

Journey Through Romans

ROMANS 1:21-32

The book of Romans can be divided into the basic sections of: 1. SIN (1:18-3:20) 2. SALVATION (3:21-5:21) 3. SANCTIFICATION (6-8) 4. SOVEREIGNTY (9-11) 5. SERVICE (12:1-15:13)

We see in this section the downfall of society after the Genesis flood. God destroyed mankind. The only people saved were Noah and his family. Have you ever wondered how society got in the mess it's in after God destroyed all the bad people? This is how...

(Romans 1:21 KJV) "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."

1. **Knowing God** (gnontes ton theon). Second aorist active participle of ginōskō, to know by personal experience. (Robertson's Word Pictures) They definitely knew God by personal experience.
2. They glorified him not as God
 - a. Cain is a good example of this: (Genesis 4:9 KJV) "And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?"
3. Neither were thankful
 - a. (1 Corinthians 11:23-24 KJV) "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me."

(Romans 1:22 KJV) "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,"

1. College Prof Illus.
2. (2 Peter 3:3-4 KJV) "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."
3. (1 Corinthians 1:18-21 KJV) "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

(Romans 1:23 KJV) "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."

1. Idolatry began after the flood. The earth was destroyed by the flood because of violence. There is no record of idol worship before Noah's flood.
2. We may not worship birds and cows and whatnot, although this is a good description of the modern, radical environmentalist movement. Also, there are religions like Hinduism that consider certain animals as sacred.
3. But, we do create idols out of men. We make men into God.
 - a. Marriage illustration.

(Romans 1:24-25 KJV) "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness 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, who is blessed for ever. Amen."

1. "God gave them up" Three times in this passage (again in vs. 26; 28). When God gives a person up, He turns them over to themselves. In other words, God says, "I'm not going to put roadblocks in your way anymore...just go do what you want to." That's a terrible thing, when God allows us to do what we want to. He "gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts"
2. To dishonor their own bodies between themselves = fornication. Heterosexual sex sin comes first, then homosexual follows...
3. Changing truth into a lie – a magic act that man does. He takes TRUTH and makes it into a LIE.
 - a. The truth = God is to be worshipped and served more than man.
 - b. The lie = Man should be worshipped and served more than God.

(Romans 1:26-27 KJV) "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 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."

1. The first time, God gives up man to heterosexual fornication and humanism. The second time, He gives up mankind to "vile affections" = homosexual fornication.
 - a. Heterosexual fornication is called "uncleanness" in vs 24.
 - b. Homosexual fornication is called, "vile affections" here in vs. 26.
 - i. The argument today is framed as, "Shouldn't we be able to love who we want?"
 - ii. Not about love - (1 Samuel 18:1 KJV) "And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul."

- iii. It's not a sin to love someone. It is a sin to commit sex acts with a member of the same sex. This is not normal love or affection. This is a "vile affection."

2. and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet."

- a. SDTs are rampant, a judgement for sexual sins.

(Romans 1:28 KJV) "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;"

1. "They did not like to retain God in their knowledge..." Many gay people are religious. It's not that they don't like to think about "a god." It is that they do not think of the true God of the Bible.
2. One of the most foolish and frankly, blasphemous things we see today are "gay Christians" and "gay-friendly churches." We should be friendly to gay people. But, the church that endorses and does not preach against the sin of homosexuality is not a friend of the gay community. A friend warns you of the consequences of your actions. A friend warns you of the judgment of God!
3. Because "they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God have them over to a reprobate mind.." God says, "You don't want to think about me and my laws; then you figure it out without me." There is a play on words in the Greek here...we see it in the English as well. They reject God "in their knowledge" so God rejects them "to a reprobate mind." Without God in our thoughts, we are mentally unstable! We are mad!
 - a. The idea of "reprobate" is rejected: a rejected mind. God walks away and leaves you to your own thoughts. What a horrible thing!
 - b. Some get the idea from this that homosexuals cannot be saved. That is pure foolishness, and not taught here. The Bible speaks of homosexuals being saved.
 - i. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11 KJV) " Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."
 - c. If we picture this as a ride on an elevator, we have dropped several floors and now we head rapidly down to the basement.

(Romans 1:29 KJV) "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,"

(Romans 1:30 KJV) "Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,"

1. Now, wait! That's odd. In the midst of all of these awful things... "disobedient to parents."
2. Inventors of evil things – people who create new ways to sin. Opposite of God's creation.

(Romans 1:31 KJV) "Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:"

1. Without understanding = they don't understand the things of God.
2. Without natural affection = love of kindred. (RWP) When a mom aborts her baby because the child is an "inconvenience" that is "without natural affection."
3. A.T. Robertson said, "It is a terrible picture of the effects of sin on the lives of men and women. The late Dr. R. H. Graves of Canton, China, said that a Chinaman who got hold of this chapter declared that Paul could not have written it, but only a modern missionary who had been to China."

(Romans 1:32 KJV) "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."

1. "Have pleasure" = hardy approval.
 - a. 1Co 7:13 And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.
 - b. You are approving of sinners. Applauding sinners. Even being entertained by sinners.

How do we stop this descent down in our own lives? **(Romans 1:21 KJV) "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."**

1. Know God.
2. Glorify Him as God.
3. Be thankful.