

REMNANT CHURCH SERMON NOTES – ROMANS 1: 18-32
PREACHED ON OCTOBER 26, 2025 BY REV. B.B. ANUM-HIGHER

18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. 25 They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. 27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.

28 Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. 29 They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, 30 slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; 31 they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. 32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

➤ **INTRODUCTION**

- We are now at the second section of our study of Paul's epistle to the Romans. This section starts at Romans 1:18 and ends at Romans 3:20.
- Paul tells us in Romans 1:17 that in the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed. In the next verse, he tells us that another thing is also revealed, which is the wrath of God. The gospel not only reveals the righteousness of God; it also

reveals the wrath of God. So both the righteousness of God and the wrath of God come to us by revelation. The Holy Spirit reveals to the sinner what God's righteousness is, their need for it for salvation, and how God has provided it as a free gift in Jesus Christ. In the same way, the Holy Spirit reveals to the sinner what their sins do to God and His anger against sin.

- In our text today, Paul addresses the immoral pagan world, specifically the practical atheist. These are people who, by their lifestyle, show that they do not recognize God. These people might say with their lips that there is a God, but when you live as if there is no God, even as a believer, it is practical atheism.

➤ **WHAT IS THE WRATH OF GOD?**

- We often become angry when we don't get what we want. We get angry when our children do not behave in a certain way, when we are not treated with respect, and so on. God also has a holy anger. **What then is the wrath of God?**
- The wrath of God is God's anger directed at sin and the sinner. It is God's hatred of sin. God cannot tolerate sin because of who He is. He is a righteous God. It is God bringing down judgment on sin and the sinner now and in the final Day of Judgment or hell because He is just.
- The wrath of God is a biblical doctrine taught throughout the Bible. John the Baptist, an Old Testament prophet, said, "**Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come**"? (Matthew 3:7). The apostles preached about the wrath of God. Jesus preached so many times about hell. The entire book of Revelation teaches the wrath of God throughout its content.
- Due to sin, the nation of Egypt suffered the wrath of God in the Old Testament. The entire world, except Noah and his family, perished in the flood. God's wrath may be immediate for some or postponed, but it will ultimately be revealed in the final judgment when Christ returns. God's wrath results in eternal punishment - eternal death and separation from God.
- What would be your answer if I were to ask you what makes sin serious and puts the sinner in danger?
- Paul tells us that it is the wrath of God. Sin has destroyed relationships, lives, organizations, etc. Lives have been cut short because of murder. Abuse of alcohol has killed several people. However, the serious thing about sin is not what it does to you, the sinner, or others, but what it does to God. Sin provokes the anger of God. It first of all grieves God which brings down His wrath on the sinner.

➤ **THE WRATH OF GOD IS REVEALED**

- Paul then tells us that the wrath of God has been revealed from heaven. In other words, the wrath of God is not a man-made idea, but it came from God Himself, from heaven. God has poured down His anger on sin and the sinner from

heaven. That immediately leads to the question: **how has God revealed His wrath from heaven?**

- The Serpent, Adam, Eve, and all of creation were not spared after man's sin in the Garden of Eden. (Genesis 3:14-19). Death came to this world because of sin.
- Historically, individuals and nations have been destroyed because of sin. The nation of Israel was divided into two kingdoms – the Northern Kingdom (Israel) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah)- due to sin. Judah was held captive in Babylon for 70 years. Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, Rome, and several other powerful nations, empires, and civilizations fell because of sin. Sodom and Gomorrah, the Flood, and other events are all examples of God revealing His wrath.
- Most significantly, God poured out His wrath at the Cross when Jesus suffered the penalty of the sins of the believers, which had been imputed to Him. God's wrath demanded the death of His Son. At the cross, Christ was bearing the wrath of God against sin. His agony in Gethsemane and His cry on the cross ("My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?") demonstrated the full wrath of God against sin. The Cross proves that the wrath of God is only satisfied when the wages of sin are paid – either by the sinner or by Christ on behalf of the sinner.

➤ **SIN DEFINED – GODLESSNESS AND UNRIGHTEOUSNESS (WICKEDNESS)**

- Paul tells us that the wrath of God is being revealed against sin, and he immediately defines what sin is. It is sin that causes God's wrath to be poured out.

18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people. Romans 1:18.

- Sin is defined as godlessness and wickedness. Sin, therefore, comes in two folds: godlessness or ungodliness and unrighteousness or wickedness. The two-fold nature of sin draws God's anger.
- Two weeks ago, we learned that the Ten Commandments reflect God's standard of righteousness. Violating the Ten Commandments brings down God's wrath on the person.
- Violating the first four of the Ten Commandments can be described as being godless, and doing the same to the last six is being wicked. The first four concern our relationship with God, and the last six concern our relationship with other people.
- Now, let us consider each of these sins.

➤ **GODLESSNESS – ROMANS 1:19-25**

19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—His

eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. 25 They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

- **What is godlessness? How do you define a godless person?**
- Godlessness is a deliberate or willful decision to prioritize something other than God at the center of our lives. It is a determined attempt to remove God from His rightful place in our lives. It refers to violations of the first table of the law, which pertains to our relationship with God. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever, so any failure to live for God's glory is godlessness.
- The godless do not honor God as God and do not thank Him for all His blessings. (Romans 1:21). Giving honor to God and thanking Him is what the godly do.
- **GODLESSNESS IS WILLFUL.** Paul tells us that godlessness is a willful activity; it is a choice people make. **“For although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him”.** Romans 1:21. When people say they are atheists or godless or don't believe there is a God, it is not because they are highly educated people, not because they are scientists or philosophers. Certainly, not because they are modern-day people, but rather, they have chosen not to acknowledge God in their knowledge. People choose to be godless.
- **GODLESSNESS IS INEXCUSABLE.** Paul then tells us that godlessness is an inexcusable sin because people suppress the truth about God by their actions (Romans 1:18). Mankind cannot plead ignorance. God has revealed Himself to man, but Mankind suppresses that knowledge, so he has no excuse on the Day of Judgment. They deliberately restrain, hold down, and fight against the Truth.
- **In which ways has God revealed Himself to Mankind?**
- In a general and special revelation.
- General revelation is the partial knowledge of God available to all Mankind through creation, conscience, providence, and history. Every human being, regardless of their location, knows that there is a supreme being who possesses eternal power and is divine; there is a God consciousness within people. Man lives in a world that is full of evidence suggesting the existence of a God. God

has, through creation, human conscience, providence, and history, both revealed Himself to us and through us.

- The Psalmist in Psalm 19 tells us that even the skies worship God.

1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. 2 Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. 3 They have no speech; they use no words; no sound is heard from them. 4 Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.

- Men and women throughout the world recognize what is right and what is wrong, and they have laws to govern human behavior. Mankind has an innate sense of right and wrong. Man's problem is not that he is ignorant and wants to be convinced; instead, he knows that there is a God, but by his actions, he suppresses that knowledge of the God who exists. This knowledge about God, however, does not save Mankind, but it is enough to render men inexcusable for their godlessness. There is, however, a special revelation that saves.
- Special revelation is the complete revelation of God in salvation, particularly through Scripture and Christ, which can only be understood through the Holy Spirit.
- **Why do they suppress the truth for a lie?** Pride and pride of intellect: they think themselves wise; everyone wants to be a philosopher. Instead of accepting revelation, they rely on their own foolish and wicked reasonings, and eventually, they lose spiritual understanding and insight, and in Paul's language, their foolish heart is darkened. (Romans 1:21).
- **GODLESSNESS IS FOOLISHNESS.** Godlessness is not only willful and inexcusable, but it is also foolishness.

21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. Romans 1:21-23.

- Godless people think they are wise, so they have rejected the truth about God in their thinking, actions, and lifestyle. Sadly, they come up with their own version of the truth, which is a lie. They reject creation, miracles, and replace them with evolution, myths, and superstition. They reject the eternal spiritual God and then make their own gods with images or worship created things, such as the sun and moon. However, no image or picture can represent a spiritual and eternal God.
- Is it not foolishness to make images and bow down to them? Is it not foolishness to reject the Creator, but worship the creatures such as human leaders, sun, moon, trees, etc? The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." (Psalm 14:1).

- Maybe you are thinking that this can never happen to us, 21st-century people, because we do not worship idols. **What is an idol?**
- God created us to depend on Him, the Creator, for our needs and sustenance. Anything that we rely on instead of God is an idol. Idol worship is therefore not only an ancient practice, but also a contemporary one. As you all know, we can easily become attached to things (creatures or manufactured things) and depend on them instead of on the Creator God. A man's idol is what lies at the center and core of his life. What lies at the center and core of your life this morning: is it money, sports, your beauty, yourself, etc? What does everything revolve around in your life? Our favorite idol is ourselves; we pamper and adore ourselves.
- **22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. Romans 1: 22-23.**
- Is this not foolishness to exchange God with birds, lizards, and snakes? This is the first exchange. Paul tells us about two more exchanges the godless make.
- **25 They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.**
- **26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones.**

➤ **RESULTS OF GODLESSNESS**

- The Bible teaches several spiritual principles. One of them is this: if you fail to see what God is doing in your life and around you, He makes you blind. Secondly, if you fail to hear God when He speaks to you, He makes you deaf. Paul tells us that there is another principle: when you abandon God through your actions and the principles that govern your life, He also abandons you. He removes His restraining grace so that your disobedience will destroy you.
- Three times, Paul tells us that God gave them over. In verses 24, 26, and 28, God gave the godless over. What is serious about godlessness is this: God takes His hands off such a life and allows the natural outcome of it to appear in the present world. God doesn't intervene and allows people to destroy themselves by their actions. If they continue in their godlessness, He will pour His full and final wrath on them on the Final Day of Judgment.
- **What did God give them over to?** In verses 24, 26, and 28, Paul tells us that God gave them over to the destruction of immorality and impurity.
24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. Romans 1: 24.
- Someone might ask, what is wrong with people doing what they want with their bodies? What if that action is legal? Well, Paul tells us that evidence that God is judging an individual and a nation is when people continue to degrade their bodies with one another through sexual impurity – fornication, adultery, etc.

- Then, Paul gives an example of how God allows people to do what they want to do to their own destruction in verses 26 and 27.

26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. 27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error. Romans 1: 26-27.

- God hands the godless over to shameful lust. Think about it, Paul calls homosexual activity a shameful act, and we must call it shameful as well. What is the shameful act? It is homosexual practices. Sex is a gift from God and His means to reproduce the human population on earth, and it was meant to be enjoyed between a man and a woman in marriage. When an individual and a nation become godless, the women lust for other women; they become lesbians. The men also lust for other men, and they become gay. LGBTQ is not a human rights topic; it is not human advancement, but God's judgment on people and nations for being godless. LGBTQ is God taking His hands off people to destroy themselves with their shameful lusts.
- Homosexuality is unnatural and shameful according to the Holy Bible. It is a sin against God that draws down His anger. When you hear about laws protecting and promoting homosexuality, know that it is a sign of God's wrath on individuals and society. At the time Paul wrote this letter, homosexuality was a common practice in the Roman Empire, and it was reported that 14 out of 15 Roman emperors over a period of time were homosexuals.

➤ **WICKEDNESS OR UNRIGHTEOUSNESS - ROMANS 1:29-31**

- We will now consider the second category of sin: wickedness or unrighteousness. Not having the right relationship with God will eventually lead to wickedness, as well as a lack of right relationships with our neighbors. For this reason, we must, through our evangelistic endeavors, bring men and women to God, to establish the right relationship with God, and to have a proper attitude toward God. Our relationship to God is the primary matter on which we will be judged. **What is wickedness? How do you define an unrighteous person?**
- Wickedness or unrighteousness refers to our relationships with other people. It is summarized in the last 6 table of the law. Any failure in our conduct towards others is unrighteousness; it is wickedness. Paul tells us that these actions show wickedness towards others: Romans 1: 29-31

29 They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, 30 slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; 31 they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy.

➤ APPLICATIONS

We have heard difficult words from Apostle Paul today. If you are here and have not yet become a believer, Paul tells you that the wrath of God has been poured out on you. God is angry with you for your sins. The fact that you are not experiencing the penalty now doesn't mean it won't come. The final judgment is certain, when the full wrath of God will be suffered by all unbelievers, all godless and wicked people. There are no second chances after death: There's nothing in the scripture about another chance, another hope, another opportunity beyond death. God's punishment of sin is eternal.

We deserve God's wrath, but He has shown us mercy through Christ. The same God who has poured out His wrath on sinners has also poured out His righteousness, which, when sinners receive it by faith alone, makes them escape His wrath now and in the future. God's wrath and God's love are inseparable aspects of His character. Will you continue to live in your godlessness and wickedness by not honoring God and thanking Him, or will you flee to Him for His righteousness?

Homosexuals, gossipers, and murderers are not outside of God's salvation. The only unforgivable sin is when you die in your unbelief or Christ returns and you are still living in your godlessness and wickedness. Do you want to continue living a life free from God? Please be careful, you might get what you want. God may give you the desires of your heart, but He may step back and allow you to continue destroying yourself in sin.

Have you reached a point in your life where you are tired of your godlessness and wickedness and want to know how you can be saved? About 2000 years ago, the **Philippian jailer asked Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30).** The answer they gave him is the same answer I will give you today because there is no other answer, no other way to be saved. **Paul and Silas responded, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).**

There were some sinners in the church in Corinth; homosexuals, thieves, slanderers, but when they fled to God for His salvation, when they believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, they were saved. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

9 Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men 10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Didn't we all, by nature, fall into one or all of these sins listed by Paul in his letter to the church at Corinth? Is it not the power in the gospel that has transformed us into who we are now and who we are becoming every day? The Corinthian Christians were no longer the people they had been; they had undergone a transformation. However, without repentance, there is no conversion. We cannot be saved without first turning

from sin. We cannot be born again sinners; we cannot be converted and think we are free to engage in homosexual practices, unethical business practices, adultery, etc. Our sins grieve Him. Sin affects God before it destroys us.

Let me end with the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-24

11 And he said, "There was a man who had two sons. 12 And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.' And he divided his property between them. 13 Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. 14 And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. 16 And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

The prodigal son was only interested in the benefits he received from his father, not in the training, guidance, and instruction that his father offered. He left home for a distant country; this does not mean a geographical distance, but rather, he was far away from his father's control. He lived a wild, reckless, and sinful life.

Sin always deceives. When he left home, he had high hopes of having the freedom to do whatever he wanted. He no longer had to obey his father, he thought. He enjoyed the pleasures sin brings, but only for a time. Sin doesn't fulfill all the promises it offers. Sooner or later, reality caught up with him after he had spent all that he had received from his father. There was a severe famine in all the land. He had nothing left, and none of his friends gave him any help. He found himself in a desperate situation. He acted wisely by repenting and going back to his father for help:

17 "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants."' 20 And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. 21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. 23 And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. 24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to celebrate.

How far have you drifted from God in your sins? How great is your sin? Just as the father welcomed the prodigal son, clothed him, and celebrated for his return, God, the Great Father would similarly welcome you, if only you understand the seriousness of your situation that His wrath has been revealed on all unbelievers, that sin is deceitful, and no sinner wins. Why die in your godlessness and wickedness when you can believe, repent of your sins, and enjoy this great salvation only Jesus Christ provides?