

# Who needs to be saved?

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- [ 0 : 00 ]     Good morning. It has been a blessed morning. We left off last, on the last message. It's a couple weeks ago. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, of God. The gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation. This is the theme that the Apostle Paul carries forward as he proceeds into Romans. Now, the next three chapters, Paul addresses salvation and who is in need of it. Who is in need of it? And this morning, lost without the gospel.
- [ 1 : 06 ]     Are the heathen lost without the gospel? I see some nods. Are we convinced? Are we convinced? Do we doubt? Paul will answer that. Chapter 2. Are the self-righteous lost without the gospel? Yes. Chapter 3. Are the Jews lost without the gospel? They are. And Paul goes on to explain, every creature, every soul, needs Jesus Christ. And so, that is the outline for the next number of sermons that we'll be working through in Romans.
- [ 2 : 10 ]     He starts off in verse 18 of our text this morning. He says, For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppressed the truth in unrighteousness. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven. Against whom? Against all ungodliness and unrighteousness stemming from those who suppress or push down the truth. and that sets the stage for what Paul is bringing here. I've titled the message this morning The Willful Rejection of God. The Willful Rejection of God. What is the wrath of God? What is the wrath of God? Say again. Hell? Okay. That's a descriptive word. What is the wrath of God? Let's add to it.
- [ 3 : 44 ]     Judgment. Eternal separation. No hope. No hope. It is God's anger and punishment upon sin upon us who reject or anyone that rejects God as we are all sinful beings with a sinful nature. And so that is the wrath of God and here he says the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness. Now we have examples in scripture of God's wrath and maybe the one that sticks out the most in our minds perhaps is Sodom and Gomorrah right? Where God rained down fire and brimstone from heaven. To destroy. Then we have the flood.
- [ 4 : 58 ]     Was that the wrath of God? It was. And he did a lot more destruction there than in Sodom where he overthrew a few cities. The worldwide flood was a global destruction minus one boat and its inhabitants.

sin. And we have some other examples in scripture of God's wrath upon us or upon sin. And so here it is revealed from heaven and in the past it has been.

What does the future look like? many of you were in the end times course this winter. We have the wrath of God waiting to be poured out on this world because of sin.

chapter was mentioned this morning and we praise God that like in times past he will remove his people.

[ 6 : 12 ] He will remove his people but those that have rejected that have pushed away the knowledge of God will face the wrath of God and ultimately hell fire.

This is what Paul is saying very clearly here. Verse 19 Why is the wrath of God revealed?

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 God head so that they are without excuse.

What is Paul saying here? In general revelation through creation we have evidence evidence that God exists.

He says so much evidence that we are without excuse. There is enough just to see with our eyes that we know we need to pursue our creator.

[ 7 : 47 ] the less I know the less I will be accountable for is a phrase that I've sometimes heard among people in regards to the word of God.

You know when words like that are used what are we saying? What are we saying? we don't learn?

Yeah. That's right. There is rejection. Because when I say that I already know enough to realize God is enticing me onward to learn more.

By the way how many of you were made in God's image? I need two more hands. Every one of us.

Is it not a slap in the face to our God to say that the less I know the less I'll be accountable for?

[ 9 : 24 ] Did God not create us in His image? Are we as His creation not geared to learn to explore?

In every aspect of life mankind seeks to learn more. Where does that come from?

Where does that come from? you know we're all gadgets supposedly to make life easier right? Man is always thinking what can I do to make this less work?

Who has given us that ability? It's not all God honoring by the way but the ability comes from God. So for us to say God I don't need you is willful rejection of Him.

Paul brings in creation the visible attributes and I'm going to turn to the children this morning. In the winter time when we go outside and we look up at the sky what do we see?

[ 11 : 05 ] What do we see? Clouds? Okay. How about when there's a clear sky? We see the sun the sky?

Do we see the stars? Okay. Sometimes we see the stars and the moon.

When we look up and we gaze at the heavens what kind of thoughts go through our mind? how vast?

How vast? Yeah. How big? How small I am? And to think that the whole heavens are out there and they're predictable and so on it speaks to us of a creator.

And so when we see God's work it points to God.

[ 12 : 23 ] Creation demands a creator. Does it not? we as humans with the intelligence that God has given us we design things.

When we don't things don't work. We put things together. The car that you drove into church this morning was it designed? Did somebody put that together?

Or quite a few somebodies? Everything has a designer. And for humans to look up at the heavens and say there's no designer.

You know what that is? The willful rejection of God. It's called sticking your head in the sand. Creation demands acknowledgement of a creator and designs demand a designer.

And so there is no way around it. And so Paul says if you push God away you are without excuse.

[ 13 : 47 ] You are without excuse. Psalm 19 as the psalmist reminds us of these things as well.

Psalm 19 and the first four verses. It's David that has written this and he says the heavens declare the glory of God excuse me.

And the firmament shows his handiwork. Day unto day utters speech and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.

Their line has gone out throughout all the earth and their words to the end of the world. What is David saying? He is gazing up into the heavens and he's saying the heavens are noisy.

They are speaking loudly. They're declaring the glory of God. Are we tuned in?

[ 15 : 04 ] Are we tuned in to what God is saying? That is called general revelation and it is enough to draw us in search for God's plan of salvation which is revealed in the Bible or this specific revelation where he tells us about his son.

So when we're faced with this truth we have a choice to make. We have a choice to make. I can embrace it pursue it or I can go like this.

I don't want it. Always truth demands choice for each one of us.

And we face it all the time. Truth demands choice. verse 21 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.

And so with knowledge we can glorify God or we can pull away and become foolish and have our hearts darkened further.

[ 16 : 52 ] It says futile in their thoughts emptiness vanity without purpose. and that is the result of pushing away God.

It's interesting that as Paul works through this chapter and we're not going to go into a lot of detail this morning but he reveals three steps that happen in people.

When we reject God the knowledge of God and we push him away what generally happens is we will turn to worship creation over the creator.

We will worship creation over the creator and lastly God will give us over to our own way of thinking this is the word a debased mind and it will reveal itself in immorality that is beyond the natural.

That is beyond the natural. What happened in Sodom and Gomorrah according to scripture? What were they doing? What were they doing?

[ 18 : 24 ] Sodom? They were Sodomites. their sexual expression was not natural. It was unnatural and there was men with men.

God says that is unnatural. That is debased. That's a twisted thinking. And here he is saying that is the outflow of the rejection of the knowledge of God.

That's where society ends up when we push God out. We have seen much of this and I'm going to make reference to some of our own people living in colonies where we have willfully pushed away the knowledge of God, suppressed the truth.

In fact, we have so many situations in our past where when Jesus was preached we packed our bags and we moved to another country. those people have struggles with these sins and we saw much of that in Bolivia.

Immoral sins that are unfit to be talked about. This is the natural progression.

[ 20 : 20 ] And Paul says three times God gave them up to their foolish minds over to a debased thinking and so on. He repeats it.

The wrath of God is revealed from heaven. It is not only talking about the coming tribulation period. It is the here and now.

the wrath of God revealed when He gives us up to our heart's desire to be twisted.

If we would evaluate our country and follow its progression the last even 50 years, do we see the pattern?

it's so evident, so clear. And in the last five years we have seen the legalization and the unashamedness of these sins as they come out of the closet so to speak.

[ 21 : 38 ] There's no more shame about this. This is who we've become. God has given us over to our thinking, to our debased minds. And this is a form of the wrath of God come down.

We always wait for the fire and brimstone. It's coming in whatever form, but He's punishing us by giving us up over to our own selves, our own flesh.

And the damage, the payment is coming, is being experienced already. Through diseases and sicknesses and sorrow from our lifestyles, we're reaping the benefits.

It is the wrath of God being revealed. world. We have Peter ends with us this morning from New Tribes and he has in the past told us many stories of being creation versus the Creator.

What's so special about worshipping creation versus the Creator? Creator? What's up with that?

[ 23 : 09 ] Okay. We're not acknowledging the Creator. You know, creation does not have eternal life.

Creation is not the Creator and it's something that we feel we can control. I'm in charge.

And so it's from our natural flesh that I want to have a God that I can control. That's a large part of it.

and it doesn't matter where you travel in the world, which people group, they have gods linked to creation. They're linked to creation instead of to the Creator.

And it's a result of pushing away the truth. Pushing away the truth. this morning, if you are not a child of God, you are without excuse.

[ 24 : 36 ] for we know enough to pursue Him. Isn't that scary?

We are without excuse to pursue our God. God. If you are a child of God, and these people are lost, what does it tell us?

What message do we get out of this? the need to share what?

The gospel. If we truly believe that they are lost, do we not pick up the burden that the gospel needs to be shared?

And I want to in a closing passage in 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 read a reminder of that.

[ 26 : 16 ] 2nd Corinthians 5 17 through 20. I believe it's a familiar passage to Moses. He says, therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

Old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God who has reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.

That is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ as though God were pleading to us, we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

What does the word reconcile mean? To make right, to be restored, a relationship restored.

[ 27 : 37 ] God reconciled us, me, to himself through his son, Jesus Christ.

And now he has given to us what ministry? The ministry of reconciliation. If the heathen are lost, God has given us the church work to do to tell them about Jesus.

That they too can be reconciled to God. Does that make you feel uncomfortable?

Does that make you feel uncomfortable? that God says in his word he has given that responsibility to the church?

He wants us. He wants us to fill in the gap, to be ambassadors for him. I want to end with a story that I came across.

[ 29 : 12 ] I want to end with a story that I came across. The story goes like this.

We were on our annual Christmas trek to Chicago. Each year we brought our family to spend time with grandpa and grandma. This year we decided to finish our Christmas shopping at the suburban Woodfield Mall.

In the midst of all the fun and excitement, one of us noticed that little three-and-a-half year old Matthew was gone. Terror immediately struck our hearts.

We had heard horror stories. Little children kidnapped in malls and rushed to a donned in different clothes and altered hairstyle and then swiftly smuggled out never to be seen again.

We split up, each taking an assigned location, and mine was the parking lot. I'll never forget that night, kicking through the newly fallen snow, calling out his name at the top of my lungs.

[ 30 : 28 ] I felt like an abject fool, yet my concern for his safety outweighed all other feelings. Unsuccessful, I trudged back to our meeting point.

My wife, Marley, had not found him, nor had my mother, and then my dad appeared, holding little Matthew by the hand.

Our hearts leaped for joy. Interestingly enough, Matthew was untraumatized. He hadn't been crying. To him, there had been no problem.

I asked my father where he had found him, at the candy counter. He replied, you should have seen him.

His eyes came just about as high as the candy. He held his little hands behind his back and moved his head back and forth, surveying all the luscious options.

[ 31 : 30 ] Matthew didn't look lost. He didn't know he was lost. He was oblivious to the phenomenal danger he was in. we live in a candy counter culture where people don't look lost and don't know they're lost and live for personal consumption.

I thought it illustrated well how easy it is for us to get caught up and not pay serious attention to life to our need to respond to God.

Let's pray. Let's pray. Father, we thank you that we do have the privilege to be here this morning.

we thank you that you've given us a time here on earth. The purpose, Lord, is to find you. It's to come into right relationship with you. And Father, furthermore, as we find you, that our hearts burn with the desire to share with others.

[ 33 : 15 ] Father, may you speak to us. Even as we go about our ways this morning, may your word burn in our hearts to the glory of God.

Amen. Amen.