

Can Someone Tell Me Where Are We?

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[0 : 00] Good morning, everyone. Please turn in your Bibles to Romans chapter 1, please. Romans chapter 1. If you are new or visiting, we've been doing a study of Romans chapter 1.

I would say we're doing the opposite of moving quickly through the text. But I think you're finding it refreshing, and it's a wonderful topic.

Like, this book is probably one of the most powerful books that we have in our Bibles today because it just covers so many things relating to us and God, our relationship with God himself. If you weren't here last week, I've been focusing in on verse 18. So what I'm going to do is I'm going to read that to you, just beginning in Romans chapter 1, verse 18.

Paul writes, For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

[1 : 12] One of the points that I made last week is that there is always a pattern to how man lives. The pattern is when God is jettisoned, when we do not worship God, our love for man dissipates or, better yet, disappears.

And I thought this week, as I've been going over some of the things in the news, and there's some very interesting newsreels, and we're going to get into them a little bit later, it will exemplify perfectly what I've been speaking about what happens with godliness and the unrighteousness of men. Now, it's important for us to understand that Paul is talking to both a Jew and a Gentile audience. And if you're not familiar with that term, it's kind of the inside religious people and the outside religious people.

You had the Jews who the Bible had been primarily prepared for in the Old Testament. And then you had these Gentiles, these new people, these non-Jews who were becoming saved.

So Paul starts addressing both of their issues. The good news is there's a righteousness of God that is given unto them. And it's good news for the wrath of God is revealed.

[2 : 32] And that word revealed means it is being revealed today. It is now. It is not just eternal damnation that has happened in the far future or the new future.

But it's a present-day reality. And one of the arguments that came up is the Gentiles said, hey, that's not fair. The Jews have had God in their lives for hundreds, if not over a thousand years. What about us? Should we be held to that same standard that the Jews should have? Because we're kind of new to this. And then Paul writes brilliantly in verse 19.

So continue reading with me. He says, For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world.

In the things that have been made, so they are without excuse. So what Paul is clearly saying that no man has an excuse if he can see, if he can smell, if he can taste.

[3 : 39] He knows that there is this world that has been created with a purpose. It did not evolve out of nothing, but it was created by someone with a specific purpose.

For although, in verse 21, they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him. For they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Claiming to be wise, they became fools. And exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. Therefore, God gave them up in their lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the creator, who is blessed forever.

Amen. Amen. This morning, I want to prove to you today how this passage is coming very real to us, as in no other time.

But before I do, let's pray. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, we are getting into some deep cultural issues. Oh, Father, and I pray that during this time, we'll be able to see some of the things that are around us for what they are.

[4 : 59] Father, all too often, I feel that we are almost the frog in the pot of boiling water. It starts off cold, and the hotter it gets, we do not notice.

We do not notice how crazy and zany and evil this world is. Father, for some of us as Christians, we have indeed buried our head.

We have ignored what is going on around us, just hoping it would pass us by. But it's not. But it's here for a purpose.

Father, I pray that this sermon would be helpful in helping us understand what truly has transpired in this world and why it is occurring. But more importantly, as we seek to understand, I pray that we would learn to communicate, to learn to demonstrate how the gospel fits so perfectly into this world today, in a world which says no to God and yes to everything of man.

Father, may you lend power to these words, give us ears to understand. In your most holy and precious name, amen. So on Thursday, February 4th, the Premier of Alberta, Daniel Smith, made a public statement to the press regarding her province's new health care policies that infuriated her political opponents.

[6 : 31] Both Liberal NDP and mainstream media heads were said to have exploded over her announcement. One writer wrote, Alberta is embarking on a genocidal campaign of state violence.

Federal woman and gender equality minister called Smith's policies reprehensible. NDP leader Jagmeet Singh stated that many Albertans are scared for their future.

Federal health minister Mark Holland accused Smith of playing politics with children's lives.

Employment minister Randy Boissoneau said, this is our NATO moment.

An attack on one of our communities is attack on all of us. And finally, the prime minister himself stated that Smith's position was an ideological one and must be resisted.

So what did Daniel Smith say that has inflamed so many of her opponents? Essentially, Smith declared that forthcoming policies and legislation regarding health care will restrict double mastectomies and genital surgeries for trans-identifying minors in her province.

[7 : 57] Cross-sex hormones and blockers will be reserved for those over 15 except for those currently in treatment. She further, parental approval will be required for schools to use new names and pronouns for kids under 16.

Sex-based rules for sports will be explored and any third-party sex ed materials will require ministerial approval for classroom use and parents will also have to opt in to specific instructions on sex and gender.

She concluded her statement by saying, I am confident that Albertans do not want children to make irreversible decisions that impact their reproductive health.

I'm confident that they don't think those are child decisions to make and adults should be making those decisions.

Within 48 hours, polls had stated that close to 80% of Canadians agreed with the premier.

[9 : 12] Yet, her detractors continued to fight her on this issue. And then finally, one political left-leaning columnist asked a very simple and straightforward question.

He asked, has everyone on their left lost their collective mind? That he was so concerned about the rhetoric against such a common-sense approach that he asked, and he was no fan originally of Smith.

He says, why are liberals, NDP, and mainstream media working overtime to turn her into the voice of sanity and reason? This morning, I want to answer the question, how on earth did we get here? How did we get here? If you look at the title of the sermon, I simply entitle it, Can Someone Tell Me Where We Are? Because the reality is, most people, and if you're familiar with the story of Rip Van Winkle, are you guys familiar with that old story of Rip Van Winkle?

He was a man who, while he was hunting with his dog, fell asleep, and it turns out he wakes up hundreds of years later, but he doesn't know. He was asleep the whole time. He does not know what happens, and he starts going around, long live Prince George, but he forgot there was an American Revolution.

[10 : 38] And things just don't feel right. And I can honestly say that for many Christians in this world today, things just don't feel right.

The world that we know just doesn't exist. So this morning, I want to ask, answer a few, I want to answer the question.

Basically, I want to take you through the evolution of thought which got us here. And essentially, this is proving the point that I brought up from Romans 1.18, which simply says how godlessness leads to unrighteousness.

When you remove God from the political center or your life or your decision making, this is where you will inevitably end up.

It's interesting that on February 8th, the NDP party openly stated that parents have no rights. The rights or the responsibilities of parents is to support and affirm their children's decisions no matter what they are.

[11:49] That is the role for a child. And should I point out, in the province of Alberta, you have to be 18 years of older to use a tanning bed.

You with me on that? You need parental authority to use a tanning bed, but you do not need parental authority to do life-changing surgery to your body that is unchangeable and essentially renders you sterile.

My friends, we are seeing Romans 1 lived out in real time right before our eyes. As Paul says, for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

That word suppress means to hinder, to prevent, to purposely push down what is already known about God.

Let me ask you a question. Could any of you foreseeing that this would have been one of the major political debates 10 years ago? How about five years ago? Well, this morning, I want to highlight a book that was written in 2022 by a Christian historian by the name of Carl Truman who outlined and explained to us why this is going on.

[13:22] And it's the evolution of the godlessness that leads to the unrighteousness. I had read it a couple years ago in 2022 when it first came out and I was kind of hoping that there'd be a point that we could talk about it and I could present to you basically his main thesis and I think that this is a perfect opportunity for it because it is more truer today than it ever could be.

The book is called *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self. It's called Cultural Amnesia, Expressive Individualism, and the Road to the Sexual Revolution.*

This morning, I want to share with you some of the pivotal points of the books that helps us understand this new political and sexual climate that we live in.

For you that are new or visiting, this isn't generally the way I would preach. It's going to be a little bit different than I'm going to account for a book, but I think it speaks very truthfully and impactfully with what is going on.

For the most part, Carl Truman tells us that we have a reality and that reality is for the most part, church, many Christians have been asleep at the wheel in regards to the cultural revolution that is going on around us.

[14:42] We live in our own little Christian bubble. We attend Christian conferences, go to Christian churches, we have Christian friends, we read Christian books, and we listen to Christian music. And because of that, we become disconnected somehow from this secular society as we're insulated in our own little world.

Our attitude has been, well, the world is evil, therefore, why do I need to know anything about the world? Now, but there's one particular shift that has happened in the last several years that has not existed because Christians have been living this way throughout all the time in different communities, but one of the major cultural shifts that has happened is that Christians used to be thought of as rather decent folks that Christians were respected.

They were recognized as valuable members of society. However, today, Christians are deemed to be a harmful influence in society.

We're now the bad guys. When we speak of things like religious freedom or freedom of speech, which we once regarded as absolute rights, are now being challenged.

Fact is, people are losing their jobs over expressing certain ideas. If you remember the church, The Rock, we prayed about this.

[16:09] They had a bakery called The Ledge, and one of their suppliers refused to deliver supplies to their coffee shop because they believed that marriage was for a man and a woman, and therefore they deemed it an unsafe place.

There's a young man in Ontario who was asked or encouraged to leave his Catholic school because he simply stated, I believe there are two genders. And recently, there was an article in the New York Times, and if you're familiar with the New York Times, it's a, lately it's been a left-leaning article, but they've included these testimonies of doctors who believe or feel or are being bullied and threatened with malpractice if they go against the political consensus of the day.

My friends, this is very real. It's not happening in a parallel universe somewhere else.

It's not happening only in big schools or big cities. It happens in little places, in small towns. If I can tell you one thing, this is not going away.

How do I know that? We just read Romans 1. He told us that this was going to happen. The reality is these morals and values that are being taught today are being taught to our children, are being taught to our grandchildren, children.

[17 : 48] And it does us absolutely no good to stick our heads in the sand and hope it all goes away. The reality is society is different in many unprecedented ways.

And the reality is it will get worse before it gets better. But I'm going to tell you something right now. We need to be here engaging with this culture probably more at any time now than at any time in the past.

This is not the time to hide. This is the time to bring truth to insanity. Our responsibility is to call people to be disciples of Jesus Christ couldn't happen at a more important time.

So the first point which I've kind of already made is this is not unexpected. This is not unexpected. Paul wrote these words 2,000 years ago.

This is not just simply a weird development that simply happened 10 or 20 years ago. This is a development that has been going on for over a hundred years.

[19 : 05] The world has always been wanting to live as if God never existed. Dave read for us a passage this morning in Ephesians 4.

Ephesians 4.18 says they are darkened. These are people without the knowledge of God. Are darkened in their understanding. They're alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them.

due to their hardness of heart they have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

and if you doubt this even this week the National Post had a new article about those who are pursuing polymorous I know I'm not saying that right relationships that's just adultery in a new term. It's just destroyed lives in a new term. It's just broken hearts in a new term. It is the disintegration of the family which God calls us to in Genesis 1.

[20 : 21] Verse 24 of Romans 1 says therefore God gave them up in their lusts of their hearts to impurity to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the creator who is blessed forever.

Amen. For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature. And the men likewise gave up natural relationships with women and were consumed with passion for one another.

Men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

Note the parallels in the passage in Ephesians and Romans. Paul speaks of those who have given themselves over to impurity. We also read that God gave them over to lustful desires and appetites as an expression of his wrath for the denial of him.

The world wants sexual freedom in order to explore every type of perversion possible and they call that good. God calls it wrath.

[21 : 59] You see, the point is when God is denied in a society, the society will change. History tells us that it tends to become aggressively sexual. This is the age in which we live.

And why does that happen? There's two central philosophies of life, and you guys know them. The Christian philosophy of life, or the view, is that this world has a given order, a given purpose, a given meaning, and we are to seek it out.

Amen? We are to learn. We understand that God is a creator. He created all, and there's a purpose for us being here, and we need to understand what that is, and we need to conform ourselves to

what the creator calls us to.

The second philosophy is that simply this world is just full of raw material, and you just draw out any meaning and purpose that you can imagine.

You design your own purpose. Suppressing the truth of God as the creator means is we make up our own way in how to do things.

[23 : 09] As Christians, we have an understanding of the corruption that is within us called sin. We also understand that this brings about a rebelliousness of fallen nature. So the fact of the matter is we understand why people go that way.

Amen? We do. We do. That is the longing of the flesh. According to American sociologist Philip Reif, he says there's essentially three worlds upon which we live in today.

I'm going to share with you those briefly. One is the pagan world. This is a world where we have moral codes which are based on myths and are generally accepted in society.

We would say this is how primitive man worked. The second world is the world based on a faith in their God. And basically, as we know, both the first and second worlds have a moral outlook founded on something above themselves.

You with me? So when we come to designing a way, we understand whether you believe in God, Yahweh, or some other God, you still have in your consciousness there's something above you that you are responsible to.

[24 : 18] And therefore, you live your life in accordance with that belief. The third world is that they do not root their moral imperatives in anything sacred.

It's essentially do what you want. They justify themselves and their action based on themselves. I'm being true to myself.

I'm being authentic. Right? This is who I am. Now, it's not just a matter of having three worlds.

What's interesting about the third world is the third world becomes a very anti-culture world.

And what that means is the third world, in order to exist, has to destroy the first and second world.

It's got to destroy God because God is that conscience that's there, and they don't want that.

So what they do is they tend to become very anti-cultural because it sees the civilization and moral frameworks of the first and second worlds as oppressive and restrictive of our personal freedom.

[25 : 30] Have you guys heard those words lately, right? Oppression, oppressive and restrictive. In fact, the third world deliberately attempts to destabilize and destroy first and second world cultural norms.

One way in which it does that are called death works. I'll describe what a death work is, and the perfect example is pornography. Pornography's sole purpose is to destroy a culture.

It is not a right. There is no such thing as ethical pornography. It is evil. Not only does it promote lust and treat people as mere objects, but it attacks any notion that sex has anything significant beyond the pleasure of the act itself.

You understand it's turned sex, which we know biblically is meant to be expressed between a husband and wife in love for joy amongst themselves and for creation, but in pornography it is about a self-seeking understanding or a self-seeking pleasure.

So to restrain yourself from seeing sex in a biblical way, you're called a killjoy, a prude, a one who is backwards. The sociology would state that we live in a third world or we're truly on the brink of it.

[27 : 00] So the issue is when we live in this third world, that there is no God and there's no purpose beyond ourselves, how do we answer the question, who am I?

Think about that. Who am I? How do you identify yourself? How do you connect with other people in a real and true way?

If your greatest goal in life is to serve the self, everyone has to be someone that you want to serve your needs. You with me on that? You with me on that?

That's what's going on. The Bible teaches that you and I are made in the image of God. You guys know that? We are made in the image of God. We were the highest creation.

God gave us dominion over this earth to be his representatives here. We had a high purpose, but we fell in Adam. We know the story of the Garden of Eden, but we also know that we've been redeemed in Jesus Christ.

[28 : 10] See, our view, a Christian view, is an outward-looking self. We look to Jesus Christ for our meaning and our identity, and we are to live in a way that brings glory to God.

When Jesus walked this world 2,000 years ago, someone asked him, what is the greatest commandment? He simply says to love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.

Because of that, you will love others as yourself. When men do not care about God, they no longer care about their fellow man.

Just this week, thankfully, but it's got a twisted side to the coin, the liberals announced that they are no longer going to use made-for-mentally ill people. Praise the Lord.

You know why? Because they said you're not ready for it. They said Canadians aren't ready for it. You guys aren't as progressive and open-minded as we are.

[29 : 21] My friends, that is twisted and evil. Do you understand that? I have friends that spent time in mental institutes that would have chosen death.

death. But God reached out and redeemed them. You guys probably don't know or do know, one of those men has actually preached here from this pulpit, even before my time.

See, if you believe that God is dead in your third world of thinking, the only place you can look for meaning is towards yourself. So I want to share with you the there's five different flows, I would say, or four different, five different types of self which explain today's world.

And I'm going to give you the quick evolution of it. You ready for this? All right, the first one is the psychological self. This happened in a post-reformation world. We also call it the time of the enlightenment.

And this is when the philosophers, John Jacques Rousseau, was one of the first people and basically believed that man was innately good. This was where this type of discussion started taking off, that we were intrinsically good and what made us evil was the forces of society.

[30 : 45] So this is when that argument about nurture versus nature started to take place. And he was the one to state that our real identity is found in our inner psychological story.

story. So he made an emphasis that we make an emphasis on self-love, empathy, and sympathy as the main informers of who we are. And because of that, there will always be a tension between who we are as an individual and the corrupt society that we live in.

All right? So that's when, that's the birth of that whole discussion. That happens in the early 1700s. Then in the early 18th and 19th century was called the poet.

The time of the romantic self is born. And you need to understand that some of these people are seeing real issues. And it's good that they see them and recognize them.

Like you need to think of that romantic time in the 18th and 19th century when the industrial revolution was happening. People were being taken advantage of.

[31 : 53] If you don't know, the birth of the unions was to protect the working class people because some people were basically worked to death. People had no rights. There was a huge gap between the haves and have nots, those who were rich and different.

And they saw that and they go, this is wrong. And they were right to say, this is wrong. They saw it as a soul-crushing way of living. And it's true.

It was. So they devised that there had to be a greater vision. Instead of turning to God, they turned to man. And the imagery that they use, there's that city, that corrupt life, or they could say there's that relaxed country Squamish life, right?

You could live in this idealistic paradise. And what was significant is that morality began to be identified as what felt right and looked right.

You with me on that? They just looked. They could tell it was wrong. So obviously that can't be good, so we got to find out, but it just looked right.

[33 : 04] And it birthed the idea that we are to be unashamed of our heart's true desires and act on them. So that's when it began that what was right was about our personal preferences and our feelings.

things. So we have the first one, the psychological self, I'm important, what's more important, I got to protect myself from out here, look inwards, and then I start identifying by the romantic self.

It's about me, what I think, what's right for me, the person. This is the most important thing. And then the third man is called the plastic self.

And it's defined as the plastic self is a man or woman who thinks he can make or remake his personal identity at will. If you're familiar with the words of or the works of Nietzsche, Karl Marx, and Charles Darwin, this is what these guys all taught.

Nietzsche, if you remember, believed that life was really bad and you had to overcome your human nature to almost be Superman. He was the one who kind of his philosophy undergirded the Nazi empire about the Superman.

[34 : 20] You had to overcome the weak. Then you had Marx, which saw industrial production and capitalism as changing society and reshaping it, but not for a good way.

So they believed that things could be changed. And of course, then Darwin talks about that were clearly created by accident. Over millions, if not billions of years, over a million, hundred, thousand million fish who come out of the sea, one of them can finally walk, then they can finally talk, and then eventually an animal comes out, and then there's another couple of billion years in there, and there's apes, right?

And what Darwin did is he robbed man of his purpose, or just an accident. He blurred the lines between the human and animals and removed any idea of humanity having a special status.

In this world, God's purposes are irrelevant. So the plastic self is the one who can remake their personal identity. In the late 1850s, early 1900s, Sigmund Freud arrived.

Sigmund Freud identified the fourth man, which is the sexual self, and he equated happiness with sexual pleasure. So the only time that you are truly happy is when you are being pleased sexually.

[35 : 55] Now I want you to see this is what is playing out today. The idea of sexual identity is what dominates our world today. You get that?

It's a sexual identity. People want to be identified by their sexual desires. Whether you are gay, bi, straight.

You understand what's going on there? Like all of a sudden your sexual preferences have overcome who you are as a person. Do you understand on that? So something that can be completely born of, and some people would say it, uncontrollable urges all of a sudden becomes who they are.

And when you are who you are, why do you need to change? Why would you need Jesus Christ? It's interesting. Are you guys familiar with Russell Brand?

He was an actor, comedian, very lewd, promulgated, drug, would talk about all his infidelities, was quite happy about that, truly a disgusting man, and now he's professing to be a follower of Jesus Christ by his own words, who lived the highest high of this world.

[37 : 13] He just simply said it is empty and it is not satisfying in any way. That sent him on a journey to fill his soul with something real. We pray that it is indeed Jesus Christ.

So whether you identify as gay, bi, straight, or even non-binary, the most prominent truth about you is how you identify sexually.

And this explains for us why there's such a battle over pronouns, why professors are being sued in classes for not identifying people. So what Freud did is what he placed the human sex drive at the very core of what it is to be human.

But we know from scripture that sex is for procreation and pleasure between a husband and wife.

Now what's interesting, he says, the happiest person is the one who is able to constantly indulge his or her sexual desires.

But there's a problem. To be true to myself means to pursue my sexual fulfillment and this plays into hands of powerful individuals.

[38 : 28] So you have to enslave someone to serve you. You with me on that? You have to get other people to part. That's why right now the big Me Too movement came out.

Because all these Hollywood producers were using their powers to get what they wanted sexually. And all of a sudden people rightfully started stating, this is wrong, it is evil.

And the problem with the world is they know it's wrong, but yet it's being sold in every magazine, movie, TV show that it's good.

Do you understand? There's this like two rocks of this world that they're trying to make sense of and it's coming together and they don't know how it works, which leads to depression, it leads to destruction and brokenness.

Then Freud or Truman comments in regards to Freud's problem, he says it means it's impossible for the civilized to be truly happy if you were to follow Freud's way, because it means you need to circumvent someone else for your own desires.

[39 : 49] Then finally, I want to share with you, it's what the major mover of our day is, and it's called the sexually politicized self. Today or earlier, a few minutes ago, I used the word oppression.

The meaning of that word has changed, you know that? It used to be about poverty or physical mistreatment, but now oppression, because it's so rooted in emotions and feelings of self, oppression means I can't get what I want.

And if you don't identify me as I identify me, you are oppressing me. You with me on that? This is what's going on today.

You are now the oppressor. I was just reading this article about this university professor and she was talking about she's had violence done to her. Violence because someone didn't use her correct pronoun.

I don't think she knows what violence is. But in today's mindset, it makes sense. sex is not a private activity.

[41 : 09] That happens between a man and a woman who love each other and are committed in a marriage. But now it's related to our social identity. So to say that a type of sexual activity is wrong, you're essentially saying that the individual is wrong.

and to not be recognized as how you identify means that you are a pressed, you are a victim.

So the new progressive left, that's the ones that are fighting Premier Daniel Smith, interpret traditional sexual codes as an evil strategy to maintain the status quo of our society.

We are evil. they speak of tolerance and love and act as if that is what they want to accomplish.

But they cannot. They want this society, a Christian society, ultimately to fail, a society which looks to God, has moral codes.

[42 : 21] They want it to die so they can be free to pursue what they consider their own identity. let me conclude for today.

And I want to say a little bit more about this next week because I'm going to talk about how do we engage in this world. Because that is the good news. We do have a truth that transcends what man's opinions, thoughts are about themselves.

We serve the creator, God, who rules over all. Amen? He knew this was going to happen. And as we go through Romans 1, that's what we're going to be taking out. We're even going to look at the path biblically, how these things unfolded.

But we live in an era where the greatest desire is inner psychological happiness or well-being. Now, it is now accepted that the way you see yourself, your inner image, is the true you.

And this true you takes precedence over your own body. You with me on this thing? So the reason, if you are a man who see yourself as a woman, you remove those parts of the body that do not accommodate to your inner view.

[43 : 47] Just as if you were a woman who identifies as a man, you take off what doesn't fit that image. And notice that image is not related to truth or reality in any way, amen?

It's not. Now, the thing is, if I were a man who identifies as a woman, I'm not truly a woman unless you call me a woman too.

That's the way it works now. Because the reality that I have, you have to share that reality with me. And that is the transition that is going on.

That is where the battle is being fought. It used to be, you know what, if you want to think that way about yourself, more power to you, right? Who am I going to tell you differently?

But now the battle is, no, no, no. You need to call me this so I am not oppressed. Because we are relational beings, we need acceptance of others in order to be comfortable with ourselves.

[45 : 00] This means that society must serve the purpose of meeting individual psychological needs. What this does is this creates what's called a therapy culture which all institutions, communities, educational centers, including the church, must adapt to reflect a therapeutic and inclusive mentality.

I will just read for you Truman's concluding words on this. He says, the refusal by any individual to recognize an identity that society at large recognizes as legitimate is a moral offense.

not simply a matter of indifference. The question of identity in the modern world is a question of dignity. For this reason, the various court cases in America concerning the provision of cakes and flowers for gay weddings are not ultimately about flowers or cakes.

They are about the recognition of gay identity and according to the members of the LGBTQ plus community, the recognition that they need in order to feel that they are equal members of society.

So the question is, why is the church hated in this new world? He answers, this explains why the faithful church is unlikely to be simply ignored.

[46 : 35] the Bible draws lines where current secular ideology does not want lines. As with so many other things in which we all fail, same-sex attraction and the confusion of gender does not fit with God's good creation.

Therefore, in the long run, it will not cause individuals or society to flourish. That's why freedom of speech and of religion will be the two rights that this present world will work to destroy.

So next week, I want to share with you how all is not lost. And how, like I said, we have opportunities to engage with this world in a real and meaningful way that can change the lives of so many people that we know and love that are struggling.

And I'm not meaning to belittle these struggles. Some of these are very real struggles. And the reason why we are putting these names up is for people that we can pray for so they can come to the true knowledge of who Jesus Christ is and can be set free from the lies that truly permeate this world.

So I'm going to ask the music team to come in after I pray here. Dear Holy Heavenly Father, I think we all have been exposed to these thoughts that are in this world.

[48 : 06] We've read articles, we've seen newsreels that really don't make sense to us. But I hope just our time together today will help us make sense of them, but also more importantly, how to communicate, how to love and care for, how to bring truth and reality into that life.

Even speaking with a good friend this week and how they express they have a non-binary partner that they work with and the way, the reason they're respected is because they love them and listen to them and they know their story.

Father, we see this over and over in Scripture. It doesn't matter what the background is or what's going on in society. The true gospel, the true evangelism happens when we understand people, we know people, we get to know their stories and how to bring truth to their brokenness, their loneliness, their lostness.

The reality is the world is struggling to make sense out of this and they don't want to be cruel, they don't want to be unloving, but they don't even have a definition of what loving really means.

So they continue to placate the self and the therapy. Father, I pray that we would give thought to these words and we would continue to study Romans 1 as it explains the methods of righteousness we follow which ultimately lead to a sense of godlessness in our society.

[49 : 40] Father, I pray that you'd bring a great righteousness across this land that people would come through the knowledge of you, through this church, doing what we've been called to do, to call those into a relationship with you would be had.

We just think of these names on this board, whether it be Anthony and Laura, Ryan, Brad, Laurie, and John, I pray that you'd bring truth to them. Just use the people who gave their names.

May they have an extra functional love these next 47 days as we prepare before Easter. Just to submit their lives to you.

And we cry out for your mercy, O God. Even this week in the Times, they posted an article about the transgenders who are full of regret because they can no longer have children and they can't truly return to how you created them.

Father, we know there's a way in the gospel for them too. that they can be dearly as loved by you as we can. And are.

[50 : 52] So, Father, I pray that you'd continue to break our hearts and save us from our pride and give us a knowledge and understanding of what this world is about so that we can live for you all the better.

You're the most holy God. We love you. Amen.