

The World Of Romans One

August 14, 2007

The Roman letter was written from Corinth on the third missionary journey of the apostle Paul in the winter of 54 or 55. Paul was in the home of Gaius, and Tertius was by his side as he wrote by the direction of the Holy Spirit. Paul began this great letter by saying, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ." I think it is interesting that Paul, a rich, powerful, influential Jew, was proud to be a servant, a bond slave of the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice also that Paul was called to be an apostle, "separated unto the gospel of God." Paul was not separated to a monkery, a nunnery, a mountain top or a commune, but to the gospel of Christ. Paul was separated to the gospel, the good news, not new news, but the good news of the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Christ.

Paul says some things that we need to hear in our day. In fact Romans One is a case history of the human race. In it you will find a diagnosis, a prognosis, and a remedy prescribed. This case history is not lovely. In Romans 5:21, "sin hath reigned unto death." In Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." One thing you may be sure of, Romans One gives the whole truth about the human condition. Romans One is dark and foreboding. It's thunder and it's lightning! The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. In verse 24, the scripture says, "God gave them up." In verse 26, again, "God gave them up." In verse 28, the scripture says, "God gave them over." The problem was sin. It is amazing how we like to trace our problems to anything, ANYTHING other than the real problem of SIN!

I was in Baylor University when John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas. I remember the ensuing discussion and the commentators as they talked about how a man could be gunned down in cold blood by another human. They said, "Maybe it was due to the frontier spirit that prevails in Texas. Perhaps it was the fault of the motion picture industry." They never really got around to discussing the real reason. Just as today we tend to ascribe it to every reason under the sun except the real problem, which is sin. The Bible is a very honest book. The Bible tells it like it is! The scripture says, "There is none righteous, no not one." All perversion is traced to the human heart. Until the heart is cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ, nothing good is going to come and nothing good is going to happen.

Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. 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 recompense of their error which was meet. 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; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: 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 (Rom. 1:24-32).

What an amazing view into the world of Romans One! Notice in verse 24, "God gave them up." If you have ever heard a note of finality struck, it is that passage. It sounds like clods on the coffin of humanity, if you will! GOD GAVE THEM UP! He withdrew his restraining grace and let them have what they insisted on having. He gave them over to the consequences of their own sins. This all says that even in this life, we can be given up. It is possible for us to fall out of the hands of the living God. What a tragedy! Romans One is a portrait of man without God. What I fear is that this will become the portrait of America. God gave these people "over" to spiritual and moral uncleanness and let them reap their own due reward. God gave them up to "VILE" affections! In other words, "wrong fulfillment of evil desires." The wrong fulfillment of natural desires becomes what the scripture calls "vile affections." In describing the world of Romans One, Paul says, even their women did burn in their lusts one toward another, indicating that the world of Romans One, had stooped to a new low.

With this, Paul introduces us to the slimy, sleazy world of homosexuality. If you have ever wondered if the Bible is current, if the Bible is relevant, if the Bible addresses anything today, if it bears any concern for the present, all you need to do is read Romans One. The world of Romans One was very much like the world of 1998. The things stated in this chapter have a

very familiar ring, do they not? In the last few years, society has been wrestling with this problem. It is the understatement of our day to say that "homosexuality has come out of the closet" In San Francisco, in 1983 there was a parade in which 300,000 people participated to sustain the very thing that Romans One condemns. Sometime ago 200,000 people marched while Mayor Ed Koch declared it to be gay and lesbian pride week in New York City. We have churches who claim 50,000 homosexuals as part of their membership. Some years ago the Catholic church in San Francisco made a statement in regard to this problem and said in effect that such is not to be held as sinful, that such ought to be treated with compassion and understanding, that we should take a nonjudgmental approach, and that we should seek to avoid alienation of all such people.

It may sound like the voice of one crying in the wilderness of these modern times, but Paul said, "They changed the natural use." Paul needs to be heard in our culture, in our society, in this very day. We have films, clubs, plays, churches and even preachers who would excuse, defend, justify and glorify the very thing which Paul condemns. We have reached a day when reason is out the window and self will has moved in. I deny that any individual is born a homosexual. I readily recognize that there is a tremendous amount of such activity in our time, all of which is a result of a series of wrong decisions, each of which the person is responsible for making. Decisions that were made out of step with and contrary to God's natural order.

Genesis 1:27, says, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; MALE and FEMALE created he them." 1st. Corinthians 6:9, speaks of "abusers of themselves with mankind." Romans One again, "even their women did change the natural use." Both men and women LEFT the natural use (the use of the body according to God's order) and burned in lust, men with men and women with women. But let's face it, the virus of evil spread even to the women and they became as bad as the men. Notice the sexual language, men, women, male, female. Evidently as far as God is concerned and as far as Paul and the Holy Spirit are concerned, there is a natural use and an unnatural use. The natural is ground into the constitution of the sexes that the Lord made in the very beginning. It is the unnatural that is under judgment in Romans One.

Notice another thing Paul says in Romans 1:27. He says, "Receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet." Paul says

they are under judgment now and on the road to ultimate judgment. Paul states that such carries its own penalty. Paul says it carries its own DUE penalty. How true!

Years ago I attended a seminar where some of our leading health officials predicted that by 1990, one hundred thousand people will die in the United States as a result of this. They told this particular group that in the next 2 years that there will not be a public school in the United States that will not be touched by this problem. A recent conversation with a clinical psychologist, gave a real view into this world. He works with children who are abused and perverted. He said he sees some unbelievable and abominable practices resulting from everything from drunken parents to satanic worship. Many years ago a leading health official from Great Britain came to the United States. After walking through one of the great syphilis wards of New York City, he said, "God Almighty certainly writes a legible hand!"

Are we building another Sodom and Gomorrah? Study Genesis the 19th chapter. Will we soon be pleading with God, as was Abraham of old to destroy us not? On Feb. 26, 1983, I attended a debate in Denton, Texas between Dan Billingsly and Dr. Ralph Blair of New York City. I listened with amazement that evening as Dr. Blair sought to defend the proposition, "Homosexual practice is consistent with a Christian's lifestyle."

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