

21. The Book of Romans 1:28-32

Paul's Epistle to the Romans

A message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier
(6-28-23)

Find this weeks' Study Audio & Video [Here](#)

In our study in Romans, we are currently in Chapter 1 where we have been looking at the first main section of the book which runs from Chapter 1:18 through Chapter 3:20.

This first main section falls under the heading of “**Condemnation**” because in it Paul wants to prove that the whole world apart from Christ is condemned by God.

Romans 1:18, 21–24 (NKJV)

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness... ²¹ because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

²⁴ Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves...

The phrase—“**lusts of the heart**” works its way out in the statement—“**to dishonor their bodies among themselves**”—and here Paul has sexual sin in mind.

Our society is absolutely obsessed with sex and the human body—it’s everywhere, in advertisement, movies, TV shows, music videos, magazines—and especially on the internet (pornography). Advertisers are constantly bombarding us with sexual stimuli that is designed to arouse a strong desire (often a sexually motivated desire) for their products—it’s become a cultural norm.

I think that the hyper-sexualization of our society is due, in no small part, to what some have called the ‘Playboy philosophy’ that has permeated our society. Hugh Hefner (who died in 2017) said, “*Why get so upset about sex—it’s only a biological necessity like eating, drinking and sleeping.*”

That attitude is nothing new—it comes right out of Greco-Roman paganism.

The attitude in the first century Greco-Roman world was that they looked at sex the same way they looked at eating, drinking, and sleeping—it was just another biological function to be satisfied without any moral implications whatsoever.

Secondly, the Playboy philosophy coupled with pornography—is a formula for the breakdown of marriage and ultimately the family.

- Adultery (mental or actual) destroys marriages and families—and as the family goes so goes society.
- God knows that the health of a nation depends on the health of the family unit. The health of the family unit depends on the health of the marriage within that unit.

- The health of the marriage depends on a monogamous relationship between husband and wife.

When we think of *monogamy*, we think of the biblical view of marriage as ordained by God—one man and one woman (one genetic male marrying one genetic female)—for life until death separates them, and the marriage covenant is rendered null and void—at which time the surviving spouse is free to marry again.

Within marriage, God requires physical (and ideally) mental fidelity on the part of both husband and wife to each other—

Matthew 5:27–28 (NKJV)

²⁷ “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘*You shall not commit adultery.*’” ²⁸ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Job 31:9–12 (NLT)

⁹ “If my heart has been seduced by a woman, or if I have lusted for my neighbor’s wife, ¹⁰ then let my wife serve another man... ¹¹ For lust is a shameful sin, a crime that should be punished. ¹² It is a fire that burns all the way to hell. It would wipe out everything I own.

For most of the years of our nation’s history adultery was looked down upon (even though it was always around it was never socially acceptable) because our strong Judeo-Christian heritage looked upon marriage as sacred.

Not to mention that God has always forbidden sex outside of marriage (adultery).

But as our country has moved further and further away from God—so have our values which has opened the door to a plethora of new sexual practices like—polyamory.

Polyamory—from the Greek *poly*, meaning “many,” and the Latin *amor*, meaning “love”—refers to “*the practice of, or desire for, intimate relationships with more than one partner, with the consent of all partners involved.*”

What is polyamory?

“In short, polyamory is the act of having intimate relationships with more than one person at the same time. A polyamorous person might have or might be open to having multiple romantic partners. Polygamy, on the other hand, involves being married to multiple partners.

*For many Christians, polyamory seems so extreme and rare that there’s no need to talk about it. But it is much more common than some people think, and it’s growing in popularity. According to one estimate, “as many as 5 percent of Americans are currently in relationships involving consensual nonmonogamy,” which is about the same percentage as those who identify as LGBTQ. A recent study, published in a peer-reviewed journal, found that 20 percent of Americans have been in a consensual non-monogamous relationship at least once in their life. Another survey showed that nearly 70 percent of non-religious Americans between the ages of 24 and 35 believe that polyamory is okay, even if it’s not their cup of tea. And perhaps most shocking of all, according to sociologist Mark Regnerus in *Cheap Sex*, roughly 24 percent of church-going people believe that consensual polyamorous relationships are morally permissible.”*

All this sexual freedom comes at a price—which is the spread of STDs like gonorrhea, syphilis, and AIDS—not to mention broken marriages and families thru divorce.

This is such a vitally important truth with such far reaching consequences that the commandment forbidding adultery made number seven on God’s top ten list of prohibitions—“*You shall not commit adultery*” PERIOD! In fact, to underscore the importance of this commandment He made it a *capital* offense in Leviticus, Chapters 18 and 20 for violating it.

You see, God knew the consequences the Playboy philosophy would have on society.

We are seeing those consequences being played out every day in our country—and it has been nothing short of devastating!

As Paul mentioned—when fallen sinners reject God and His laws to do perverted sexual things—he tells us that, **“God gave them up to uncleanness in the lusts of their hearts” (verse 24)** (*‘a driving passionate destructive desire for forbidden pleasure.’*)

Whenever people reject God’s design for human sexuality (2 genders consisting of one biological male and one biological female)—sexual identities and sexual practices quickly deteriorate into confusion, chaos, and gross perversion.

And wanting to sum up the topic in a concise way—Paul picks the worst, the most disgusting, degrading sexual practice he can think of to key in on—HOMOSEXUALITY!

Many believe that just as God made some people right-handed and others left-handed—He made some people heterosexual and others homosexual.

But if that’s true then why does God condemn homosexuality in both the Old and New Testaments?

It’s because it is not a part of God’s creation but is a perversion of His divine order—it’s the result of what happens when people willingly reject God’s rules, His order and do whatever is right in their own eyes.

Romans 1:18, 26-27 (NKJV)

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

²⁶ **For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women (genetic females) exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. ²⁷ Likewise also the men (genetic males), leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another (the Greek is: ‘to be burned up completely—completely destroyed’—they were incinerated by their lust), men with men committing what is shameful [aschēmosúnē—the Greek word we get the word schematic from—‘of, relating to, or forming a scheme, plan, or diagram’]...**

God’s schematic for His creation is for a male and a female to come together for marriage and procreation. However, once you deny the existence of the Creator you then deny there is design—and once you get rid of the schematic (God’s design)—anything goes.

God said that homosexuality is against His schematic—it goes against His design, He didn’t ‘wire’ us that way and is a perversion of His divine order.

Romans 1:26–27 (NKJV)

²⁶ For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. ²⁷ Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, **and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.**

The idea here is that seeking fulfillment and expecting a blessed outcome for their practice of homosexuality they received exactly the opposite.

Instead of blessing they received judgment as God let them reap the penalty for exchanging what was natural (heterosexuality) for perverted, unnatural, deviant sexual practices instead.

In Washington D.C. the Family Research Council talking with psychologists and other experts and including 5200 obituaries in 16 homosexual newspapers of homosexual deaths over 5 years said:

The average age of homosexual men dying of AIDS is 39 years old—the average age of homosexuals dying of all causes is 41.

One percent of homosexuals live to be 65 or older and only three percent live past 55.

Homosexual men are 3 times more likely than the general population to have alcohol and/or drug abuse problems.

14 times more likely to have syphilis.

23 times more likely to contract a venereal disease.

1000 times more likely to contract AIDS.

Lesbians are 19 times more likely than heterosexual women to have syphilis and 2 times more likely to suffer from genital warts.

In San Francisco (one of the most openly gay cities in America) versus the national average—homosexuals have twice the rate of infectious Hepatitis A; 3 times the rate of infectious Hepatitis B; and 22 times the rate of venereal disease.

The chance of homosexuals dying at the hands of other homosexuals is 50 times higher than the general population and 60 times higher for suicide than the general population.

The point is that calling this lifestyle 'gay' is one of the cruelest jokes imaginable!

It's not 'gay' but it has become militant—as it was in Sodom and Gomorrah.

In an article that came out just last week, the author had this to say on the subject—

“Today, all things corrupt and unholy are celebrated, with the entire month of June officially set aside as “Pride Month” (trans Admiral Rachael Levine said one month is not enough and declared this the ‘Summer of Pride!’) to honor and publicly flaunt immoral, perverted sexual behaviors widely practiced in the ancient biblical cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. At the same time, everything good, decent, wholesome and moral is, for some strange reason, now demonized.

For example, “straight white men” holding to conservative Christian values are routinely condemned by powerful leftist political leaders – utterly without evidence – as “white supremacists,” “violent extremists” and “domestic terrorists.” And of course, “the patriarchy” has been vilified by large parts of the leftwing feminist movement for decades, an attack on men that continues into the present day.

Likewise, children have become front-and-center targets of the revolutionary left’s transformational agenda. Early sexualization, considered a heinous crime in previous eras, is widespread in the increasingly toxic “public” (government) school system...”

In another article that came out a few of days ago—

“LGBT activists at the annual Drag March on Friday in New York City shouted a troubling message regarding children across the nation. As Pride Month comes to a close, the participants marched through Tompkins Square Park in the East Village while chanting, the New York Post reported Saturday. Video footage shows the flamboyantly dressed crowd moving through the area, and a woman among the group appeared to be topless:

‘We’re here, we’re queer, we’re coming for your children,’ some of those in the crowd shouted.

In July 2021, Breitbart News reported the San Francisco Gay Men’s Chorus music video where singers promised to “convert” children to their LGBT ideology..

Lyrics to the song include:

‘You think we’re sinful. You fight against our rights. You say we all lead lives you can’t respect. But you’re just frightened. You think that we’ll corrupt your kids if our agenda goes unchecked. It’s funny. Just this once, you’re correct.’”

So, the conservative right—and especially the Christian church is experiencing cultural warfare (which is actually spiritual warfare) like never before in our nation’s history!

At this point we need to remember the words of Paul the Apostle—

Ephesians 6:10–12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

- Is homosexuality the unpardonable sin—NO.
- Is homosexuality a worse sin than any other—NO.
- Is a homosexual less human than the rest of us—NO

They’re no different from any other sinner whose reaching out for something that is against God’s design and doesn’t fulfill.

It’s our responsibility not to condemn them but to reach out to this community with prayer and the love of Christ—something Christians have failed to do for the most part. God loves the gay community and Jesus died for them so that they can be saved and become children of God just like us—homosexuality is not the unpardonable sin.

The bottom line is there is a right way to live and a wrong way to live; there is God’s way and there is the devil’s way—and it’s up to each of us to decide which way we’re going to live:

Deuteronomy 30:15–20 (NLT)

¹⁵ “Now listen! Today I am giving you a choice between life and death, between prosperity and disaster. ¹⁶ For I command you this day to love the Lord your God and to keep his commands, decrees, and regulations by walking in his ways. If you do this, you will live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you and the land you are about to enter and occupy. ¹⁷ “But if your heart turns away and you refuse to listen, and if you are drawn away to serve and worship other gods, ¹⁸ then I warn you now that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live a long, good life in the land you are crossing the Jordan to occupy. ¹⁹ “Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make.

Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live! ²⁰ You can make this choice by loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and committing yourself firmly to him. This is the key to your life. And if you love and obey the Lord, you will live long in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

Romans 1:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a **debased** [*‘a depraved’*] **mind**...

Understand that a **‘depraved mind’** is a mind that can no longer think and reason as God designed it to be able to do—it can’t form right judgments because it is so skewed and warped by sin. A depraved mind is more than just a **‘sinful mind’** which Paul spoke of earlier.

A depraved mind is what happens when sin is tolerated, justified and celebrated in a person’s mind over a long period of time.

It is the accumulated effect of going down the path of sinful lusts and moral impurity—resulting in a mind that is so depraved that it begins to think that what is evil is good and what is good is evil.

Isaiah 5:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

“Our rebellion against God is not only displayed in our actions, but in our thinking. We are genuinely “spiritually insane” in our rebellion against God.”

Romans 1:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, **to do those things which are not fitting** [proper]...

The question is—*“Not fitting for who?”* The answer is—*“Not fitting for those who have been made in the image of God.”*

Someone has said—

“According to Psalm 8, man is made a little lower than the angels, which means that man is in a position somewhere between the angels above and the animals below. It has always been man’s prerogative to either move upward toward the angels and ultimately God, or downward toward the animals. But let me remind you that Psalm 8 says that we have been made a little lower than the angels rather than being made somewhat higher than the animals. In other words, we are to look heavenward not earthward to find our true identity and purpose in life.”

Yet man seems determined to look to the animal kingdom to find his identity and practice in life.

Years ago, a story appeared in Newsweek magazine accompanied by a picture of a baboon killing an infant baboon and over it the headline read: *“Biologists say infanticide is as normal as the sex-drive and that most animals, including man, practice it.”*

Folks, the title says it all—the logic goes like this: 1) Man is an animal; 2) Animals kill their offspring; 3) Therefore it is all right that human beings kill their offspring—justifying abortion and infanticide!

These are nothing more than the reasonings of a depraved mind.

Romans 1:28-31 (NKJV)

²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; ²⁹ **being filled with all unrighteousness** (injustice), **sexual immorality** (fornication, adultery, homosexuality and other forms of illicit sex), **wickedness** (active evil), **covetousness** (greed, the incessant desire for more), **maliciousness** (the desire for harm on others; venomous hatred); **full of envy** (jealousy of others), **murder** (premeditated and unlawful killing of another, either in anger or in the commission of some other crime), **strife** (wrangling, quarreling, contentiousness), **deceit** (trickery, treachery, intrigue), **evil-mindedness** (ill-will, spite, hostility, bitterness); **they are whisperers** (secret slanderers, gossips), ³⁰ **backbiters** (open slanderers, those who bad-mouth others), **haters of God** (or hateful to God), **violent** (despiteful, insulting), **proud** (haughty, arrogant), **boasters** (braggarts, self-paraders), **inventors of evil things** (devisers of mischief and new forms of wickedness), **disobedient to parents** (rebellious to parental authority), ³¹ **undiscerning** (lacking moral and spiritual discernment, without conscience), **untrustworthy** (breaking promises, treaties, agreements, and contracts whenever it serves their purposes), **unloving** (acting in total disregard of natural ties and the obligations that go with them), **unforgiving** (irreconcilable or implacable), **unmerciful** (cruel, vindictive, without pity)...

This is the sick legacy of a world that has rejected God and His righteous standards—

Galatians 6:7–8 (NKJV)

⁷ Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption...

Or as Hosea put it—*“They sow the wind and reap the whirlwind!”*

Theodore Epp (pastor, radio evangelist and founding director of the *Back to the Bible* radio broadcast had this to say on the subject—*“When God gives a person over to a reprobate mind, his mind is like an abandoned building which soon becomes the home of rats and other rodents. A reprobate mind is one which is unfit to distinguish between right and wrong. It is a mind that is warped with regard to moral judgments.”*

The sad result is all these sins (v.29-31) that we live with as a society on a daily basis— sins against God and crimes against our fellowman that have become so common place that we are no longer shocked by them and have become, for the most part, desensitized and jaded to them.

Romans 1:32 (NKJV)

³² **who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.**

Here is where the evil, rebellious heart of man reaches a crescendo—it not only practices the things God has forbidden but encourages others to participate in them also and applauds those who do.

Many people would never think of picking up a gun and killing someone—but they love to watch graphic violence and killing in the movies or on TV.

Many people will never actually get involved in adultery—but they love to watch others who engage in explicit acts of sexual immorality in the movies or on cable.

“Deserving of death”

“They know this is God’s verdict, however much they seek to rationalize or legalize these sins. But this does not deter them from indulging in these forms of ungodliness. In fact they unite with others to promote them, and feel a sense of camaraderie with their partners-in-sin.”

1 Peter 2:11–12a (NKJV)

¹¹ Beloved, I beg *you* as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, ¹² having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles [unbelievers]...

1 Peter 4:1–5 (NKJV)

¹ Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, ² that he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. ³ For we *have spent* enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. ⁴ In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with *them* in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of *you*. ⁵ They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

Psalms 101:1-4 (NKJV)

¹ I will sing of mercy and justice; To You, O Lord, I will sing praises. ² I will behave wisely in a perfect way...I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. ³ I will set nothing wicked before my eyes...⁴ A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will not know wickedness.

Job 31:1 (NKJV)

¹ “I have made a covenant with my eyes; Why then should I look upon a young woman?

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Want to know more? Click [here](#).

Reach out to us [here](#).