

## Epistle of Romans IV Chapter 1:17-32

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Romans 1:16: “For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ...” Remember, all the way through here *Gospel* is mentioned in vs 1, 9, 16, 19; the Gospel is the *good news* of God, the message of salvation and the coming Kingdom of God. It’s not just the Gospel of the Kingdom of God alone, but it is the Gospel of Grace, which then is salvation and the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

Let’s see the difference of that back in Acts 20 where we have both of them defined side-by-side, right along side of each other so that we know that the Gospel is not just the Kingdom of God, but it has to do with the Gospel of Grace which is the Gospel of Salvation that Paul is talking about in Rom. 1.

Acts 20—Paul was giving a witness and a testimony to those elders from Ephesus and Paul was the one who raised up the Church at Ephesus, so he obviously had authority to talk with them and admonish them. He called them down to Miletus and gave them this testimony:

Acts 20:21: “Earnestly testifying, both to *the* Jews and *the* Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.... [that’s all a part of the Gospel] ...And now behold, I am bound in the spirit, *and* am going to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall happen to me there; except that the Holy Spirit fully testifies in every city, saying that bonds and tribulations await me. But I myself do not take any *of these* things into account, nor do I hold my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to fully testify the Gospel of the grace of God” (vs 21-24).

That’s the Gospel of Salvation, the Kingdom of God is also salvation, *salvation for the world*. The Gospel of Grace is to those *who are called now*.

Verse 25: “And now behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the Kingdom of God... [there it is right there all together] ...will see my face no more.”

Paul talks about the Gospel of Christ—Romans 1:16: “...because it is *the* power of God unto salvation **to everyone who believes...**”

Wherever you see that, you will see that quite often in the translation of Romans it is a present tense participle, meaning *the one who is believing!* Everything we do in our relationship with God is always based upon our present tense

relationship with Him.

“...both to *the* Jew first, and to *the* Greek” (v 16). Let’s understand something concerning salvation. Salvation has three distinct aspects to it:

1. You ***have been*** saved!

Let’s read Eph. 2:8 into the record so that we get it very clearly here. This is going to fit in with what Paul is going to be giving us in the rest of the Epistle to the Romans. Put in your notes vs 1-8, but I’m only going to read

Ephesians 2:8: “For by grace **you have been saved...**” This means that you have been saved *from your sins and from Satan the devil*; that’s in the context. We’re saved from the ‘prince of the power of the air’ and we were ‘dead in our sins.’ So *having been saved* because there is no such thing as ‘once saved always saved.’ Otherwise there would not be the *unpardonable sin*.

2. You ***are being*** saved! That is the present passive tense

This is not reflected in the *King James*; 1-Corinthians 1:18 (*KJV*): “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us **who are saved** it is the power of God.” This should read:

(*FV*): “For to those who are perishing, the preaching of the cross is foolishness; but to us who **are being saved**, it is the power of God”—present tense passive.

The Gospel is “*the* power of God unto salvation...” (Rom 1:16). It is unto those “...who are being saved, it is the power of God” (1-Cor. 1:18).

In 1-Cor. 15 we have the same Greek word, which is present tense passive—*are being saved*:

1-Corinthians 15:1 “Now, I am declaring to you, brethren, the *same* Gospel that I proclaimed to you, which you also received, ***and in which you are now standing.***” That’s an interesting phrase; we’re to *stand in the Gospel*, which means *it’s a way of life, a way to live, our standing before God*.

Verse 2: “By which **you are also being saved...** [notice why]: ...if you are holding fast *the* words that I proclaimed to you; otherwise you have believed in vain.”

2-Corinthians 2:15: “For we are Christ’s sweet perfume to God among those **who are being**

**saved**... [a process; that's why our prayers are a savor] ...and among those who are perishing.”

3. You **shall be** saved!

Currently there are some who are saying that the love of God (John 3:16) only applies to those in the Church and not the world; that God actually hates the world. That is not so. That is a false doctrine. God loves the world and this proves the love of God, right here, that it is for the *whole* world.

Romans 5:6: “For even when we were without strength... [before we were called and converted] ...at the appointed time Christ died for *the* ungodly. For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die for a good man. But God commends... [present tense ongoing to everyone] ...His own love to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (vs 6-8).

Therefore, when it says, ‘God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on Him shall not perish but have everlasting life’; it means *God loves the world!* And a greater proof of the fact that God loves the world is the fact of the second resurrection, as we understand it in the plan of God and as pictured by the Last Great Day. What tremendous love of God that He would resurrect all of those whom He did not call, to give them an opportunity for eternal life. That’s a tremendous thing!

Verse 9: “Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath...” There’s *present tense* wrath in the time being, as we will see in the rest of Rom. 1. There’s *future* wrath meaning the wrath of God when Christ returns.

“...through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His own Son, much more *then*, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life” (vs 9-10)—the resurrection. So, the three steps or phases of salvation are:

- 1) you **have been saved** from your sins and Satan the devil
- 2) you **are being saved** if you continue in the Gospel, which is the power of God and your standing therein
- 3) you **shall be saved** at the resurrection

Those are the three things concerning salvation.

We’re going to cover some details here, but we will save the details of some of these for later when we come into other sections of the book of Romans.

Romans 1:17: “For therein... [refers back to the Gospel] ...*the* righteousness of God **is revealed**... [present tense] ...from faith into faith, according as it is written: ‘The just shall live by faith.’ Indeed, the wrath of God **is revealed**... [present tense] ...from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the Truth in unrighteousness” (vs 17-18).

Let’s look at this a little bit more. Verse 17 is the overall purpose statement for the whole book of Romans. That’s what he’s going to talk about: *the righteousness of God!* {refer to #s 5 & 6, this series *The Two Righteousnesses*}—the righteousness of the law and the righteousness by faith; very important for us to understand.

“...is revealed from faith unto faith...” (v 17). Let’s understand this phrase and this is quite good in the Greek.

- **from faith**—‘ek’ (Greek)—*from; out from*

This is coming from you to God and from God to you. This is one of those things that applies in a circle.

- **unto faith**—‘eis’ (Greek, pronounced ‘ice’)—*into and toward*

It has more of the meaning *into* because it’s coming *from God into you and from you back to God—into*—so it is a **living** faith.

Let’s see the kind of faith, the quality of faith that we are to have. The quality and kind of faith that we are to have is that kind of faith that is not necessarily just the faith or the belief of someone such as when Jesus healed someone and He said, ‘Your faith has healed you.’ There was no spirituality involved in that, except they just believed that Jesus could do it because they had seen what He had done.

Our faith, on the other hand, is to be far different. And currently, some people are teaching that we, as brethren in the Church of God, have to ‘unlock the faith that’s in us.’ If you know any New Age teaching, that is New Age phraseology through and through. **Faith is a gift of God!** You don’t receive the full measure of faith until you are baptized and then somehow you unlock it later. **No! You grow in grace and knowledge!** And as the apostles said one place, ‘Increase our faith.’ So faith is something that you grow in; you don’t unlock it. **Faith is a gift of God.** What kind of faith is it that we are to have?

Galatians 2:20<sub>[corrected]</sub>: “I have been crucified with Christ...[that is through baptism; obviously he wasn’t on a cross next to Christ] ...yet, I live.

*Indeed*, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me. **For the life that I am now living in the flesh, I live by faith—that very faith of the Son of God**, Who loved me and gave Himself for me.” This means *Christ’s own faith*. How can that be? *Christ in you is the ‘hope of glory’!* If Christ is *in you*, then you can develop and have the faith of Christ.

It’s not something you unlock, *it’s something that God gives!* This is the kind of faith that we need to have. We’ll also see in another place where we are told to have *God’s faith*—so that becomes even more to it. Faith is really quite a thing! The faith that it is, it is *faith into faith*.

Let’s look at the phrase in Romans 1:17: “...‘The **just** shall live by faith.’”—*the righteous!* That has an awful lot to do with the imputed righteousness of Christ. We have what God is doing with His righteousness:

1. He is counting us *righteous*
2. He is *imputing His righteousness* to us
3. He is *giving His righteousness* to us

Isn’t that something? Isn’t that a greater righteousness than any of us could do? That’s what He’s doing!

Habakkuk 2:4—“...the just shall live by his faith.” That’s where it comes from, and this is the spiritual application of it.

Romans 1:18: “Indeed, *the* wrath of God **is revealed** from heaven... [present tense—is being revealed, made evident in lives of sinners] ...upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the Truth in unrighteousness.”

That’s exactly what they are doing. They are holding back the Truth, they are suppressing the Truth so that it won’t get out.

Verse 19: “Because that which may be known of God is manifest among them, for God has manifested *it* to them; for the invisible things of Him are perceived from *the* creation of *the* world, being understood by the things that were made—both His eternal power and Godhead—so that they are without excuse; because when they knew God, they glorified *Him* not as God, neither were thankful; but they became vain in their own reasonings, and their foolish hearts were darkened. While professing themselves to be *the* wise ones, they became fools and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into *the* likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed creatures, and creeping things. For this cause, God also abandoned them to uncleanness through the lusts of their hearts, to disgrace their own bodies between themselves, who exchanged the Truth of God for the lie; and they

worshiped and served the created thing more than the One Who is Creator, Who is blessed into the ages. Amen” (vs 19-25).

Verse 26: “For this cause, God abandoned them to disgraceful passions; for even their women changed the natural use *of sex* into that which is contrary to nature; and in the same manner also the men, having left the natural use *of sex* with the woman, were inflamed in their lustful passions toward one another—men with men shamelessly committing lewd *acts*, and receiving back within themselves a fitting penalty for their error. And in exact proportion as they did not consent to have God in *their* knowledge, God abandoned them to a reprobate mind, to practice *those* things that are immoral; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, malice; full of envy, murder, strife, guile, evil dispositions; whisperers, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things *and practices*; disobedient to parents, void of understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable *and* unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who commit such things are worthy of death, not only practice these things themselves, but also approve of those who commit *them*.” (vs 26-32).

I just read to you the nightly news and world history. Let’s go back a look at some of these things. First of all, I want to read something to you. This is taken from a book written by Aldous Huxley, *Ends and Means*. I think you’re going to be amazed at this. I know a doctor who knew the wife of Aldous Huxley and said that his end was most miserable indeed!

These are reasons and motives for denial of a special creation of everything and for an explanation of creation without a Divine Creator.

I had motive for wanting the world to have a meaning. Consequently assumed that it had none, and I was able without any difficulty to find satisfying reasons for this assumption. For myself, no doubt for most of my contemporaries, the philosophy of meaninglessness was essentially an instrument of liberation from a certain system of morality. We objected to the morality because it interfered with our sexual freedom. We objected to the political, economic system because it was unjust. There was one admirably simple method of justifying ourselves in our political and erotic revolt. We could deny that the world had any meaning whatsoever. Similar tactics had been

adopted during the 18<sup>th</sup> century and for the same reasons. The chief reason for being philosophical was that one might be free from prejudices. Above all, prejudices of a sexual nature. It was the manifestly poisonous nature of the fruits... [of that previous moral system] ...that forced me to reconsider the philosophical tree from which they had grown.

That is quite an awesome statement. You think of it all coming out of his mouth. It shows of the eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. This is what happens with people: Satan sets up a system that becomes corrupt—like the Protestants and the Catholics—and then people come along and reject it. Instead of trying to get to something that is true, what do they do? *They go clear over to Satan's side the other way!*

Romans 1:18: “Indeed, *the* wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the Truth in unrighteousness... [I just read what he said is an exact fulfillment of that, without a doubt] ...because that which may be known of God is manifest among them, for God has manifested *it* to them” (vs 18-19)—that is, *revealed it!* He did before the Flood.

- Was God not there personally with Adam and Eve? *Yes!*
- Was God not there with Enoch and Noah? *Yes, He was!*
- Was He not there after the Flood? *Yes!*

They *knew* God! You talk about having something revealed to you, I would think that the Flood—if you lived through it—ought to be a lifelong memory-lasting, etched in your mind experience you would never forget. But then there's another generation. Then there's another generation after that! All of them come to this rebellion. It may not be quite as bad as that, but it ends up in the same way.

Here's how they knew, v 20: “For the invisible things of Him are perceived from *the* creation of *the* world... [clearly perceived] ...being understood by the things that were made—both His eternal power and Godhead—so that they are without excuse.”

Let's understand something here that God always, *always* does: ***Before He acts to carry anything out, He always gives a warning, so they are without excuse!*** We can apply that to what's going to happen at the end-time. Jesus came and said, *'If I had not come, then they would have had excuse for their sin. But now that I have come, they have no cover for their sin!'* So, the very fact of Christ coming is very profound in that. ***They are***

***without excuse!*** Let's understand how this is done; we have the same thing in:

Colossians 2:6: “Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, be walking in Him; being rooted and built up in Him, and being confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. Be on guard so that no one takes you captive through philosophy and vain deceit... [We just read some of this philosophy of Aldous Huxley.] ...according to the traditions of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him [Christ] dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, Who is the Head of all principality and power” (vs 6-10).

So, God made it very manifest to them. I think, in every generation, God does something so that they know. Look at this generation; look at the tremendous things we have to analyze the creation, and yet, people still don't believe in God. But God has made it known through the things that He has created.

Romans 1:21: “Because when they knew God...” What does it mean *to know God?* *'Hereby we know Him IF we keep His commandments!'* So, they had known God! They turned their backs on God!

“...they glorified *Him* not as God, neither were thankful; but they became vain in their own reasonings... [futile in their thinking; would end in nothing] ...and their foolish hearts were darkened” (v 21). What happens when the heart is *darkened?* *Satan comes along and says, 'It's light, brother!'* Always does!

Verse 22: “While professing themselves to be *the* wise ones... [who tell you what wisdom is; they have placed themselves in place of God] ... they became fools.” Let's tie some other Scriptures together with this and see how all of this comes together.

Psa. 14—this is what they do. And when it comes to this point, it is really a difficult proposition to get a person turned around. That's why God alone has to deal with them. That's why we will see the penalty gets progressively more difficult as we go along.

Psalms 14:1: “**The fool has said in his heart...** [if you truly, truly say that in your heart then you're in trouble] ...‘There is no God!’ They are corrupt; they have done abominable works, there is none who does good.”

Let's see what this results in. I think all we have to do is look at the fruit of the society around

us. Whenever they reject God, what happens? *There is never a vacuum that does not remain filled!* Who fills that vacuum when you reject God? *Satan the devil!*

Psalm 36:1: “The wicked utters transgression in his heart. There is no fear of God before his eyes, for he flatters himself in his own eyes until his iniquity is found to be hateful. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit; he has stopped acting wise and doing good. He plots iniquity upon his bed; he sets himself in a way that is not good; he does not hate evil” (vs 1-4).

In another place it says that they ‘think on their bed to rise early and do the evil.’ *That happens!* That all comes right along with that. This is quite something!

Proverbs 12:15: “The way of a fool *is* right in his own eyes... [you can’t tell them anything] ...but he who listens to advice *is* wise.”

Proverbs 16:2—let’s build the case: “All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes... [They think it’s right! It’s good! They justify it!] ...but the LORD weighs the spirits.... [v 25]: ...There is a way that seems right to a man...

- It seems right!
- They get all excited about it!
- It feels wonderful!
- It looks so good!

...but the end thereof is the way of death” (v 25). This is repeated in Prov. 14:12. That ties right in with what Jesus said: ‘Broad is the way and wide is the gate that leads unto destruction, and many there be who go in at that gate.’

Let’s tie this together with the way that the human heart is. This is one of the first Scriptures we ever learned. I think that the beginning point of conversion for any person is when he or she applies this Scripture personally. I think that’s a beginning point.

Jeremiah 17:9: “The heart *is* deceitful above all things...” It is! Without a doubt we’ve all deceived ourselves, even when we think we’re doing good. Of course, it’s always an excuse to do evil, because it’s going to bring good. That’s the whole basis of the abortion controversy we have in the United States today. How many deceitful plans were hatched which haven’t worked?

“...and desperately wicked; who can know it? **I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings**” (vs 9-10). God is going to hold *all* accountable.

Let’s see how bad it can get, v 1: “The sin of Judah *is* engraved with a pen of iron, with the point of a diamond; *it is* carved upon the tablet of their heart and upon the horns of your altars.” Think about that in relationship to what is the complete opposite of this verse? *To have the laws of God written in your heart and mind!* It actually means *inscribed!*

Verse 5: “Thus says the LORD, ‘Cursed *is* the man who trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the LORD. For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes. But he shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in* a salt land that is not inhabited’” (vs 5-6).

That’s part of the *wrath of God!* There it is right there. We have great living testimony of that. It’s called the Sahara Desert. It used to be a wonderful place with a lot of grass and cattle and animals and everything; a great, wonderful breadbasket. Now what is it? *Sand, heat, wind, scorpions, camels and few Arabs, etc.!*

On the other hand, v 7: “Blessed *is* the man who trusts in the LORD and whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters; *it* sends out its roots by the river, and *it* shall not fear when the heat comes, but its foliage shall be green; and he is not worried in the year of drought, nor will it cease from yielding fruit” (vs 7-8).

Jeremiah also said, ‘Oh, Lord, correct me, for the way of man is not in him to direct his steps. But be merciful.’

Let’s look at this on a grander scale from a national level, when a whole nation comes to this point. You can apply these individually, to individual persons. You can apply them nationally to any nation. Then we will see you can apply it to the whole world. This is all profound! The reason I’m going through it here is to show the background that Paul is bringing into these verses. *He’s bringing so much into them!*

Hosea 4:1—again, we’re going to have living testimony of today: “Hear the Word of the LORD, children of Israel, for the LORD *has* a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, ‘**There is no truth...**’” It says they ‘suppress the truth in unrighteousness.’ Boy! They’re sure doing that—aren’t they? Religion, education, politics, economics, all of our food chain is laden with all kinds of deceit and trickery in it, because of what they do to it and put in it and so forth.

“...nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.” (v 1). When they come to that they don’t

want God in their knowledge. We just read it!

Verse 2: “By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and the committing of adultery they break out; and blood touches blood. Therefore, shall the land mourn, and everyone who dwells in it shall languish, with the beasts of the field and with the birds of the heavens. Yes, the fish of the sea shall also be taken away” (vs 2-3).

Just be alert! Every once in a while, there’s an on-going report that ‘we’re running out of fish.’ They’re being taken away because of sin.

Verse 6: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...” When you get rid of the knowledge of God and don’t what to retain Him in your knowledge, then you’re on your way to destroying yourself. It’s an automatic thing that happens.

“...Because you have rejected knowledge... [notice how this ties in with ‘they are without excuse’] ...**I [God] will also reject you...**” (v 6).

You never want to get into a position that God rejects you. I think some of the brethren you know are still going along with all of these damnable lies taking place in the Churches of God that if you can do anything to help them, to redeem them, so they don’t come to the point of rejecting God. That really leads to some terrible consequences there.

“...from being as a priest to Me. Since you have forgotten the Law of your God, I will also forget your children” (v 6). So, it happens to your children! Now they’re really going to get OBE: *outcome based education*. They’re going to graduate from high school with a third grade mentality—don’t know how to do mathematics, don’t know how to spell, don’t know how to speak—but they’re happy and well-adjusted socially.

(go to the next track)

Verse 7: “As they were increased, so they sinned against Me. I will change their glory into shame. They eat up the sin of My people, and they set their heart on their iniquity” (vs 7-8). They can hardly wait to do more.

Verse 9: “And it has become, like people, like priest; and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them for their doings, for they shall eat and not have enough. They shall commit whoredom and not increase because they have stopped taking heed to the LORD” (vs 9-10).

Let’s see what happens here, because it’s a progressive thing; it’s a step-by-step thing and it builds. Each time something happens and they continue in it, they build for the next one. It’s just

like perverseness. A person does not become perverted immediately. It is done step-by-step, a little at a time. Here a little change, there a little change as they’re moving and nudging along.

Isaiah 5:18 “Woe to those who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin with cart ropes; who say, ‘Let Him hurry *and* hasten His work, so that we may see it; and let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come, so that we may know!’” (vs 18-19). That is that they may reject it. That’s what they want to do.

Verse 20: “Woe to those who call evil good and good evil... [That’s the wrath of God being revealed. Is not ‘WOE’ the wrath of God?] ... who put darkness for light and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe unto *them that are* wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!” (vs 20-21). Professing themselves to be the *wise ones*, ‘they became fools!’

Verse 22: “Woe unto *them that are* mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink... [you can apply that spiritually and physically.] ... who justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!” (vs 22-23).

They don’t want you to have it. They don’t want you to point out the evil. Oh yes, let Michael Jackson get away with it. Let him payoff, let him bribe, declare him righteous and wonderful and good. That’s just one little example. You could name hundreds, thousands of names—couldn’t you?

Verse 24: “Therefore, as the fire devours the stubble, and the flame burns up the chaff; their root shall be like rottenness, and their blossoms shall go up like dust because they have cast away the Law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the Word of the Holy One of Israel.” Not satisfied with that, they’re going to do it on a grand, global scale.

Psa. 2—here’s the grand, global scale. This is what is happening right now. I can’t think of any Psalm that more depicts the forming of the United Nations and its continuing reign over the world than:

Psalm 2:1: “Why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Christ... [yes, let’s all gather together here] ...saying, ‘Let us break Their bands asunder and cast away Their cords from us.’.... [‘There is no God!’] ...He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD scoffs at them. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and in His fury He terrifies them” (vs 1-5). Then it talks about the coming of Christ to setup the Kingdom of God.

One other Scripture to fulfill the vanity of their own wiseness. God taunts them a bit. They're out there making all of these things; all of their gods and all of the likeness of everything. So, God takes them to task.

Isaiah 40:18: "To whom then will you compare God? Or what likeness will you compare to Him? The workman melts a graven image, and the goldsmith spreads it over with gold, and casts silver chains. He who is too poor for *that* offering chooses a tree... [a totem pole] ... that will not rot; he seeks for a skillful workman for himself to prepare a graven image that will not totter. Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning?...?" (vs 18-21).

God has left a witness in every generation, one way or the other. The things that we have in history we cannot count on as *true* history. The ones who were the victors wrote the history and they put in there what they wanted. But I'm sure that God left a witness to them.

"...Have you not understood *from* the foundations of the earth? *It is* He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers; *it is* He Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in; Who brings the rulers to nothing; He makes the judges of the earth as vanity. No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown, no sooner do they take root in the ground, then He shall blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away like stubble. 'To whom then will you compare Me, or who is My equal?' says the Holy One" (vs 21-25).

Here's what He revealed to them, v 26: "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold, Who has created these *things*... [He spoke that they existed, brethren! That's tremendous!] ... Who brings out their host by number? He calls them all by names by the greatness of His might, for He is strong in power; not one fails. Why do you say, O Jacob, and O Israel you speak, 'My way is hidden from the LORD and my cause is disregarded by my God?'" (vs 26-27).

You're never, never going to get away from God. That's the whole lesson of the whole thing:

- whether it's an individual who's a 'fool in his heart'
- whether it is a nation that rejects knowledge of God and 'casts the Law of God behind
- whether it is a whole global organization getting rid of God

### ***God holds them all accountable!***

Romans 1:23: "And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into *the* likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed creatures, and creeping things."

We're going to find there are three categories of sins in these behaviors:

1. vs 19-23—**sin against God and the Truth**—that's where it begins
2. vs 24-28—**sins against oneself**—when you reject God, the first thing you do is begin sinning against yourself in your own mind, in your own wickedness  
*Not satisfied with that, that translates into:*
3. vs 29-32—**sins against others**

Let's think about this for just a minute and understand exactly what this is defining. What is the first and great commandment? *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and being!* And *love the Truth, too!* What is the second commandment? *You shall love your neighbor as yourself!* Here they commit their sins against themselves and then bring in others for their sins and sin against others. So, there we have outlined the two major commandments of God, right there. Isn't that amazing? Stop and think about that!

Let's look at the sins against themselves, v 24: "For this cause, God also abandoned them..." Notice that God is doing this Himself. *God* gave them over. He can use various things to do it, but God "...abandoned them..." *Abandon* is little better than just 'gave over' (*KJV*) because *abandon* means to *leave them by themselves completely*.

"...to uncleanness through the lusts of their hearts, to disgrace their own bodies between themselves, **who exchanged the Truth of God for the lie...**" (vs 24-25)—NAV—New Age Versions.

What is the timeframe of all of this? *I think from Adam and Eve through all of mankind!* It's constantly applying. The Word of God is always in use and living and applying for those who are righteous and for those who are evil.

Verse 25: "Who **exchanged** the Truth of God for the lie; and they worshiped and served the created thing more than the One Who is Creator, Who is blessed into the ages. Amen."

Who is the *created being* that wants to be worshiped as God? *Lucifer! Satan!* An angel of light, but his light is darkness.

Verse 26: "For this cause, God abandoned them to disgraceful passions; for even their women

changed the natural use of *sex* into that which is contrary to nature.”

- v 23—changed
- v 25—exchanged
- v 26—exchanged

you find

- ✓ a *change* becomes a *cause*
- ✓ *exchange* becomes a *cause*

- v 24—this cause.

see how that pattern falls

- v 26—*change glory for this cause*; who *exchanged* the Truth for this ‘cause.’

### **Then God abandoned them!**

Look at the first *abandoned*, v 24: “...God also **abandoned** them...”—gave them over. That follows right after ‘this cause.’ Same way in v 26: “For this **cause**, God abandoned them...” There is a three-step thing that takes place. It gets more intense as it goes along.

Verse 28: “And in exact proportion as they did not consent to have God in *their* knowledge... [that’s the *cause*. God is just because it’s in exact proportion.] ...God **abandoned** them to a **reprobate mind**, to practice *those* things that are immoral.”

A ‘reprobate mind’ means *one devoid of judgment or a carnal, evil mind*, because you *exchange* and then you create a *cause*; then you *exchange* again and you create a *cause*. And every time there’s a *cause* God *abandoned* them, gave them over. You can see this in a person’s life, or a country’s life. I don’t know where we are in this country on this scale, but we must be getting kind of close to the third one now; then it gets really worse.

This is how perversion takes place a bit at a time. I imagine that if you took someone who was a very young person, and before they were able to have been changed by choice or by association and practice. Let’s just take the example of a homosexual: If you would have shown them at the beginning, the ending and all the vileness of it, they would be shocked; they would never accept it. But if they’re taken step-by-step, thought-by-thought, manipulation-by-manipulation... You can also do the same thing with religion; we’ve seen it! You present an idea that’s contradictory, but you present it in such a way that it causes confusion and you can lead people step-by-step and pervert them into accepting the wrong thing.

The ultimate perversion in religion is that you, as a person, could be moved—and it could happen today just as it did in the past, step-by-step-by-step—and the end result is offering your children in sacrifice in the fire to Molech; then to eat their flesh. To us that’s very repugnant, but people did

that. Stop and think! How did they get to that point where they thought what they were doing was right?

It is amazing! In a sense—not quite that bad, but in a sense, in degree—that is what has happened in the Churches of God. Then when someone finally reaches a plateau or a barrier through whatever means that they will no longer go through, maybe they can retrieve themselves. But I know it’s very difficult! Very difficult for them to understand how much God has for them. They’re kind of like the ten virgins in Matt. 25. They go out and say, ‘Hey, we want to buy. What do you have? Tell me quickly.’ What do we say? *We can’t tell you!* The best we can say is *here’s a thousand tapes, good luck*—not quite. But they haven’t realize what they have missed, because they’ve been take a step at a time, *a step at a time, a step at a time*. They kept moving the threshold of resistance out a little further, *out a little further, out a little further*.

Jeremiah 3:20: “‘Surely *as* a wife treacherously departs from her husband... [‘Treachery’ implies *thought, plan, will, perversion*—knowingly.] ... so you have dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel,’ says the LORD.... [Here’s the result of it]: ...A voice was heard upon the high places weeping and supplications of the children of Israel; for they have perverted their way... [step-by-step] ...*and* they have forgotten the LORD their God” (vs 20-21).

A strange thing happens. Something happens mentally in the perversion that they no longer recognize it. It comes to the point that those who are doing right are now viewed as *perverted*. That’s really the turning of things upside down. When that happens that is a cause that God is going to do something.

Proverbs 14:2: “He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD, but *he who is* perverse in his ways despises Him.” That’s what happened! These people despised God as we read in Rom. 1. It takes place step-by-step-by-step.

That is what’s happened to the whole society to where now that if there was anything on television back when they first came out—the middle 50s—where there was the slightest immodesty, it met with revulsion and threats of withdrawal of commercials. Today, it is almost open ‘pornea’—to use a Greek word. On the television screen: male and female, male and male, female and female, and then you have these wonderful open, frank, afternoon talk shows where they talk about every perverted thing that anyone has ever done under the sun. And that is interesting; tell us what you think; tell us how you felt.’ If I would have shot



the television every time I felt like shooting it, I probably would have gone through hundreds and hundreds of televisions.

Proverbs 28:6: “Better *is* the poor who walks in his uprightness than he who *is* perverse *in his* ways, though he *is* rich.” You can plug in any name you want there.

Now you see why God hasn’t called many mighty, many noble. How far down the *perversion trail* have they gone? *We don’t know!* And in saying that, we don’t judge them. All we know is we can look and see what is happening. God alone knows the heart and He’s going to call them into judgment.

This is something! In preparing for this, it was just amazing to me all of these things. Go back and I want you to think if you can remember the first statement that was made, which began to pervert the Gospel and you let it slide. Can you remember that first statement? Can you remember the first thing that took place? I can think of two:

1. you’re not physically healed with the stripes of Christ
2. Sabbath does not begin until it’s dark

Those two are profound. For me it was the *Gospel of the Unseen Hand*. When you really understand that, that was, in fact, another gospel. I can’t read Revelation and see an ‘unseen hand.’ I see Christ coming in the power and glory of God!

Isaiah 30:1: “Woe *to* the rebellious children,’ says the LORD, ‘Who carry out a plan, but not of Me; and who form an alliance, but not of My Spirit, that they may add sin to sin; those **who set out to go down to Egypt**... [that’s what’s happening today, right now] ...and have not asked at My mouth; to take refuge in the stronghold of Pharaoh and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt!’” (vs 1-2).

How many times have you heard of the grand event to celebrate New Years in the year 2000? It was to be right there at the pyramids in Egypt right in front of the Sphinx! I mean, a literal fulfillment of this in our day! Remember how many times we’ve covered Rev. 11 where it says ‘Sodom and Egypt.’

Verse 8: “Now go, write it before them in a tablet, and note it in a book, so that it may be for the time to come forever and ever... [that’s us now] ...that this *is* a rebellious people, lying children. They are children who will not hear the Law of the LORD; who say to the seers, ‘See not,’ and to the prophets, ‘Do not prophesy to us right things, speak to us smooth things, prophesy illusions... [See how the perversion takes place. ‘Let’s all be positive;

don’t rock the boat.’] ...go out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.’ Therefore, thus says the Holy One of Israel, ‘Because you have despised this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and rely on them; therefore, this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant” (vs 8-13).

Just like a dam that is full of water, especially an earthen dam and it’s sogged all the way through, and then BAM! it breaks open all the water just comes out in such great force.

That happened to the dam up on the Snake River near the Tetons. I use to visit out that way and we’d come down along the Snake River we would come up alongside the dam and here’s this little river going down along this lake that runs for 30-miles. One time we were traveling there and Delores said, ‘I wonder what would happen if that ever broke.’ I said, ‘Ah, no, it’ll never break.’ Guess what happened? *It broke!* Wiped everything out! That’s how God says the destruction is going to come, just like that; just like a wall breaking out suddenly. The perversion becomes terrible.

It affects doctrine, our thinking and the way that we do things. If you have a TV addiction, let me ask you to try something. Try no TV except news for a whole week. Then ask yourself—because I want you to go back to the television the next week and I want you to analyze it—what is the purpose of this program? Whether it be an afternoon soap or whether it be a primetime sitcom. I want you to think about all of the psychological programming that is being done. They will make statements and do things, laugh at sin and perversion. I want you to think about what is going into the minds of everybody and maybe what has gone into your mind. I think you will see, if you look at it carefully, that there is a planned and programmed perversion of all viewers *to control their thoughts, to manipulate what they think, to tell you what you ought to think.*

Then I want you to ask yourself: Why do I believe certain things: politically, economically, whatever? Where did I get those thoughts from? That’s a big assignment, but try it. If you can’t stand it a week, do it two days.

1-Timothy 6:3: “If anyone teaches any different doctrine, and does not adhere to sound words, *even those* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine *that is* according to Godliness.” That, brethren, is why knowing your Bible is true and correct.

There is a man who is saying, ‘I don’t have

a belief statement because a belief statement makes you stuck in one point. My beliefs have changed over the years, so I don't have a belief statement.' Yet, people follow him and listen to his tapes and say, 'Oh, he's a wonderful man.' Listen! Let me tell you straight out something very plain: **God sent us a statement of beliefs! The Bible!** He inspired it to be written and gave each one of us a copy of it. Now, who does not want us to have that? *Satan!* Why? *If we have the sound words of Christ and the sound doctrine of Christ, we will know the words to salvation!*

So therefore, any man who brags and says, 'I don't have a statement of beliefs,' if I were you, brethren, if you heard someone preaching that, I would run away from him so fast, because he's got a scheme somewhere in it. You may not understand it. He may even appear to be very humble.

The Scripture is, 'I change not.' The true doctrines of God do not change. Are you going to change from Sabbath to Sunday? So, we're up against some very sophisticated preaching. When I cover some of these things, some people get all 'excited' that there's mean ole nasty Fred going after so-and-so again. Mean ole nasty Fred is not going after so-and-so again. However, what responsibility does God lay upon us to defend the Truth. He does! I'm not going to deal in personalities. I will deal with Scriptural Truth. Some of these things I'm going to have to cover, I mean, it is so bad! One of the big problems you have is all of those who listen who are the enablers.

You don't have these things according to doctrine, which is according to Godliness—that is how to become how God is—for those who are not willing to declare their doctrines or have a doctrinal statement of belief to say exactly what they believe. {note booklet *Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God*; if you examine it carefully, there are only two mentions of the Christian Biblical Church of God. That's on the front cover and the return address and then in the section concerning elders. Otherwise, you will see the beliefs booklet that we have contains pure Scriptural doctrinal statements all the way through.

Notice what God says, through Paul writing to Timothy, it says of this kind of person, v 4: "He is proud and knows nothing. Rather, he has a morbid attraction to questions and disputes over words, from which come envy, arguments, blasphemy, wicked suspicions, vain reasonings of men who have been corrupted in *their* minds and *are* destitute of the Truth—*men* who believe that gain is Godliness. **From such withdraw yourself**" (vs 4-5).

That's what needs to be done. If you're hearing anything like that, then you need to withdraw yourself from it. Remember the three sections of *sin against God*:

1. against God and Truth
2. against self
3. against others

*then we have:*

- change
- exchange and exchange

*for which we have*

- cause and cause
- abandon and abandon

Can you think of anything worse than for God to abandon you? Just leave you over to your own evil?

Romans 1:29: "being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, malice; full of envy, murder, strife, guile, evil dispositions; whisperers, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things *and practices*; disobedient to parents" (vs 29-30). I think the schools are fomenting that more than anything else, under the guise of self-expression and self-esteem.

Verse 31: "Void of understanding, covenant-breakers..." You might think about that in relationship to those people who turn their back on God, because they've broken the everlasting covenant.

"...without natural affection, implacable *and* unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God... [God always gives them a witness somewhere along the line] ...that those who commit such things are worthy of death, not only practice these things themselves, but also approve of those who commit *them*" (vs 31-32). ***There you have the result of evil!***

Why does Paul do this in the first chapter? Then he carries on into the second chapter and the first part of the third chapter. *What he's doing is showing the hopeless condition of men!* That only the salvation of God and of Christ can save them from this mess. I'll project ahead just little bit further: If you try to do it yourself—from within yourself—you're going to end up with the same results that we just read here in the first chapter, which we will read in the second and the first part of the third chapter. ***That's why it all has to be of God!***

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 1:16

- 2) Acts 20:21-25
- 3) Romans 1:16
- 4) Ephesians 2:8
- 5) 1 Corinthians 1:18
- 6) 1 Corinthians 15:1-2
- 7) 2 Corinthians 2:15
- 8) Romans 5:6-10
- 9) Romans 1:17-18, 17
- 10) Galatians 2:20
- 11) Romans 1:17
- 12) Habakkuk 2:4
- 13) Romans 1:18-32, 18-20
- 14) Colossians 2:6-10
- 15) Romans 1:21-22
- 16) Psalm 14:1
- 17) Psalm 36:1-4
- 18) Proverbs 12:15
- 19) Proverbs 16:2, 25
- 20) Jeremiah 17:9-10, 1, 5-8
- 21) Hosea 4:1-3, 6-10
- 22) Isaiah 5:18-24
- 23) Psalm 2:1-5
- 24) Isaiah 40:18-27
- 25) Romans 1:23-26, 24, 26, 28
- 26) Jeremiah 3:20-21
- 27) Proverbs 14:2
- 28) Proverbs 28:6
- 29) Isaiah 30:1-2, 8-13
- 30) 1 Timothy 6:3-5
- 31) Romans 1:29-32

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 1:1, 9, 19
- Ephesians 2:1-7
- John 3:16
- Proverbs 14:12
- Matthew 25
- Revelation 11

Also referenced:

- Sermon Series: *The Two Righteousnesses* (#s 5-6  
Romans Series)
- Book: *Ends and Means* by Aldous Huxley
- Booklet: *Beliefs of the Christian Biblical  
Church of God*

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