

***Romans***  
***Message 22***  
***Dangers and Warnings Concerning Sin***  
***Rom 1:18-32***

- 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;
- 19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.
- 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:
- 21 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.
- 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,
- 23 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.
- 24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:
- 25 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.
- 26 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:
- 27 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.
- 28 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;
- 29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,
- 30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,
- 31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:
- 32 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. KJV

**Introduction:**

We have been slowly working our way through this introduction to the book of Romans because it is here that Paul laid out the fundamentals of the Gospel Message he preached in far more detail than he did any other place.

We would be fools to pass this by without understanding it as deeply and profoundly as we possibly can for it is the Gospel that is our Hope of Salvation, right?

Who can be saved without the gospel?

If it is the connection between us and God, how dare we treat it casually as if it makes no difference whether we understand it properly or not?

And, if we compare the message of Paul with most of what we are hearing today that is called 'the gospel' how can we fail to notice that he sounds a lot different than the guys on TV or the radio... or maybe in many pulpits?

We must remember always the very stern and serious warning Paul gave concerning the gospel message.

Gal 1:8-9

- 8 But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.
- 9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed. NAS

We have no reasonable option other than to take all the time needed and pay all possible attention to all of the details lest we get something wrong to the eternal destruction of our souls.

Now, I realize that we live in a day when many people do not want to think closely on spiritual matters. I also realize that there are religious people, maybe even in my audience, who think they have it all figured out and need not take this kind of care.

But I will tell you that no one can take too much care for his soul. For many of us the sun is setting on this life and for some the end of our ability to do close reasoning is coming more quickly than death. You and I cannot afford to be careless. There is far too much to lose.

Eternity is a very long time and the Lake of Fire is a very miserable place.

There are three major topics that I want to discuss with you from this text this morning. Some of them we may visit again in more detail in future messages but I at least want to sketch out the framework of the passage before us.

**Paul's Attitude Toward Sin**  
**The Dangers of Sin**  
**Warnings Concerning the Deception of Sin**

**Paul's Attitude Toward Sin**

We can often tell a great deal about a person's feelings about any matter by listening closely to his tone and watching the expressions of his face. But when the words are in writing, as many of us have found by experience using text messages, it is the choice of words that speak to us

concerning the attitude of the writer.

Look back at the text and notice Paul's choice of words on the matter.

V.21 - Vain in their imaginations  
Foolish heart was darkened  
Other versions read: futile in their speculations, senseless heart was darkened

V.22 - they became fools  
Virtually every other translation agrees

V.23 - changers of the glory of God  
Some translations substitute "exchanged" but essentially agree

V.24 - uncleanness, dishonor  
"Impurity", "sexual impurity", "degrading", "vile and sinful"

V.25 - changers of truth  
"Exchanged the truth for the lie"

V.26 - vile affections...against nature  
"Degrading passions....unnatural" "vile passions" "shameful lusts"

V.27 - unseemly  
"Indecent acts" "shameless acts"

V.28 - reprobate mind  
"Depraved mind" "debased mind"

V.29 - unrighteousness  
"All manner of wickedness"

Then, Paul gave the list of the wicked deeds and practices of those about whom he was speaking.

Rom 1:29-31

- 29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,
- 30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,
- 31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: KJV

Now it is obvious that Paul's value judgments did not cause him to hate sinners.... he gave his life to bring the gospel to them and was about to suffer a beating, two years of prison and a shipwreck to get to Rome to preach the gospel to such.

But his words do not betray any kind of softness toward sin, no willingness to embrace wicked lifestyles, no excusing of the ungodliness and not even the politeness of tone that we so frequently hear today. Sin was sin. It was horrible and vile and he had no place in his value set to be soft in his declaration of that.

Now, before you dismiss him too harshly, remember this.

He was filled with the Holy Spirit of God Who was inspiring him to write and to preach these things... and in just this way.

You cannot miss this. These are the very words that Jesus Christ would have used had He been writing this letter rather than Paul.

Paul is not some kind of misogynist misfit, some hyper-religious pharisee nor a prejudiced and hate-filled person. He was the Apostle of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, called, empowered and inspired by our Blessed Lord. Neither his words nor his attitude can be dismissed as some kind of primitive notion about right and wrong. All of these issues he mentioned are just as wicked as he described them to be, no apology, no compromise.

I know that the world around us - even the so-called 'Christian' world - is working on developing arguments as to why it is wrong of us to share Paul's attitude.

There has been in the world for a very long time a heresy which is now resurfacing, called by some the "red letter heresy." It refers to those Bibles that have the words of Jesus in red ink and those who make the claim that they believe what Jesus said but not what the apostles wrote as if there is a division, a dichotomy, between the Lord and His messengers.

Many of them reject such passages as this one because it was not personally declared by Jesus Christ. But we all must remember that the words of scripture written down by the men of God bear the authority of heaven just as if Jesus had spoken or written them personally.

**One of the dangers we face is the softening of tone and attitude toward sin in our day.**

We hear people say, "hate the sin but love the sinner," and we hear it often but there are some things we need to watch here. You should know that this statement is the invention of men and is not found in scripture.

This has become a sort of a mantra in our day which, in practice, seems to mean "don't say anything to the sinner about his sin lest he get upset and become offended." It is as if the worst possible thing we could do in evangelism is to offend the one who is actively involved in offending the Great God of All Things.

The only Great Sin, seemingly, in our culture, in case you haven't noticed, is to cause someone to "feel offended."

It is called "bullying" by some and in some places it is against the rules (places of higher education) or even against the law.

The pressure is to silence the Gospel message as declared by Paul or, for that matter, any affirmation of reason or morality.

On the one hand the scriptures each us for sure to hate sin, to run away from it as if it were a dangerous animal or some kind of poison (which it is).

1 Tim 6:8-11

- 8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.  
9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.  
10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.  
11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. KJV

2 Tim 2:22

- 22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. KJV

1 Cor 6:18

- 18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. KJV

1 Cor 10:13-14

- 13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.  
14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. KJV

So, there is no question concerning the attitude we are to have toward sin. We are to hate it, avoid it, run from it.

But the idea that the sinner is not to be confronted with sin lest they become offended is a thought foreign to scripture.

Consider Jesus with the Woman of Samaria when He encountered her at the well.

John 4:16-19

- 16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.  
17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:  
18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.  
19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. KJV

Jesus knew that she was an immoral but religious woman. He also knew that she was involved

in fornication as they spoke, so He Himself brought the subject up, “go call your husband.”

He did not embrace nor excuse her lifestyle and we can rest assured that she did not remain in it.

Witness His words to those who followed Him to Capernaum after the feeding of the Five Thousand.

John 6:24-27

- 24 When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.
- 25 And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?
- 26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.
- 27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. KJV

“Do not be consumed with this world,” v.27, which they were.

“Do not depend upon the religious system given by Moses,” which they did.

John 6:30-33

- 30 They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?
- 31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.
- 32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.
- 33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. KJV

“Do not doubt My Deity,” which they did.

John 6:42-43

- 42 And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?
- 43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. KJV

“Know that God is Sovereign and man is totally disabled spiritually.” And they did not believe this.

John 6:44-45

- 44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I

will raise him up at the last day.

45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. KJV

He spoke truth that offended people and He knew that it offended them. He knew that because of His words many of these people were going to abandon Him and openly express their unbelief. But when it came to the issue of confronting sin, He minced no words.

John 6:64-67

64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? KJV

Now, this does not say that we are not to love the sinner. What it teaches is that we are to love them enough to speak the truth to them plainly and definitely.

We are not to hate them and behave as if God is indifferent to their sins or that their sins are not really that bad.... or that we have no disapproval of their wickedness.

### **The Dangers of Sin**

Some in our day look at this scripture text and seem to only see homosexuality and it is here for sure but that is not the only thing here.

To hear some you might be tempted to think that so long as a person avoids this one sin he/she is OK and in no danger but that is far from the truth.

There are hundreds of types of perversion that have nothing to do with same sex sin. All of them are equally dangerous to your mind, your soul, your self.

We have already looked at this text.

1 Cor 6:18

18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. KJV

1. Concerning sin in general - all deliberate rebellion against God confounds the mind and soul of a human.

Look again at the list of sin in Rom 1:28-32.

28 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;
- 29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,
- 30 Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,
- 31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:
- 32 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.  
KJV

Are any of these people mentally/morally/spiritually healthy people?

Their rebellion against God, v.28, has made them, in some important ways, ill, sick, morally crippled and perverted.

(By the way.... this is the reason you do not want ANY such person as your moral/spiritual leader.)

2. Some sin has profound pleasure associated with it.

Imagine with me for a moment.

Suppose that alcohol, even the tiniest taste of it, made one violently sick and with an immediate and severe headache. How many drunkards do you suppose there would be?

Suppose that were true of marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamine? How many drug addicts would there be?

What if the same were true of all illicit sexual behavior. How many fornicators would we find?

The reason we have these things is because there is pleasure, sometimes intense pleasure, associated with them... at least for a while.

3. But it is the pleasure associated with sin that makes the combination of the two extraordinarily dangerous and addictive.

Tony Robbins, the motivationalist, tells a story of an experiment done on two monkeys at a University in California several years ago. They wired one monkey so that his finger was moved mechanically over and over again. After about 10,000 times, when they took the machinery off, the monkey continued to move his finger in the way the machine had been doing. It felt wrong to him if his finger wasn't moving. On the second monkey, they hooked him up the same way but every time his finger moved they also stimulated the pleasure center of his brain. After only a dozen or so stimulations, he too continued to move his finger without being prompted. The point that Mr. Robbins was making is the point that we should all notice concerning sin and pleasure.



Pleasure re-wires the brain very quickly. It doesn't take long to become addicted to anything that we enjoy whether it is television, golf, facebook, pornography or immorality. Pleasure has the power to reconfigure our thinking and not just about the thing we are doing. Our brain will re-order itself so that it seems to us that this was always what we wanted. The personality often changes in addictive sin so that the person becomes someone who seems entirely different than they one they were before. Many of you have seen this first-hand. You may say to yourself, "I don't even know this person anymore." It may be a friend or a relative, it may even be your own child. Values are re-ordered, priorities are changed, reasoning processes shift, and suddenly a behavior that they once looked on with scorn or distaste is the most important thing in the world.

God programmed our brains to be capable of great pleasure but knowing that such an ability to experience this level of enjoyment could and would lead us to harm ourselves, choosing behaviors that would destroy us spiritually, He hemmed us in with moral law, even from the very beginning of our race. Cain knew that it was wrong to kill Abel but he was so angry with him that it gave him pleasure to murder his brother.

Remember that the Great Flood was send because of wickedness and that Noah was a preacher of Righteousness. Necessary to that equation is known moral law.

Now, back to the monkeys. The pleasure of sin re-programs the brain. We have all, on one level or another, experienced how effective that re-programming can be.

This is the reason sin cannot be played with especially drunkenness (from whatever chemical) and fornication (of whatever construction). Some of these behaviors so change the brain that people rarely come back to normal from them.

They tamper with our brains and the first thing to go is any real desire to know God and truly commune with Him.

The two things are mutually exclusive. One cannot draw near to God without hating sin, casting it aside, despising it.

This is the reason no immoral person can ever convince me he loves God. He may think that he does but I know that his brain is not functioning properly concerning spiritual matters.

**By the way, this is also the reason Paul placed such clear and rigid requirements upon the pastorate.**

1 Tim 3:1 If a man desire the office of a bishop... not a woman.... desires the office and all that it entails... including self-humiliation... Phil 2

1 Tim 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour.... if he is given over to wickedness in any way his mind is mal-configured and he cannot be a proper spiritual leader...

sober... serious minded... of good behavior... etc.

The requirements have never been altered or relaxed and the church has the responsibility to take care in who fills the pulpit.

But individuals also have the responsibility not to place themselves in the spiritual care of people who are immoral.

Immoral people by definition have minds that are distorted by sin. They cannot think straight concerning biblical truth. They cannot legitimately be a church member much less a church leader.

1 Cor 5:9-13

9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:

10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?

13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person. KJV

Yet we live in a world in which immoral people are not only being placed into the ministry but being celebrated there.

Want to know what is wrong with the Church in America? Check the moral lives of the members and their pastors.

Immorality in all its forms is associated with critical changes to the way the minds of those involved work. In fact, as we have already shown, God gets involved and 'helps' with the mental decline.

Rom 1:24 Wherefore God also gave them up

Rom 1:26 For this cause God gave them up

Rom 1:28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind,

This is one reason that the church, its worship and its teachings must forever resist what carnal people take pleasure in, what they 'want.'

It, the church, must ever and always be guided by God's Word which is given to us by the Holy Spirit of God and is the literal expression of the True Will of God. All who think otherwise have

something wrong with their minds.

We are to see sin the same way that Paul saw it, rebellion against God, destruction to the souls of men, and we must continually be willing to speak truth sincerely with profound prayer in our hearts that God might open minds and breathe life into dead souls.