



# Commentary on Romans

## "The Gospel of God"

### Chapter 1:25-32

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# Chapter One

“Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.” Romans 1:22-25

At the end of our last Ebook about Romans we saw that because of their foolishness, God gave human beings up to “uncleanness, in the lusts of their heart, to dishonor their bodies among themselves.” In this study we will look at what they received for their foolishness.

## The Exchange

“... who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever.”

οιτινες μετηλλαξαν την αληθειαν του θεου εν τω ψευδει και εσεβασθησαν και ελατρευσαν τη κτισει παρα τον κτισαντα ος εστιν ευλογητος εις τους αιωνας αμην

The Apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit as he wrote to Christians in Rome, made the truth claim that the foolishness of human beings led them to “exchange” the truth of God for “the lie.” What did Paul mean by that?

The word “exchanged” is a translation of the Greek word μετηλλαξαν. It is the combination of two words: μετά (with, after) and ἀλλάσσω (change, alter, exchange, transform). Paul used ἀλλάσσω several words earlier when he wrote – “and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man ...”

Paul is pointing to a terrible exchange on the part of humans: they changed (exchanged) both the “glory of God” and “the truth of God.” What did humans receive in the exchange?

- an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things
- the lie

No wonder Paul referred to humans as "Professing to be wise, they became fools." God created humans and gave them Himself as well as the Truth. They foolishly exchanged that for an image made like corruptible man and "the lie."

What is "the lie"? (τό ψευδει – *to pseudei* .. definite article used with noun)

"The lie" hearkens back to the words of Satan in the Garden of Eden:

"Then the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.'" Genesis 3:4-5

Satan's lie then, and now, is that humans can "be like God." That foolish advice led to the foolish choice by humans to exchange "the truth of God for the lie." The Greek word translated "lie" means "falsehood, untruth, lie." It comes from the verb ψεύδομαι, which means "deceive, speak falsely." That is exactly what Satan did when he spoke to Eve – he deceived her through his false speech:

"For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression." 1 Timothy 2:13-14

"But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." 2 Corinthians 11:3

"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it" John 8:44

We know the end of the story:

" So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Revelation 12:9

God created humans to worship and serve Him. What happened when humans exchanged that truth for "the lie"? They "worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator." Notice the "change" here. God created humans to worship Him, the Creator. Humans foolishly chose to worship the creature rather than the Creator. God created humans to serve Him, the Creator. Humans foolishly chose to serve the creature rather than the Creator.

## Worship

What does it mean to “worship” someone or something? The Greek word Paul used in Romans 1 is σεβάζομαι. It means “to revere, to stand in awe, to venerate, to adore, to esteem highly.” What happens when people see the glory of God?

“All the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the tabernacle door, and all the people rose and worshiped, each man in his tent door.”  
Exodus 33:10

“So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped.” Exodus 34:8

“So He said, ‘No, but as Commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.’ And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, ‘What does my Lord say to His servant?’” Joshua 5:14

“When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord on the temple, they bowed their faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshiped and praised the Lord, saying: ‘For He is good, For His mercy endures forever.’” 2 Chronicles 7:3

"And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh." Matthew 2:11

"Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God." Matthew 14:33

"Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen." Luke 24:51-53

"Then he said, 'Lord, I believe!' And he worshiped Him." John 9:38  
What about beings God created who live in Heaven? How do they respond to God?

"Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: 'You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.'" Revelation 4:9-11

"Then the four living creatures said, 'Amen!' And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever."

Revelation 5:14

"And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: 'We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned.'"

Revelation 11:16-17

Angels who live in the presence of God are sensitive to making sure only God receives worship:

"Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, 'See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.'" Revelation 22:8-9

Without question, the Bible is clear that God seeks people to worship Him. Jesus said –

"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him." John 4:23

## Serve

What about "serving" God? Is that different than "worshipping" God?

The Greek word Paul used for "served" is λατρεύω. It comes from λάτρις, which means "hired servant, hireling." The noun, λατρεία, means "sacred service, worship." To "serve" in this context is to serve as part of one's worship.

Question: what was God's purpose in calling Moses to go to Pharaoh and ask for the release of the Israelites from slavery?

Answer: "When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain." Exodus 3:12

God calling on Pharaoh to release the Israelites from bondage so they could "serve" Him was a continual theme in Exodus (e.g. Exodus 4:23; 7:16; 8:1, 20; 9:1, 13; 10:3). Pharaoh understood what God was commanding him to do –

"So Moses and Aaron were brought again to Pharaoh, and he said to them, "Go, serve the Lord your God. Who are the ones that are going?" Exodus 10:8

"Then Pharaoh called to Moses and said, "Go, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be kept back. Let your little ones also go with you." Exodus 10:24

“Then he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, ‘Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the Lord as you have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also.’” Exodus 12:31-32

Once Moses and the Israelites escaped from Egypt and were in the wilderness, God reminded them that they were to serve Him and only Him –

“You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.” Exodus 20:4-6

God also clearly spelled out to Israel what would happen to them if they worshipped and served anyone or anything other than Him –

“They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against Me. For if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.” Exodus 23:33

“Take careful heed to yourselves, for you saw no form when the Lord spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of any figure: the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any animal that is on the earth or the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground or the likeness of any fish that is in the water beneath the earth. And take heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the Lord your God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage.” Deuteronomy 4:15-19

The Hebrew word used to serve both God and creature (idols) is עָבַד (*abad*). It means “to work, serve, worship.” What did the Israelites often do instead of serving/worshipping God? They served/worshipped images “made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.” They “exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator.” That is the sad, sad story of how humans have treated God through the millennia.

## Blessed Forever

Paul adds a short phrase after people exchanging the truth of God for the lie, and worshipping and serving the creature rather than the Creator – “who is blessed forever.” What does that mean and why did Paul add it there?

The Greek is ος εστιν ευλογητος εις τους αιωνας αμην – “who is blessed to the ages.” The word “blessed” is εύλογητός (*eulogéτος*) and it means “worthy of praise, speak well of.” When someone does a “eulogy” at a funeral they are speaking well or highly of the person who has died.

This phrasing by Paul is not unusual of ancient writings about God –

“Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said: ‘Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.’ And he gave him a tithe of all.” Genesis 14:18-20

“And he said, “Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His mercy and His truth toward my master. As for me, being on the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master’s brethren.” Genesis 24:27

"Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited and redeemed His people." Luke 1:68

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort." 2 Corinthians 1:3

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." Ephesians 1:3

The word "Amen" (ἀμήν) is used often in the Bible at the end of a thought. It means "so let it be." It comes from the Hebrew word -אָמֵן (*amen*), which means "verily, truly."

## Chapter Two

“For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 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.” Romans 1:26-27

In our last chapter we looked at Paul’s claim that the human race had made a terrible “exchange” by changing the glory of God for an image made like corruptible man and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things and by changing the truth of God for “the lie.”

We will now look at some of the bad results from what the Apostle Paul described as “foolish.”

δια τουτο παρεδωκεν αυτους ο θεος

This is the second time in Romans that Paul has used the phrase “God gave them up.” In verse 24, Paul wrote – “Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves.” In verse 26, he wrote – “For this reason God gave them up to vile passions.”

The "uncleanness" that God gave them up to resulted in "lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves." He called this lust and dishonor "vile passions."

### παθη ατιμιας

"vile passions" is a translation of the Greek words παθη ατιμιας. The word παθη (passion, emotion) comes from πάσχω, which means "to feel heavy emotion, passion." The word ατιμιας (disgrace, dishonor) comes from ἄτιμος, which means "without honor, despised."

Translators have used many English words to describe παθη ατιμιας –

- sinful desires
- shameful lusts
- dishonorable passions
- shameful things
- vile affections
- degrading passions
- degrading lust
- evil desires
- vile lusts
- passions of dishonor
- shameful affections
- shameful passions
- disgraceful passions
- evil things

- vile pursuits
- wrong things
- passions of shame

All of them agree with the basic meaning of the Greek words: God gave people up to a life of expressing the worst kinds of evil with each other – evil that is disgraceful, shameful and degrading. What would the worst kind of evil expression be between people?

## The Evil Exchange

τε γαρ θηλειαι αυτων μετηλλαξαν την φυσικην χρησην εις την παρα φυσιν

“For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.”

One literal translation into English – “both indeed females of them changed the natural use into that contrary to nature.”

Another literal translation into English is – “even for females of them changed the natural use to the use against nature.”

Why Paul’s continued emphasis on “changed” and “exchanged” in this context? The theme of this part of Paul’s letter to the Romans concerns the wrath of God revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Even though people knew the truth, they suppressed the truth “in unrighteousness.” Paul reached back in time to the “creation of the world” and how God’s invisible attributes were clearly seen, “being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead.”

The word μετηλλαξαν means “change, transform, alter, exchange.” This is the third time Paul has used the word:

vs 22-23 – “Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.”

vs. 25 – “who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever.”

vs. 26 – “For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.”

People changed the “glory of the incorruptible God” into an image made like corruptible man, birds, four-footed animals, and creeping things (e.g. idols) and exchanged the “truth of God” for a lie. God responded by giving them up to uncleanness to dishonor their bodies among themselves and to vile passions.

We need to return to Genesis 1 & 2 for a moment to understand where this is headed.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” That’s where everything begins. God existed before anything – time, space, heavens, earth, people. He created the heavens and the earth and everything in it. God created time and space – and people.

## Chapter Three

“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” Genesis 1:26-28

We see in these early verses of Genesis that God did something quite remarkable. He created human beings (male and female) in “Our image, according to Our likeness.”

Notice that God first said “Let Us make man in Our Image, according to Our Likeness.” That is significant in light of what He said about creating matter and creatures prior to man. In the previous creative process, God said – “Let there be.” With the creation of man, God said – “Let Us make.”

- “Let there be light”
- “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters”
- “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place”
- “let the dry land appear”

- "Let the earth bring forth grass"
- "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens"
- "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures"
- "let birds fly above the earth"
- "Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind"
- "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness"

God changed His language during the creative process, I believe, to express the "personal" relationship He would have the humans who He would make in "Our image, according to Our likeness."

The Hebrew reads –

כְּדִמוֹתֵינוּ בְּצַלְמֵנוּ אָדָם נִעֲשֶׂה

The Hebrew word for man, אָדָם, transliterates as *adam*.

God first said "Let Us make *adam* in our Image, according to Our likeness;" then He said "let them have dominion." That's the Hebrew word וַיְרִדוּ (plural). Who is "them"?

"So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them ..."

Genesis 1:27 continues the creative explanation by stating that God created *adam* (man – אָדָם), in His own image (צֶלְמֵם); male (זָכָר – *zakar*) and female (נְקֵבָה – *neqebah*) He created them. The “man” God created is male and female. God created *adam* (man) in His (Our) image and likeness and that image was male and female. As we know now and the ancients knew then, male and female are sexual distinctions. Boys and girls are different. Men and women are different. How? The primary difference between the male and female *adam* is their reproductive and sexual anatomy. This is important to our understanding of what Paul presents in Romans 1.

We see the “image” and “likeness” of God when we see male and female together. How did God demonstrate this to the male who He created first?

“And the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.’ Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.”

Genesis 2:18-20

God said that it was not good that man should be alone – (בַּד – *bad*), which means “separation, apart.” Because God created *adam* in His (Our) image and likeness and that image and likeness was male (*zakar*) and female (*neqebah*), God brought every living creature to the male *adam* and told him to give them names. The male *adam* saw that the cattle, birds and

beast of the field came before him in pairs (male and female) and would have seen that he did not have a helper (עֵזֶר – *ezer*) comparable (נֶגֶד – *neged*) to him. God put the male *adam* to sleep and created the female *adam* from the male's rib. God brought the female to the male and the male said –

“This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.” Genesis 2:23

Some scholars believe the Hebrew words *zō't happa'am* (זֹאת הַפֶּאִם) have an exclamatory nature – “This is now!” The male saw the female and realized they were a completed pair even as he had seen the animals in pairs.

The next words of the text demonstrate an understanding from the earliest time that sexual union was understood to be between male and female in a marriage relationship –

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” Genesis 2:24

It's interesting to see that the word “female” is *neqebah* and the word “comparable” is *neged*. There is a special comparability/suitability with male and female in God's purpose and design. Important to remember that male and female together are how God made man (*adam*) in His (Our) image and likeness.

Even as the male named all of the living creatures God brought to him, he named the female Adam God brought to him. He named her "Woman" (נְשִׁיָּם – *ishshah* – wife) because she was taken "out of Man" (שָׂתָה לָאִשׁ – *zoth laqach ish*).

As we continue to read Paul's words in Romans 1, we must remember that the image of God is male and female together. That will guide us in understanding why Paul wrote what he wrote.

God gave humans the highest position on the earth He created. They would have "dominion" (רָדָה – reign, rule) over the fish, the birds, the cattle, the earth and every creeping thing." They would co-rule the earth with God. That's the plan God had for humans.

God created humans to reproduce through sexual union – "Be fruitful and multiply." Genesis 2:24 reads, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." The words "be joined" come from the Hebrew word דָּבַק (cling, cleave, keep close). This joining together included physical, sexual, emotional, mental and social closeness ("one flesh" – *echad basar*). God's idea of creating humans to have dominion over the earth and everything in it would include a closeness that included all aspects of who they were as humans.

God's words to the male and female (וּמִלְאֵוּ וְרָבוּ פְרוּ) tell us much about the type of relationship God intended for male and female to have together as they represented the image of God on earth. The word *parah* means "to bear fruit, be fruitful." The word *rabah* means

“multiply, grow great, increase, make large.” The word *mala* means “be filled, to fill.” The word *erets* means “land, earth.” God commanded the male and female to be fruitful, multiply in number and size, and fill up the land (earth). What mechanism did God create within the male and female to accomplish this command? Sexual intercourse leading to pregnancy and birth of new males and females. The sexual relationship male and female have together is interwoven into their design as being the image and likeness of God.

## Why This Is Important to God

Look again at what God said about creating humans – “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.” God created the heavens and the earth; He created angels and animals, birds and fish. Yet, the only created being that would share in the “likeness” (תְּמוּנָה – likeness, similitude) was humans. The Hebrew word comes from the root הִמָּד which means “be like, resemble.”

When a man and woman (male and female) come together as husband and wife, they are expressing the image of God on earth. When they have a sexual relationship that brings new males and females into the world, they are being fruitful, multiplying and filling the earth.

Look at Romans 1:24-25 again –

“Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever.”

Can you imagine anything more honoring than for the Almighty God to create a living being that would be in His “likeness”? Can you imagine anything more dishonorable than for humans to “exchange” that great honor for something as demeaning as worship and service for idols and dishonoring their bodies among themselves?

God created humans for the greatest experience imaginable – being made in the image and likeness of God and ruling the earth with Him – and how have humans repaid His great honor? by worshipping and serving the creature rather than the Creator and dishonoring their bodies among themselves.

How have humans done that?

## Against Nature

Paul began with a description of what women did with each other in ways that he described as "against nature."

He chose to use the word *θηλειαι* for "women." It comes from a root word for the female breast and means "to suckle." It speaks to the sexual "function" of a woman, not sexual "desire." Only a female is designed to give birth and suckle a child.

This is important to note for multiple reasons. One is how that word is used in the Greek New Testament. Another reason is that there are other words for "women" in the Greek that Paul did not choose to use. Paul was a highly educated person and knew Greek and Hebrew very well. He was a wordsmith and selected the right word for each situation.

The word *θηλειαι* is used five times in the New Testament –

"And He answered and said to them, 'Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.'" Matthew 19:4-6

“And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Because of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation, God ‘made them male and female.’ ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

Mark 10:5-9

“For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.”

Romans 1:26

“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.” Romans 1:27

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Galatians 3:28

All other uses of the word “woman” and “women” in the New Testament come from these Greek words:

- γυνή (a woman, wife, my lady)
- γυναικάριον ( a woman, a poor weak woman, a silly woman)
- πρεσβῦτις (an old woman)

Paul chose to use a specific word for “women” (θηλειαι) that specifically addressed their function for childbearing (including childrearing) within the human race.

What did Paul say the females did?

They “changed” (exchanged – μετηλλαξαν) the “natural use” (φυσικην χρησην) for “what is against nature” (εις την παρα φυσιν).

## Chapter Four

“For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 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.” Romans 1:26-27

In the last chapter we looked at the history of God’s purpose and design for creating “man” (male and female) in His image and likeness. What we learn in Genesis 1 & 2 prepares us to understand why the Apostle Paul used sexual relations as the first example of what happened after God gave up the human race to “vile passions.”

“For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.”

τε γαρ θηλειαι αυτων μετηλλαξαν την φυσικην χρησην εις την παρα φυσιν

Paul used the word θηλειαι for “female.” It’s the Greek word that speaks of the sexual “function” of a woman (female breast to suckle). Women “exchanged” (μετηλλαξαν – change, transform, alter, exchange) the “natural use.” The Greek words are φυσικην χρησην (*phusiken chrésin*). The word φυσικην means “natural, according to nature.” The word χρησην means

“usage, manner of use.” The manner of use was often in the sexual sense, as it is here.

εις την παρα φυσιν

One literal translation would be – “into that contrary to nature.” What does that mean – “contrary to nature”?

## Against Nature?

First, let's take a look at how various English translators deal with this verse

—

“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.”

KJV

“For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural ...”

NASB

“Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones.” NIV

“For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature ...” ESV

“For this reason God gave them over to degrading and vile passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural [a function contrary to nature] ...” AMP

“This is why God delivered them over to degrading passions. For even their females exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones.” HCSB

“That is why God let go of them and let them do all these evil things, so that even their women turned against God’s natural plan for them and indulged in sex sin with each other.” TLB

“Worse followed. Refusing to know God, they soon didn’t know how to be human either—women didn’t know how to be women, men didn’t know how to be men. Sexually confused, they abused and defiled one another, women with women ...” MSG

Many Christian commentators believe Paul was addressing a big problem in the Gentile world – homosexuality. However, some commentators believe that is not what Paul meant. They believe Paul was addressing **heterosexuals** involved in **homosexual** relations rather than homosexuals having sexual relations with other homosexuals. Their idea is that a female heterosexual who engages in sexual relations with another female is doing something **against** her nature. However, a homosexual female who engages in sexual relations with another female is doing something **within** her nature. Is that what Paul meant?

First, let’s look at how a leader in the Christian gay community views Romans 1:26-27 –

“Gay people have a natural, permanent orientation toward those of the same sex; it’s not something that they choose, and it’s not something that they can change. They aren’t abandoning or rejecting heterosexuality—that’s never an option for them to begin with. And if applied to gay people, Paul’s argument here should actually work in the

other direction: If the point of this passage is to rebuke those who have spurned their true nature, be it religious when it comes to idolatry or sexual, then just as those who are naturally heterosexual should not be with those of the same sex, so, too, those who have a natural orientation toward the same sex should not be with those of the opposite sex. For them, that would be exchanging "the natural for the unnatural" in just the same way. We have different natures when it comes to sexual orientation." Matthew Vines, *The Gay Debate: the Bible and Homosexuality*, <http://www.matthewvines.com/transcript/>

## Text and Context

Is Vines right? Do people have “different natures” when it comes to sexual orientation? Does God give some people a heterosexual nature and others a homosexual nature? Was Paul rebuking Christians who had “spurned their true nature”? We need to look at both the original Greek text and the context of the verses leading into and following the study text.

**Lead-in Text** – “Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.”

**Study Text** – “For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.”

**Follow Text** – “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 lead-in text clearly states that –

- God gave them up to uncleanness
- in the lusts of their hearts
- to dishonor their bodies among themselves
- who exchanged the truth of God for the lie
- and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator

The study text clearly states that –

- God gave them up to vile passions
- even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature

The follow text clearly states that –

- 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

## Who is Suitable?

Vines argues that Christians who hold to the traditional interpretation of Genesis 1:27 – “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them”- are missing an important point of God’s design from Genesis 2:18 –

“In Genesis 2:18, God says, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.’ And yes, the suitable helper or partner that God makes for Adam is Eve, a woman. And a woman is a suitable partner for the vast majority of men – for straight men. But for gay men, that isn’t the case. For them, a woman is not a suitable partner. And in all of the ways that a woman is a suitable partner for straight men—for gay men, it’s another gay man who is a suitable partner. And the same is true for lesbian women. For them, it is another lesbian woman who is a suitable partner. But the necessary consequence of the traditional teaching on homosexuality is that, even though gay people have suitable partners, they must reject them, and they must live alone for their whole lives, without a spouse or a family of their own. We are now declaring good the very first thing in Scripture that God declared not good: for the man to be forced to be alone. And the fruit that this teaching has borne has been deeply wounding and destructive.”

Matthew Vines, *The Gay Debate*

Vines is “forcing” his interpretation onto what is clear in Scripture. He may believe that God created gay men as suitable partners for other gay men and gay women as suitable partners for other gay women, but the text of

Genesis 1 & 2 doesn't support that interpretation. "Living alone" is not the lesson of the Genesis 2:18 text. The lesson is design, purpose, completion and function.

Here's a reminder of what we saw in our previous study –

"We see the 'image' and 'likeness' of God when we see male and female together. How did God demonstrate this to the male who He created first?

'And the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.' Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.'

Genesis 2:18-20

God said that it was not good that man should be alone – (בַּד – *bad*), which means 'separation, apart.' Because God created *adam* in His (Our) image and likeness and that image and likeness was male (*zakar*) and female (*neqebah*), God brought every living creature to the male *adam* and told him to give them names. The male *adam* saw that the cattle, birds and beast of the field came before him in pairs (male and female) and would have seen that he did not have a helper (עֵזֶר – *ezer*) comparable (נֶגֶד – *neged*) to him sexually as he saw among the animals who were sexually paired male and female. God put the male *adam* to sleep and created the

female *adam* from the male's rib. God brought the female to the male and the male said –

‘This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.’ Genesis 2:23

Some scholars believe the Hebrew words *zō't happa'am* (זֹאת הַפֶּאִמָּה) have an exclamatory nature – ‘This is now!’ The male saw the female and realized they were a completed pair sexually even as he had seen the animals in comparable sexual pairs.

The next words of the text demonstrate an understanding from the earliest time that sexual union was understood to be between male and female in a marriage relationship –

‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.’ Genesis 2:24

It's interesting to see that the word ‘female’ is *neqebah* and the word ‘comparable’ is *neged*. There is a special comparability/suitability with male and female in God's purpose and design. Important to remember that male and female together are how God made man (*adam*) in His (Our) image and likeness.

Even as the male named all of the living creatures God brought to him, he named the female *adam* God brought to him. He named her 'Woman' (נְשִׁים – *ishshah* – wife) because she was taken 'out of Man' (זָאת לָקַח אִישׁ – *zoth laqach ish*).

As we continue to read Paul's words in Romans 1, we must remember that the image of God is male and female together. That will guide us in understanding why Paul wrote what he wrote."

## Further Reading

The argument that God created the homosexual nature even as He created the heterosexual nature has no support in Scripture. None. Matthew Vines and others who identify as "gay Christians" are forcing, twisting, bending, and spinning their homosexual wishes onto the Bible in ways that the original language and text will not allow or defend.

If you are interested in reading more about why Vines is wrong in his interpretation of Scripture, please visit these thoughtful Christian posts –

<http://www.albertmohler.com/2014/04/22/god-the-gospel-and-the-gay-challenge-a-response-to-matthew-vines/>

<https://carm.org/response-to-matthew-vines-bible-homosexuality>

<https://www.monergism.com/response-matthew-vines-40-questions>

[http://evangelicalfocus.com/magazine/876/My\\_response\\_to\\_Matthew\\_Vinesgay\\_theology](http://evangelicalfocus.com/magazine/876/My_response_to_Matthew_Vinesgay_theology)

<https://www.str.org/blog/a-response-to-matthew-vines-the-bible-doesn-t-support-same-sex-relationships#.WfZDOEyZOCQ>

<http://www.christianity.com/christian-life/political-and-social-issues/god-the-gospel-and-the-gay-challenge-a-response-to-matthew-vines.html>

## Chapter Five

“For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 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.” Romans 1:26-27

In the last chapter we looked at what Paul meant by the use of the phrase “against nature.” We looked at it from two points of view: those who view homosexuality as a gift from God to men and women, and those who view homosexuality as a sin against God. We studied the text and context from three perspectives:

- 1 Lead-in text
- 2 Study text
- 3 Follow text

“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.”

## Text

Let's begin by looking at the text.

ομοιως τε και οι αρρενες αφεντες την φυσικην χρησην της θηλειας  
εξεκαυθησαν εν τη ορεξει αυτων εις αλληλους αρσενες εν αρσεσιν την  
ασχημοσυνην κατεργαζομενοι και την αντιμισθιαν ην εδει της πλανης αυτων  
εν εαυτοις απολαμβανοντες

“likewise” is ομοιως and means “equally in the same way, in like manner, similarly.”

The “men” (αρρενες – males) “also” did something similar, like, equally in the same way to the women. They left the “natural use of the woman.”

“leaving” is αφεντες (aorist active participle – having left) and means “letting go, releasing, departing.”

“the natural use” is την φυσικην χρησην and is the same phrase Paul used for women exchanging “the natural use” (την φυσικην χρησην) for “what is against nature” (εις την παρα φυσιν – what is contrary to nature).

"burned" is *εξεκαυθησαν* and is used only one time in the New Testament, Romans 1:27. It is a combination of the words *ἐκ* (from out, suggesting from the interior outwards) and *καίω* (ignite, burn, consume with fire). It means "blaze out, burn out from within" and was used in the sense of burning with internal lust.

"in their lust" is *εν τη ορεξει* and means in their "strong desire, lust, appetite." The word *ορεξει* comes from *ὀρέγω* (stretch forth, long for, eager for). It is used only one time in the New Testament, Romans 1:27.

This lust, strong desire is directed toward "one another" – *εις αλληλους*. Who is "one another"?

*αρσενες εν αρσεσιν* (males with males). How do men express their lust, strong desire, appetite with other men?

*την ασχημοσυνην κατεργαζομενοι* – "committing what is shameful"

*ασχημοσυνην* was used to describe behavior that was "unseemly, indecent, shameful, indecent, lewd, nakedness." The word is used twice in the New Testament – Romans 1:27 and Revelation 16:15.

*κατεργαζομενοι* means "work out, produce, accomplish." One Greek commentary added this – "The participle *κατεργαζομενοι* (nom. pl. masc. of pres. mid. ptc. of dep. *κατεργάζομαι*, "achieve, accomplish") is adverbial of result; the present tense is iterative ("with the result that they are repeatedly

committing what is disgraceful"). (*Exegetical Guide To The Greek New Testament*, Romans, B&H Academic, 2017, p 46).

Men lusted after other men continuously and produced what is shameful, indecent, lewd, unseemly. Was there a result from this work of shameful lust?

"and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due" is και την αντιμισθιαν ην εδει της πλανης αυτων εν εαυτοις απολαμβανοντες

αντιμισθιαν is used twice in the New Testament and means "reward, recompense, retribution."

εδει means "necessary, inevitable."

πλανης means "wandering, departure, deceit, delusion, error, sin."

εν εαυτοις απολαμβανοντες translates as "in themselves receiving." The word απολαμβανοντες is used only one time in the New Testament, Romans 1:27. It means "get back, receive back." The idea of the word is to receive what one is due.

The men who left the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, and produced what is shameful, received a recompense, a retribution, that was due them because of their error, their departure. Departure from what? What God designed as the "natural use of the woman."

## Context

It's important that we continue to return to the context for those who think the text is supportive of homosexual acts between homosexuals. Does Romans 1:26-27 mean that it is wrong for heterosexual women to have sexual relations with women? Yes. Does Romans 1:26-27 mean that it is wrong for heterosexual men to have sexual relations with men? Yes. Does Romans 1:26-27 mean that it is acceptable for homosexual women to have sexual relations with homosexual women and homosexual men to have sexual relations with homosexual men? NO!

People who participate in homosexual acts and those who support the right of people to participate in homosexual acts and believe the Apostle Paul would agree with them are not understanding the text nor the context of Romans 1. The context is clear that God gave up the people (men and women) "to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves" and to "vile passions." Nowhere in the context of Romans 1 do we find a presentation of two kinds of nature: one for homosexuals and another for heterosexuals. People are treated as either male or female, part of the human race.

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them." Romans 1:18-19

Because the human race did not glorify God as God, even though they knew God, nor were thankful, “but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened” and because while professing to be wise, “they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things,” God gave them all up to “uncleanness, in the lust of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves” and to “vile passions.” What does that look like? Women having sexual relations with women and men having sexual relations with men, both having left the “natural use” of the opposite sex. As Paul viewed it, a very sad state for the human race.

## Homosexuality in Scripture

Let's look first at homosexuality in the New Testament –

“For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 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.” Romans 1:26-27

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

“But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.” 1 Timothy 1:8-11

"... as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Jude 1:7

What about the Old Testament? What about Jesus? Did He ever say anything about homosexuality? Let's begin with the Old Testament because Jesus said much about what was written there –

"Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground. And he said, 'Here now, my lords, please turn in to your servant's house and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way.' And they said, 'No, but we will spend the night in the open square.' But he insisted strongly; so they turned in to him and entered his house. Then he made them a feast, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate. Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. And they called to Lot and said to him, 'Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally.' So Lot went out to them through the doorway, shut the door behind him, and said, 'Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly! See now, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please, let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you wish; only do nothing to these men, since this is the reason they have come under the shadow of my roof.' And they

said, 'Stand back!' Then they said, 'This one came in to stay here, and he keeps acting as a judge; now we will deal worse with you than with them.' So they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near to break down the door. But the men reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. And they struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they became weary trying to find the door. Then the men said to Lot, 'Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, and whomever you have in the city—take them out of this place! For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the Lord, and the Lord has sent us to destroy it ... Then the Lord rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the Lord out of the heavens. So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.'" Genesis 19

"You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination."  
Leviticus 18:22

"If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them." Leviticus 20:13

Genesis and Leviticus are part of the Torah, the Law of Moses. Here's what Jesus said about that Law –

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.” Matthew 5:17

“Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.” Matthew 7:12

“The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail.” Luke 16:16-17

Jesus presented His view of marriage as being between a man and a woman –

“But from the beginning of the creation, God ‘made them male and female.’ ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.” Mark 10:6-9

It's important at this point that we remember that Jesus is the Creator and designed the purpose for male and female –

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.”  
Colossians 1:15-17

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” John 1:1-3

## Summary

God is angry. Paul wrote that “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.” Paul wrote that God gave humanity up to “uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves” and to “vile passions.” The next sentence explains what people did when God gave them up –

“For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 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.”

Homosexual relations (men/men, women/women) are not the only thing Paul will list for what humans did when God gave them up, but it is the first thing on Paul’s list. There’s a reason for that as we have explained in previous parts of this study. It goes back to God’s original design for the male and female sexually, a design the human race has violated in many ways.

It is about origin, identity and purpose. We originate from God, our identity is that which God gives to each of us, and our purpose is what God purposed us to be and to do. To exchange that for anything else is missing the entire point of being made in the image and likeness of God (Imago Dei).

## Chapter Six

“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.” Romans 1:28

We are continuing our study in the section of Romans 1 that addresses God’s “wrath” and why He is so angry. We have most recently looked at what happened when God gave people up to “uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves” –

“For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 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.” Romans 1:26-27

We move now to verse 28 to see what else we can learn about the righteousness of God, the unrighteousness of mankind, and God’s wrath outpoured on them.

και καθως ουκ εδοκιμασαν τον θεον εχειν εν επιγνωσει παρεδωκεν αυτους  
ο θεος εις αδοκιμον νουν ποιειν τα μη καθηκοντα

This continues the thought Paul presented in verses 24 & 26 –

- “Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness” v 24
- “For this reason God gave them up to vile passions” v 26

Now we have God doing this in verse 28 –

- “God gave them over to a debased mind”

What does that mean and what results from it?

“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge ...”

This is a familiar idea in Paul’s presentation so far –

- “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness”
- “because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.”
- “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead”

- “so that they are without excuse, 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”
- “Professing to be wise, they became fools.” Romans 1:18-21

God gave people up to “uncleanness” and “vile passions” because even though they “knew” God, they did not glorify Him as God and were not thankful to Him for all He had given them. The people thought themselves wise, but they became fools. They knew the truth, but suppressed the truth “in unrighteousness.”

## God In Their Knowledge

In verse 28, Paul wrote that the people "did not like to retain God in their knowledge." One important note here is that we again see people "rejecting" God. They didn't make a mistake, they didn't miss something they should have caught; they made a conscious decision to reject God. They "suppressed" truth. They "knew" God but didn't glorify Him as God. They were not thankful to God even though they "knew" God existed and had created life for them. They became fools because they rejected God.

Here are some insights from the Greek:

Καὶ καθὼς οὐκ ἔδοκίμασαν – "And as not they did see fit"

The word ἔδοκίμασαν (*edokimasan*) means "to put to the test, prove, examine" and carries the idea of approving after testing. Conclusions can be reached based on the testing. What was it that people "did not see fit" to approve?

τον θεον εχειν εν επιγνωσει – "God to have in their knowledge"

People did NOT want to acknowledge God. They didn't see fit to have God in their knowledge. That goes back to verses 18 and 19 –

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.”

People “suppressed” the truth about God because of their “ungodliness and unrighteousness.” They did not want to have God “in their knowledge.”

The Greek words translated “in their knowledge” are εχειν εν επιγνωσει. εχειν (*echein*) is a verb that means “to have, hold, possess”

επιγνωσει (*epignōsei*) is a noun that means “knowledge, discernment, recognition, perception”

They did not want to “possess” the “knowing recognition” of God, so they “suppressed” what they knew to be true. What did God do about that?

“God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting.”

The Greek is παρεδωκεν αυτοις ο θεος εις αδοκιμον νουν ποιειν τα μη καθηκοντα – “gave them up God to a depraved mind to do things not being proper.”

παρεδωκεν (*paredōken*) is a verb that means “hand over, deliver, abandon”

αδοκιμον (*adokimon*) is an adjective that means "failing to pass the test, unapproved, counterfeit, depraved"

νοον (*noun*) is a noun that means "the mind, reasoning faculty, intellect"

ποιειν (*poieon*) is a verb that means "do, construct, make"

μη (*mē*) is an article that means "not"

καθηκοντα (*kathēkonta*) is a verb that means "to be proper or fitting"

God gave people over to a "depraved, debased, unapproved, counterfeit, failing" "mind, reasoning faculty, intellect," to "do, make, construct" things that were "not proper or fitting."

Stop for a minute and take a look at the picture Paul has painted for us of what happened because of people's ungodliness and unrighteousness:

- God gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves
- God gave them up to vile passions
- God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting

Let's remember that what God did was give people up or over to what came from their own choices. God did not force people to make the bad choices they made. He gave them over to what they wanted to do.

## The List

The first thing on Paul's list is homosexuality –

“For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 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 next things on the list are –

“... being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 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.” Romans 1:29-32

Including homosexuality, Paul lists more than 20 sinful activities —

- 1 homosexuality
- 2 filled with all unrighteousness
- 3 sexual immorality
- 4 wickedness
- 5 covetousness
- 6 maliciousness
- 7 full of envy
- 8 murder
- 9 strife
- 10 deceit
- 11 evil-mindedness
- 12 whisperers
- 13 backbiters
- 14 haters of God
- 15 violent
- 16 proud
- 17 boasters
- 18 inventors of evil things
- 19 disobedient to parents
- 20 undiscerning
- 21 untrustworthy
- 22 unloving
- 23 unforgiving
- 24 unmerciful
- 25 approve of those who practice them

This is quite a list! Here are the Greek words for each and their definitions –

- 1 μετήλλαξαν τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν εἰς τὴν παρὰ φύσιν – “changed the natural use into that contrary to nature” (homosexuality)
- 2 πεπληρωμένους πάσῃ ἀδικίᾳ – being filled with all unrighteousness
- 3 πορνεία – fornication
- 4 πονηρία – wickedness
- 5 πλεονεξία – covetousness
- 6 κακία, – malice
- 7 μεστοὺς φθόνου – full of envy
- 8 φόνου – murder
- 9 ἔριδος – strife
- 10 δόλου – deceit
- 11 κακοηθείας – maliciousness
- 12 ψιθυριστάς – gossips
- 13 καταλάλους – slanderers
- 14 θεοστυγεῖς – hateful to God
- 15 ὑβριστάς – insolent
- 16 ὑπερηφάνους – arrogant
- 17 ἀλαζόνας – boastful
- 18 ἐφευρετὰς κακῶν – inventors of evil things
- 19 γονεῦσιν ἀπειθεῖς – to parents disobedient
- 20 ἀσυνέτους – foolish
- 21 ἀσυνθέτους – untrustworthy
- 22 ἀστόργους – heartless
- 23 ασπονδους – truce breaker
- 24 ἀνελεήμονας – unmerciful

25 συνευδοκοῦσιν τοῖς πράσσουσιν – are approving of those practicing them

Do the items on this list look familiar? It reads like something out of the nightly news and a local gossip column. It’s a sad picture of human nature and the society in which we live.

## Chapter Seven

“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; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 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.” Romans 1:28-32

I have often said that reading Romans 1:28-32 is like reading the daily newspaper, listening to the radio news or watching the evening newscast. I know saying that dates me since most people get their news online, on cable or satellite, or through social media 24-7 these days, but I still say it that way. There was a time when getting news was based on an appointment with the delivery time of a morning or afternoon newspaper or the top or bottom of the hour for radio news or 6pm for television news.

Newspapers, the “nightly” news and radio newscasts during the day were how we kept up with news decades ago. The delivery platforms for news have changed since the 1950’s, 60’s and 70’s, but people have not. The attitudes and actions of people of the mid-20th century are the same as

people in the early-21st century. In fact, people haven't changed since the 1st century of Paul's time or even the 21st century BC. People are, were and will continue to be exactly as Paul described them in Romans 1.

In our last study in Romans, we saw that people did not like to retain God in their knowledge, so God gave them over to a debased mind, "to do those things which are not fitting." Here's a look at the list again with the Greek words attached –

- 1 μετήλλαξαν τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν εἰς τὴν παρὰ φύσιν – "changed the natural use into that contrary to nature" (homosexuality)
- 2 πεπληρωμένους πάσῃ ἀδικίᾳ – being filled with all unrighteousness
- 3 πορνεία – fornication
- 4 πονηρία – wickedness
- 5 πλεονεξία – covetousness
- 6 κακία, – malice
- 7 μεστοὺς φθόνου – full of envy
- 8 φόνου – murder
- 9 ἔριδος – strife
- 10 δόλου – deceit
- 11 κακοηθείας – maliciousness
- 12 ψιθυριστάς – gossips
- 13 καταλάλους – slanderers
- 14 θεοστυγεῖς – hateful to God
- 15 ὑβριστάς – insolent
- 16 ὑπερηφάνους – arrogant
- 17 ἀλαζόνας – boastful

- 18 ἐφευρετὰς κακῶν – inventors of evil things
- 19 γονεῦσιν ἀπειθεῖς – to parents disobedient
- 20 ἀσυνέτους – foolish
- 21 ἀσυνθέτους – untrustworthy
- 22 ἀστόργους – heartless
- 23 ασπονδους – truce breaker
- 24 ἀνελεήμονας – unmerciful
- 25 συνευδοκοῦσιν τοῖς πράσσουσιν – are approving of those practicing them

## Sexual Sins

It's interesting to see that Paul started the list with sexual sins, both homosexuality and fornication. While homosexuality is changing the natural sexual use into what is contrary to nature, fornication (sexual immorality) is used for unlawful sexual intercourse (sexual relationship outside of heterosexual marriage) and the practice of idolatry. The word πορνεία (*porneia*) is used in several other places in Scripture, which is helpful to understanding the biblical view –

“But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.” Matthew 5:32

“For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.” Mathew 15:19

“And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.” Matthew 19:9

“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders ...” Mark 7:21

“You do the deeds of your father.’ Then they said to Him, ‘We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God.” John 8:41

"... but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood." Acts 15:20

"It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's wife!" 1 Corinthians 5:1

"Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body." 1 Corinthians 6:13

"Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband." 1 Corinthians 7:2

"... lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I shall mourn for many who have sinned before and have not repented of the uncleanness, fornication, and lewdness which they have practiced." 2 Corinthians 12:21

"But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints ..." Ephesians 5:3

"Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry." Colossians 3:5

"For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality ..." 1 Thessalonians 4:3

"And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent." Revelation 2:21

"And another angel followed, saying, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.'" Revelation 14:8

"... with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication." Revelation 17:2

"The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication." Revelation 17:4

"For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury." Revelation 18:3

"For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her."

Revelation 19:2

Some translations of Romans 1:29 leave out the words "fornication" or "sexual immorality" –

"They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity." NIV

"They are filled with every kind of unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, malice." NET

"Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy ..." NLT

"They are filled with all unrighteousness, evil, greed, and wickedness. They are full of envy ..." HCSB

"They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice." ESV

The reason is that those and other translations use Greek manuscripts that do not include πορνεία (*porneia*). Here is Romans 1:29 from four Greek manuscripts –

“πεπληρωμενους παση αδικια πορνεια πονηρια πλεονεξια κακια μεστους φθονου φονου εριδος δολου κακοηθειας ψιθυριστας” 1550 Stephanus New Testament (TR1550)

“ πεπληρωμενους παση αδικια πορνεια πονηρια πλεονεξια κακια μεστους φθονου φονου εριδος δολου κακοηθειας ψιθυριστας” 1894 Scrivener New Testament (TR1894)

“πεπληρωμενους παση αδικια πονηρια πλεονεξια κακια μεστους φθονου φονου εριδος δολου κακοηθειας ψιθυριστας” 1881 Westcott-Hort New Testament (WHNU)

“πεπληρωμένους πάση άδικία πονηρία πλεονεξία κακία, μεστούς φθόνου φόνου έριδος δόλου κακοηθείας, ψιθυριστάς SBL Greek New Testament (SBLGNT)

You’ll notice that the Stephanus and Scrivener texts include πορνεία, while the Westcott-Hort and SBL texts do not. That is why some English translations do not include the words “fornication” or “sexual immorality” with the Romans 1:29-32 list of sins.

## All Unrighteousness

All of the Greek texts have these words – πεπληρωμένους πάση ἀδικία. ἀδικία (*adikia*) means “not justice” and is often translated as “unrighteousness.” Paul may have used it as an overarching statement in the sense of every vice contrary to justice and righteousness (*Adam Clarke Commentary*). What follows are specifics of that statement.

## Wickedness

πονηρία is translated “wickedness” in the NKJV and other versions. Some translations use the word “evil” for *poneria*. The Greek words *porneia* and *poneria* sound almost the same, but they come from different roots.

*porneia* comes from *pornos* (used for a male prostitute) which comes from *pernaō*. *pernaō* means “to sell off.” The English word “pornography” comes from *porneia*.

*poneria* comes from *ponos* (“pain, laborious trouble”) which comes from *ponos* (pain). The idea is the pain that comes from bad or criminal behavior.

## Covetousness

πλεονεξία (*pleoneksía*) comes from *pleíōn* (higher number or value) and *éxō* (have). It is the strong desire, lust, for more temporal things. An English understanding of "covetousness" is wrong desire for wealth or possessions – being greedy. It also carries the idea of coveting what other people have.

## Malice

κακία (*kakía*) comes from *kakopoiéō* (a wicked disposition). The idea of having an inherent presence of evil even when not expressing it outwardly. Some English translations use the word "malice" or "maliciousness." Others use "evil."

## Full of Envy

μεστοὺς φθόνου (*mestos phthónos*) means to be filled with envy and spite, "carrying a grudge, feeling of ill will." The word *phthónos* is similar to the word *phtheírō* (corrupt, decay, break down). This envy comes from jealousy and includes the desire to raise oneself while lowering the person envied.

## Murder

φόνου (*phónos*) is homicide that is both intentional and unjustified.

I want to pause here to think back to something we've read many times before, but this time read it with Paul's list to this point in mind: all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, malice, full of envy, murder.

"So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering; but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. Then the Lord said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.' Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, 'Where is Abel your brother?' And he said, 'I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?' He said, 'What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground. Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you cultivate the ground, it will no longer yield its strength to you; you will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth.' Cain said to the Lord, 'My punishment is too great to bear! Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of

the ground; and from Your face I will be hidden, and I will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.' So the Lord said to him, 'Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold.' And the Lord appointed a sign for Cain, so that no one finding him would slay him. Then Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden." Genesis 4:3-16

Do you see the progression of "all unrighteousness" in Cain's heart and mind? Cain became jealous, envious, covetous of his brother, Abel, and it grew into anger and a plot to murder.

God warned Cain, but Cain didn't listen. God gave Cain over to a debased mind, to do what he wanted to do. God explained the choices Cain had before him – "do well" and "not do well." God told Cain what would happen if he chose "not do well" – "sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you." God gave Cain valuable insight to making the better choice – "you must master it." God gave Cain every opportunity to do well, but Cain chose to "not do well" and murder his brother.

Paul began his list with sexual sin, then proceeded into the sins of the heart that led to the first violent crime on earth – brother murdered brother.

## Chapter Eight

“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; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 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.” Romans 1:28-32

Paul’s letter to the Romans is made up of more than seven-thousand words. We learn in Romans 16 that a man named Tertius wrote the letter as Paul dictated it to him. Given that letters from the same time period averaged less than one-hundred words, we see that Paul’s Roman epistle carried a tremendous weight of importance – literally as well as spiritually.

Paul took great time at possibly great expense [the cost of paying a scribe for his time along with the cost of purchasing the materials for a letter as long as Romans would be very high] to share his thoughts with Christians living in Rome. Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, had much to say and was careful in preparing his readers to receive the impact of what God wanted them to know.

Bible students have been outlining Paul's letter to the Romans for centuries to help understand this magnificent document's purpose. Here are some examples of how the current section we're studying has been outlined:

- A. Gentiles and sin (Chapter 1)
- B. The Condemnation of the Gentile (1:18-32)
- C. The Guilt of the Gentiles (1:18-32)
- D. Results of Gentile World Unbelief (1:24-32)
- E. All Gentiles are sinners (1:18-32)
- F. The Wrath of God (1:18-32)
- G. The Need Of The Gentiles (1:18-2:16)
- H. Righteousness needed by sinful men (1:17 — 3:20)
- I. The Gentiles are sinful and have earned God's wrath (1:18-32)
- J. God reveals His righteousness through wrath because the Gentiles practice unrighteousness (1:24-32)

Paul's timeframe for this section began with "since the creation of the world" (1:20), which was long before there were Jews in the world. Paul gave his readers a unique look at what happened to the human soul beginning with the sin of Adam and Eve and moving out to the world through their descendants.

In our most recent study we saw that God gave humans over to a "debased mind" since they did not like to "retain God in their knowledge." Humans became "filled with all unrighteousness" and committed sexual sins (homosexuality and heterosexuality outside of marriage), along with wickedness, covetousness, malice, envy, and murder.

We now move to the next part of the list of sins, beginning with strife and deceit.

## Strife

ἔριδος (*eris*) means "contention, quarrel, strife" and was used for people who had a readiness to quarrel.

## Deceit

δόλου (*dolos*) means "bait" and was used figuratively for using a bait or hook to trick (deceive) people based on their own greed.

## Maliciousness

κακοηθείας (*kakoétheia*) comes from κακός (evil, bad) and ἦθος (customs, manners, morals) and means being evil-minded and malevolent.

## Gossips

ψιθυριστάς (*psithuristés*) means being a "whisperer," a "back-stabber," someone who secretly hurt someone's character.

## Slanderers

καταλάλους (*katalalos*) comes from κατά (down, against) and λαλέω (talk, chatter). It's the idea of speaking down or against another person in a hostile, mocking manner, hurting someone's reputation (defamation, slander).

## Hateful to God

θεοστυγεῖς (*theostugés*) comes from θεός (God) and *stygeō* (abhor). The idea was of someone who abhorred or hated God's will and turned against Him completely.

## Insolent

ὕβριστάς (*hubristés*) comes from ὑβρίζω (insult, treat with insolence) and describes someone who is a violent, insolent person.

## Arrogant

ὑπερηφάνους (*hyperephanos*) comes from ὑπέρ (above) and φαίνω (shine, appear, seem) and means to "over-shine" someone.

## Boastful

ἀλαζόνας (*alazón*) was a wandering vagabond who boasted about himself wherever he went, making claims that were either not true or only partially true, thus they had to keep moving to find new people to listen to them.

## Inventors of Evil Things

ἐφευρετὰς κακῶν (*epheuretés kakon*)... ἐφευρετὰς comes from ἐπί (on, against) and εὕρισκω (discover, find, learn), meaning "an inventor, discoverer." κακῶν comes from κακία (evil, wicked) and means "evil, bad." The idea is of someone who is a continual inventor of things that are evil.

## Disobedient To Parents

γονεῦσιν ἀπειθεῖς (*goneus apeithés*) .. γονεῦσιν was used for a begetter, a father, parents .. ἀπειθεῖς means someone who will not be persuaded, unbelieving, disobedient.

## Foolish

ἄσυνέτους (*asunetos*) comes from ἄ (no, not) and συνετός (wise, discerning, intelligent) and means someone who is not wise or discerning.

## Untrustworthy

ἀσυνθέτους (*asunthetos*) comes from ἄ (no, not) and συντίθημι (agree, make an agreement) and means someone who does not keep an agreement. It carries the idea of treachery in not keeping the agreement (covenant).

## Heartless

ἀστόργους (*astorgos*) comes from ἄ (no, not) and *storgé* (family affection) and means "unloving, devoid of affection."

## Truce Breaker

ασπονδους (*aspondous*) comes from ἄ (no, not) and *spondē* (libation sacrifice used for making covenants and other agreements) and means someone who doesn't keep agreements, someone who is not bound by a truce they make (truce breaker).

## Unmerciful

ἀνελεήμονας (*aneleemonas*) means someone who is without compassion, cruel, without pity, unmerciful.

[not included in some translations because ἀνελεήμονας does not appear in some Greek texts]

## Approving of Those Practicing Them

ΟΙΤΙΝΕΣ ΤΟ ΔΙΚΑΙΩΜΑ ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ ΕΠΙΓΝΟΝΤΕΣ ΟΤΙ ΟΙ ΤΑ ΤΟΙΑΥΤΑ ΠΡΑΣΣΟΝΤΕΣ ΑΞΙΟΙ ΘΑΝΑΤΟΥ ΕΙΣΙΝ ΟΥ ΜΟΝΟΝ ΑΥΤΑ ΠΟΙΟΥΣΙΝ ΑΛΛΑ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΝΕΥΔΟΚΟΥΣΙΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΠΡΑΣΣΟΥΣΙΝ

“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.”

Paul adds a powerful claim to his list of sins. These people, who God gave over to a debased mind, “know” the righteous judgment of God and “know” that people who practice such things are deserving of death, but not only “do the same” but also “approve of those who practice them”!

Paul is making a case for the total depravity of the human race. Not only do they know God, not only do they know the righteous judgment of God, not only do they know that people who practice disobedience to God are deserving of death, not only do they practice those sins, but they also “approve” of people who practice them.

In other words, the human race is all in for sin. They’re all in. They love to sin and love to see other people sin. They have a deep, passionate love for sinning against God. That, Paul wrote, is just how bad it is.

In the words of Robert Mounce –

“Willful rejection of divine revelation hardens the heart to the point where the rebel takes delight in the sinfulness of others. At this point wickedness has sunk to its lowest level.” Robert Mounce, *Romans: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture* (The New American Commentary), Holman Reference, 1995

συνευδοκουσιν (*suneudokousin*) comes from σύν (with, identify with) and εὐδοκέω (to think well of, well-pleased) and means “consenting with, agreeing with, one mind with.” Sinful people practicing sin saw other sinful people practicing sin and were of one mind with them. They consented, agreed with, approved of their sinfulness. They not only approved, but also participated with them in mutual sinfulness. Their delight is in sin.

## Commentary

What Paul described in Romans 1:28-32 was a despicable state of affairs that began at the beginning with Adam and Eve and their descendants. Here are some insights from a variety of commentators.

"This is set last, as worst of all; it is the highest degree of wickedness: such come nearest the devil, who take pleasure in evil because it is evil." *Matthew Poole's Commentary*

"In the horrid depravity of the heathen, the truth of our Lord's words was shown: Light was come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil; for he that doeth evil hateth the light. The truth was not to their taste. And we all know how soon a man will contrive, against the strongest evidence, to reason himself out of the belief of what he dislikes. But a man cannot be brought to greater slavery than to be given up to his own lusts. As the Gentiles did not like to keep God in their knowledge, they committed crimes wholly against reason and their own welfare. The nature of man, whether pagan or Christian, is still the same; and the charges of the apostle apply more or less to the state and character of men at all times, till they are brought to full submission to the faith of Christ, and renewed by Divine power. There never yet was a man, who had not reason to lament his strong corruptions, and his secret dislike to the will of God. Therefore this chapter is a call to self-examination, the end of which should be, a deep conviction of sin, and of the necessity of deliverance from a state of condemnation." *Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary*

“not only do the same—which they might do under the pressure of temptation and in the heat of passion ... but have pleasure in them that do them—deliberately set their seal to such actions by encouraging and applauding the doing of them in others. This is the climax of our apostle’s charges against the heathen; and certainly, if the things are in themselves as black as possible, this settled and unblushing satisfaction at the practice of them, apart from all the blinding effects of present passion, must be regarded as the darkest feature of human depravity.” *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary*

“They show that it is no mere momentary yielding to the force of temptation or of passion, but a radical perversion of conscience and reason, by the fact that they not only practise such things themselves, but in cold blood commend and applaud those who practise them.” *Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers*

“They delight in those who commit sin; and hence, encourage them in it, and excite them to it. This was a grievous aggravation of the offence. It greatly heightens guilt when we excite others to do it, and seduce them from the ways of innocence. That this was the case with the pagan there can be no doubt. People do not commit sin often alone. They need the countenance of others. They “join hand in hand,” and become confederate in iniquity. All social sins are of this class; and most of those which the apostle mentioned were sins of this character.” *Barnes’ Notes on the Bible*

## Summary

We have now completed our study of the first chapter of the Book of Romans. We have seen the depths of human sinfulness and the breadth of God's anger. Fortunately for all of us, Paul's letter to the Romans does not stop there. It's good to remember some of the earlier words of Paul in this chapter:

- 1 "concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."
- 2 "Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name, among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ."
- 3 "To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."
- 4 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'"

We have HOPE in Jesus Christ!

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