - With The **Gift** Of Their Own **Bodies!**
 - They Not Only Sin Against God!
 - They Sin Against & Dishonor:
 - Their Own Bodies!
 - Think About Your Body For A Moment!
 - As We Are Told In Psalm 139:14 - We Are "Fearfully And Wonderfully Made!"
 - Your Body Is A Gift - From God To You!
 - Your Eyes / Ears / Mouth / Nose!
 - Your Hands / Feet / Lungs / Heart!
 - But - What Do We Do With These Gifts?
 - All Too Often - We "Yield Our Members As Instruments Of Unrighteousness Unto Sin!"
 - But Here - Paul Highlights The Misuse & Abuse Of The **Sexual** Gift:
 - God Has Given To Us!
 - When You Use The Gift Of Your Body:
 - To Fulfill Your Own Unbridled Lusts And Desires:
 - You Getting Closer & Closer To The Edge Of The Pit!
 - This Is Why Paul Wrote:
 - In 1 Corinthians 6:18 - "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body!"
 - But - God Will Also Leave You To:
 - The Currents Of Your Own Choice!
 - As We Read In 1:25 - Which Once Again:

- Points Out The Foolish “Change” & “Exchange!”
 - Of The Excellency Of God:
 - For The Emptiness Of Idols!
- 1:25 - “Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator!”
 - Remember:
 - A Painted Rock Is Still A Rock!
 - A Carved Tree Is Still A Tree!
 - And - A Deified Man Is Still A Man!
 - **IE:** In Ancient Rome - Eventually The Emperors Claimed To Be Divine! Started By Caesar Augustus! Yet - Saw His Mausoleum In Rome!
- What Dreadful Currents These Are! What A Dreadful Path!
 - I Think That’s The Reason Why:
 - Paul Ends 1:25 With These Words About God The Creator - “Who is blessed for ever. Amen!”
 - Because - He Just Can’t Keep Thinking About This “Descent” & Depravity Of Man!
 - As A Christian:
 - Who Had Been Personally Rescued:
 - From This Path:
 - I Can Almost Hear Paul Singing!
 - I am resolved no longer to linger,
 charmed by the world's delight;
 things that are higher, things that are nobler,
 these have allured my sight.
 - I will hasten to Him,
 hasten so glad and free;
 Jesus, greatest, highest,
 I will come to Thee!
- And - So It Can Be For You Today!
 - Why Resist God?
 - Why Keep Fighting?
 - Why Keep Pulling Away?
 - God May Yet Release His Grip:
 - On The Rope Of His Restraint:
 - And Let You Go Where You Want To Go! And Let You Do What You Want To Do!
 - And This Is Where It Leads!
 - Because - He May Also Let You Go:

2. ***To Follow Your Own Sinful Passions!***

- As We Are Told In 1:26 - “For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections!”
 - “Vile Affections” Here - Are Your Own ***Corrupt Deceptions!***
 - You May Get To The Point:
 - In Your Sin - When You No Longer:
 - Crave That “Forbidden Fruit!”
 - Because - When Your Heart Starts To Harden:
 - **No** Fruit Feels Forbidden To You!
 - And - What Once Was Considered Shameful, You Now Consider Normal!
 - **IE:** Like The Sad Day In Our History When The Supreme Court Of The United States Ruled That “Gay Marriage” Was Legal! And That Night - Without Shame - The White House Was Lit Up In A Rainbow Of Colors! And - God Loosened His Grip Just A Little Bit More!
 - And - If You Keep Resisting God:
 - He Will Eventually Let You Go - Even Further:
 - To Follow Your Own ***Deceptions!***
 - **IE:** Imagine If That Bottle Got Caught In The Current Of A Swift River - Like A Barrel In The Niagara - And The Water Keeps Getting Rougher & Faster As It Careens Toward The Great Niagara Falls! There Comes A Point - When It Is Too Late To Turn Back! You Will Go Over Falls! And So It Is When God Loosens His Grip!
 - He Will Let You Live In Your World:
 - Of Deception And Denial!

- Which We See In The Rest Of 1:26-27:
 - “For even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: / 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!”
- The Sin Of Homosexuality:
 - Is Highlighted By Paul:
 - To Show Just How Low:
 - Mankind Can Go:
 - In Their Self-Deception!
 - Because - This Kind Of Sin Is:
- A Denial Of God’s Distinctions!
 - Paul Uses The Terms For “Female” & “Male” In These Verses - To Remind Us:
 - Of The Real And Special Differences:
 - God Made Between The Sexes!
 - And - The Physical Differences:
 - Created By God - Were Meant:
 - To Be “Used” The Way He Originally Intended!
 - But - Not Only Do Fallen Men:
 - Deny Those God-Given Distinctions:
 - There Is Also:
 - A Denial Of God’s Design!
 - As Paul Tells Us In:
 - 1:26 - “Even Their Women Did Change The Natural Use Into That Which Is Against Nature!”
 - God Created & Designed The Sexual Relationship:
 - Between A Male & A Female:
 - As A Husband & A Wife:
 - To Be Good And Beneficial And Beautiful!
 - But - Instead - “Even The Females” Of The Human Race:
 - Rejected God & His Plan:
 - For Their Bodies! But - It Is Also:
 - A Denial Of God’s Desire!
 - 1:27 - “And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman!”
 - So - “Also The Males” Of The Human Race:
 - Reject God & His Plan!
 - Because God’s Plan Is:
 - And Has Always Been:
 - Genesis 2:24 - “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh!”
 - And The Normal / Natural Result:
 - Of This Kind Of Relationship Is:
 - The Formation Of Families:
 - And The Propagation Of The Human Race!
 - But Even Still - There Is:
 - A Denial Of God’s Disgust!
 - 1:27 - “Burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly!”
 - This Is An Unequivocal Statement:
 - Of How God Sees Homosexuality! Still!
 - It Is “Unseemly!”
 - That Is - It Is Shameful!
 - It Is An Act That Is Deformed & Distorted:
 - From What God Intended & Provided!
 - It Is Grotesque!
 - Now - Some Will Say - “But Isn’t It A Sin Like All Others?”
 - In One Sense - Yes - Every Sin:
 - Makes One Unrighteous Before God!
 - But - As Paul Clearly Highlights Here:
 - Sins Of A Sexual Nature - And:

- Sins Of A Homosexual Nature:
 - Are Sins Of A Hardened Heart!
- And This Is Why We Still See - In Spite Of What We Just Read:
- A Denial Of God's Determination:
 - To Judge Them For Their Sin!
 - 1:27 - "And receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet!"
 - We Need To Remember What We Are Told In:
 - Galatians 6:7 - "Be not deceived; **God is not mocked**: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap!"
 - There Is A "Recompense" For Their "Error!"
 - A Payment For Their Deception & Denials:
 - Of God & His Will!
- And - While - "The Wrath Of God" Awaits Them:
 - As They Keep Tugging & Pulling & Resisting Him:
 - He May "Recompense" Them Yet - By:
 - Just Letting Them Go!
 - Because - As William Shedd Once Wrote:
 - "The Recompense Is The Gnawing Unsatisfied Lust Itself, Together With The Dreadful Physical And Moral Consequences of Debauchery!"
- So - Why Resist? Why Fight? Why Pull Away?
 - God May Yet Release His Grip:
 - On The Rope Of His Restraint:
 - And Let You Have:
 - What You Want!
 - And This Is Where It Leads!
 - Because - He May Also Let You Go:

3. ***To Follow Your Own Sinful Perceptions!***

- As We Are Told In 1:28 - "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind!"
 - "A Reprobate Mind" - Is Your Own ***Corrupt Delusions!***
 - This Describes A Person With Absolutely No:
 - Spiritual Judgment Or Discernment!
 - Instead - They Made Themselves:
 - Into The Judges Of God!
 - "They Did Not Like To Retain God In Their Knowledge!"
 - They Weighed God:
 - In Their Own Balances - And:
 - Found Him Wanting!
 - What A Dreadful Place:
 - For A Soul To Be!
 - Because - If A Person Keeps Resisting God:
 - He Will Eventually Let You Go - All The Way:
 - To - The Depths Of Your Own Delusion!
 - **IE:** Downstream From The Great Niagara Falls Is The Niagara Whirlpool! If Your Bottle Makes It Past The Falls - The Currents Will Take It All The Way To The Whirlpool - Where It Can Get Sucked All The Way Down To The Bottom! This Is What Happens When God Finally Releases His Grip From The Rope Of Restraint!
 - The Pleasure & The Power Of Sin Is Like A Whirlpool! But - This Whirlpool Is Not On The Outside! It Is On The Inside! It Is Within You! In Your Own Heart! And Its Currents Will Swirl And Suck Until It Traps You And Takes You Deeper & Deeper Into Its Depths!
 - But - Even Still - Sinners Still Won't Stop!
 - Instead - They Will Continue:
 - To - The Depths Of Your Own Disorder!
 - Because - As We See From The Rest Of 1:28-31:
 - Sin Always Breeds More Sin!
 - "To do those things which are not convenient; / Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit,

malignity; whisperers, / Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, / Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful!"

- Though This Is Not An Exhaustive Catalog Of Sins - It Might As Well Be!
- Because It Covers So Many Aspects Of Unrestrained Sin!

- We See - The Unrestrained Inclinations Of Evil!

- In The First 5 Vices!

- Unrighteousness / Fornication / Wickedness / Covetousness / Maliciousness!

- Paul Says That We:

- "Have Been Filled" With These Things!

- What A Sad State For A Person To Be In! To Have A Heart "Filled" With All This Corruption!

- But - This Is What *ALL* Of Us Are Like:

- Apart From Christ!

- The Potential To Sin In Any & All Of These Ways Is In Your Fallen Heart!

- We See - The Unrestrained Intentions Of Evil!

- In The Next 5 Vices:

- Which Are All Sins That Are Focused Outward - Toward Others!

- Envy / Murder / Deceit / Maliciousness!

- And Paul Says That We:

- Are "Full" Of These Things!

- We Are So Full Of Ourselves:

- That There Is No Room In Our Heart Or In Our World For Others!

- We Also See - The Unrestrained Implementations Of Evil:

- In The Rest Of The Vices - 13 Of Them!

- And Your True Heart Is Displayed:

- In Your Hatred!

- As - Whisperers / Backbiters / Haters Of God!

- In Your Haughtiness!

- As - Spiteful / Proud / Boasters!

- In Your Habits!

- As - Inventors Of Evil Things / Disobedient To Parents!

- In Your Hopeless Condition!

- As - Without Understanding / Covenantbreakers / Without Natural Affection / Implacable (Pitiless) / Unmerciful!

- Is This Any Way To Live?

- If You Are In This Condition:

- It Is A Condition Of Woe!

Conclusion:

1. But - As We See From The Final Verse In This Chapter:

- Things Are Even Worse!

- 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!"

- Everyone Knows:

- "The Judgment Of God!"

- After All - Death Is All Around Us! There Is No Escaping It!

- And - Even If Someone:

- Doesn't Think *Everyone* Is Worthy Of Death:

- *Everyone* Thinks That At Least:

- *Some* Are Worthy Of Death!

- **IE**: Like The Hitlers Of This World! Because Of His Crimes & Sins Against Humanity!

- But - "Knowing The Judgment Of God":

- What Do We Do?

- We Still Persist:

- In Our Sin!

- We Still "Do The Same!"

- But At The Same Time:

- We Still Participate:

- In Others' Sin!

- We Still "Have Pleasure In Them That Do Them!"

2. **"O Wretched Men That We Are!"**

- This Is The **True** "Descent Of Man!"

- Not - Getting Better & Better:

- As Charles Darwin Wanted Us To Believe:

- When He Wrote His Book With This Title!

- No - We Are Getting Worse & Worse:

- Because We Keep Resisting & Tugging & Pulling:

- Against The Rope Of God's Gracious:

- Restraint!

- But - There Will Come A Point:

- When God Will Reveal His Judgment & Wrath:

- On Both Sin & Sinners:

- By - Just Letting Go!

- And - By Letting Us Do What We Want!

3. So - Stop Resisting! Stop Fighting! Stop Pulling Away!

- Instead - **Remember:**

- And **Rest In** - The Truth Back In:

- 1:17 - "The just shall live by faith!"

4. The Only Hope For Man:

- "Descending" Into The Mud-Pit Of Sin & Death:

- Is The Gospel Of Jesus Christ:

- And The Revelation Of His Righteousness!

- So - For You Today:

- God's Hand Is Still On The Rope!

- And - It Is A Rope Of Rescue!

- And The Rope Is Made Up Of:

- Scarlet Thread Dyed In The Blood Of The Lord Jesus Christ!

- Have You Turned To:

- And Trusted In Jesus:

- His Life / Death / Resurrection:

- To Save You & Rescue You:

- From Your "Descent?"

- If Not - Will You?

- When You Do - God Will Never Let You Go!

- Instead - He Will Hold You Fast!

- And - Now - Won't You:

- Help Others? By - "Throwing Out The Lifeline"?

5. The Picture Painted Of Man:

- In This Part Of Romans:

- Is Not Pretty!

- But - The Picture Is Actually:

- Your Own Portrait:

- Apart From God's Intervention Through The Gospel!

- God Is Still In Control!

- Even Of Our Own Descent!

- And - In His Compassion:

- He Still Calls Out To Us:

- In The Gospel!

- And - When You Stop Resisting / Tugging / Pulling Away:

- And Respond By Faith:

- You Can Experience For Yourself:

- What John Newton Once Proclaimed:

- With His Dying Breath:

- "Although My Memory Is Fading, I Remember Two Things Very Clearly! I Am A Great Sinner! And Christ Is A

Great Savior!"

- * Are You Still Resisting & Pulling Away From God?
- * Do You See The Serious Nature Of Playing Around With Sin?
- * Will You Rest In Christ Today - Your Great Savior?

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