

Glen Park Gospel Church
Tuesday Evening Bible Study Group Notes

Rev Chris Trinham

Studies in Romans

No 2

Series 1. Condemnation - No One Is Righteous
Gentiles and Barbarians

Scripture Reading: Romans 1:18-32

As we saw, Jews considered all others Gentiles and the Greeks called all others Barbarians. Paul in this first short series of three studies considers Jews, Greeks and the rest of us to be Sinners, everyone is condemned and in need of God's mercy and grace. It is the way we are (Romans 1:14,17&3:23). Paul also hastens to tell us that there is an answer to our need in the provision of God through Jesus Christ and His death upon the cross. Salvation is found only in Jesus.

Being Ignorant of Our Own Shortcomings is No Excuse.

Sooner or later someone will ask, 'What about the poor ignorant savage (our hypothetical case is almost always some one living in the jungles) who has never heard God's good news, the gospel? How can God condemn him in sin?' (Question for thought: Are you worried about 'him', or are you trying to find a way around for your self?) Here is Paul's answer:

v18 God's wrath is upon the wickedness of all who override truth by their wickedness, and

v19 God has already stamped His godly image into us all when we were created in His image.

v20 God's holy nature and mighty power are demonstrated in the wonderful creation of the universe, nature and mankind.

Our conscience with which we were created as part of that image of God is imprinted with an innate knowledge of right which when tender screams against wickedness. We continue in sin by suppressing that awareness, and we do so at our peril for it tells us that we have transgressed the

holiness of God, and are guilty by our own actions and choice.

The choice before all men.

Right is right: true is true. Any deviation from this, no matter how 'small' is sin: if not to us, it is to God. Sin is serious stuff. Adam's 'slip' was the fall of humanity (Genesis 3). God's attitude to our sin is such that the remedy cost Him all He had. He sent His Son to die for us (John 3:16) and His righteousness is demonstrated in the message of the Gospel. See Romans 1:16&17.

The choice before us is clear, choose God and His righteousness, or choose our own way. This is true for all mankind, and true for us.

The choice is also crucial for it is a parting of the ways. The sinful man is at the crossroads. One way leads to God and the path of increasing godliness and righteousness, the other is to condemnation and the path of increasing sinfulness.

The path of Godlessness Into Sin

There are three steps.

v24 *God also gave them up to uncleanness.* This bends the will. The

will is man making choice.

The reason for this is seen in verses 21-23. This is not a statement about evolution, but the concept of God in the heart, the soul of a sin-choosing man, whereby to him the holy infinite creator somehow becomes irrelevant with the consequence that man himself is no more than an another animal.

The result is that God abandoned them to behaviour in accord with this concept. These people are no more than living souls, deprived of anything greater than their own mind, emotion or will can conceive. For them, God does not exist and man is no more than an animal, so their morality allows such practices as co-habitation, sex outside marriage, divorce and re-marriage and the like. "It's all OK by me!" they cry. See v24. Do you say, "This is not me!" Look at society around you.

v26 *God gave them up unto vile affections.* This corrupts the emotions.

The reason. There is a flow-on effect, for the heart of man is never satisfied with what he has, whatever the goal, be it making money, sport, political power, group domination, lewdness, enjoyment, sex or crime. We are created to strive, to exceed. Enough is never enough.

Steps into deeper sinfulness often indicate degrees of difficulty in repentance. The further we go the more difficult it is even to decide to come back. We have practised rebellion, the lessons are hard to unlearn. This may be tough for us, but it is not beyond the ability of God. Here is a promise for those who dare to try. 'Whoever comes to me I will never drive away' John 6:37 (NIV). When we turn and come, Jesus, God's Son, gives us the power, step by step. This is the Gospel. Jesus died for our sins and was raised again for our sakes, to make us just in God's eyes. Therefore we need to trust in God.

The result. The depraved nature dives deeper. Allowable deviation becomes an overt perverted drive and the demand for greater emotional gratification. See v27. Do you say, "This is certainly not me!" Again look at society around you.

v28 *God gave them over to a reprobate mind.* This poisons the intellect.

The reason. The intellect is the dominant controlling faculty of the soul and often the last to be taken over by sinking human nature.

The result. When man is given 'over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done'(NIV), any kind of evil may result. See v29-31. You say, "This is not me. I may not be perfect, but this text does not describe me." Pick up any copy of the daily newspaper and read all about it. These verses describe our society. They are the inevitable end of people who at first refuse to acknowledge the God of glory, turn their backs upon him and seek to gratify their own desires.

The cemetery is full of dead people. They died from many different diseases; each according to their individual weakness. But they are all dead. So it is with sin.

Welcome

Glen Park Gospel Church

Lower Road, Eltham North

Sundays 10.30 am

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