

When God Gives Up Man

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[0 : 00] All right. Welcome. My name is BK. I have the pleasure of being one of the pastors here. Some of you are new. Some of you are old friends showing up after a while.

It's good to have you here. But please turn in your Bibles to Romans chapter 1. If you do not have a Bible, you do need to have a Bible in your hands. We believe in a style of preaching which is called expositional preaching, which means the truth that we are gathering is from the text itself.

And I want you to see this in the text for yourself. I don't want you to take my word for it. I want you to be able to take this text, get to know it, be comfortable with it.

This morning, we begin by looking at a passage which many consider to be the most sobering, fearful, and grim passage in all of Scripture.

It is a passage that outlines God's divine abandonment of mankind. Not only that, but in this text, and I say these in the words of one author, vividly portrays the consequences of God's abandonment of rebellious mankind.

[1 : 20] It is a text that outlines the nature, the expression, and the extent of mankind's sinfulness, which ultimately flows from a rebellion against God.

It is a text that helps us understand why the world is as it is. Probably seemingly more today than it did 2,000 years ago.

It explains for us the destructive powers of mankind pursuing his own desires. It explains for us why sex seems to be at the center of every political discussion of the day.

It explains for us why homosexuality and transgenderism is so pervasive today, even in our elementary schools. It explains to us why Supreme Court justices cannot define what a woman is.

It explains for us why governments have needed to step in and stop the mutilation of confused children. Even this week, if you were paying attention to the news cycle, it even explains why a BC nurse who, while supporting women's rights, supported a billboard that simply said, I love J.K. Rowling, the author of the Harry Potter books.

[2 : 47] And if you do not know, J.K. Rowling is a strong supporter of women's rights and has spoken out against transgender rights or confusion. And this nurse, because of her support for J.K. Rowling, might lose her license to be a nurse.

All for expressing her opinion. It is why one non-Christian author laments, society seems to be in the grip of mass derangement.

It helps us explain or understand why there's been such a departure from reason and logic and objectivity has been replaced by ideology.

That is the reason why 2 plus 2 equals 4 is now considered racist. This is the text that will help us understand. But before we get into the meat of this sermon, I believe it will prove fruitful to read what we've been studying the last couple of sermons, and I'll give you a brief overview.

So please read along with me in Romans chapter 1, beginning in verse 16. Paul writes, For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

[4 : 11] For it is the righteousness of God revealed from faith for faith as it is written, the righteous shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

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 and the things that have been made.

So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him. And they became futile in their thinking, and in 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.

If you've been with us, we understand that there's been an accusation that has been made against mankind. There was a verse between verse 18 and verse 19. The verse would say, it's not fair.

[5 : 27] It's not fair. This is what the Gentile responds to God. God has given laws to the Jews, God's people, but the Gentiles are claiming ignorance.

They're claiming we did not have Moses. We did not have laws. We did not have prophets to warn us. We weren't given any of the warnings that you've written about previously.

So to say that we're as guilty as the Jews or we deserve this wrath is somewhat unfair.

But Paul, as an excellent prosecuting attorney, steps in and he makes three damning statements against mankind. Look at verse 19. For what can be known about God is plain to you because God has shown it to you.

So the first charge is man is inexcusably ignorant that his divine attributes, namely his eternal powers, nature, everything has been clearly seen.

[6 : 32] So to say that you are without excuse, that you're ignorant, that God didn't reveal himself, I have just proven that to be false.

Then Paul steps up with this other attack in verse 27. Not only did you know God, and notice the text says God clearly showed himself.

God made it that way. You didn't have to be a theologian or a scientist or an investigator to see this truth. God made it clear to everyone.

But not only did he make it clear, but you showed no thanksgiving to God. So man is charged with showing ingratitude. Verse 21. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him.

If you were here last week, I answered the question, if God is so clear, why does man still reject him?

[7 : 36] We learned from the text that man is foolish, prideful, and wicked. And we learned this from our forefathers, Adam and Eve.

They were the one who modeled this pride, this wickedness, and this foolishness for us. The greatest, most wicked sin that mankind can do is to not honor and worship God.

This is the sin that condemns a soul to an eternity in hell. It's the sin to not honor and worship God. You may know God, you may call him God, but if you do not worship and honor him, you are in dire straits. For this is the violation of the greatest commandment that Jesus was asked about, which he simply responded to love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.

To know God, yes, to refuse God, is probably one of the most wicked things that mankind can do. The third charge that Paul brings against mankind, not only are you saying he is unclear when he isn't, you know he's there because the text says, for all they knew God, not only did you give him proper thanks, but you were insolent towards God.

[9 : 09] Not only did mankind willfully not give thanks or worship, which he rightfully deserves, mankind decided to create his own gods.

In verse 22, Paul describes a dreadful, absurd exchange. Mankind trains the glory of the almighty God, the sweetness of his excellence, for a lie.

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.

We see this in the arrogance today that people know who Jesus claims to be, still claim that Jesus was only a prophet, that Jesus was only a moral teacher, that Jesus was a moral revolutionary.

To say that Jesus is anything but the Son of God is both disgusting and irreverent. This is the depth of mankind's insolence.

[10 : 25] And when you ponder upon these thoughts, it's absolutely staggering. Last week, I used an illustration what we've done, and I'll repeat it here today.

It's like a son having a father, and he kills his father. And then what he does is he creates a dummy to look like his father.

He puts the pillows in and sticks for arms and a paper mache head on his face and takes a marker and draws eyes on it. Then he takes it out amongst all his friends and say, hey, this is my dad.

This is the one I have a relationship with. It's insane. And this insanity leads us somewhere.

This morning and over the next few Sundays, we come to a text that explains this judgment that God has against mankind. And it's not just judgment, my friends, but he uses the term wrath.

[11 : 35] Verse 18, For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness. This is a ruling of the judge who created all things.

And because God is the judge who creates all things, he has every right to judge over all things. He has the right to judge over all creation.

This is a God who sees all things, knows all things. God has every right to dispense this judgment over mankind. These verses, verses 24 to 32, is how God is unleashing his wrath on all ungodliness and unrighteousness of mankind.

Not only does this text give us answers to the statements that I made in my introduction, but it does help us understand God. It helps us understand ourselves.

It also gives us wisdom as those who are believers in Jesus Christ, who are trying to make sense of this world, who are trying to speak to our coworkers, speak to our neighbors, speak to our family members, and we seem to be missing each other.

[12 : 49] This text defines, helps us understand why we are missing each other. My prayer is that through these next few sermons, that the Lord God would be kind and grateful to provide each and every one of you with an insight, not just into our culture, but truthfully how to respond to your coworkers, your friends, your family members, the ones that you love.

For those who seem so lost in this day and age of mass derangement, the feeling is that most people would rather close our eyes and hope it all goes away, and then if we closed our eyes long enough, somehow sanity would show up once again.

My prayer is that by understanding this text and Paul's words to this church that was written 2,000 years ago would be an encouragement to you, that you will truly see new opportunities for the gospel.

I pray that God will give you new opportunities to speak into the truth in this age of lies. My ultimate prayer here is that we would meet you through your word in here today, the Lord Jesus Christ and Savior of all.

And as some of you have so thoughtfully done over these last several weeks, you've written names of those you've loved on the walls that we've been praying for for 40 days. I pray that there'd be a wisdom for you.

[14 : 24] So let's look at verse 24. So this is kind of an introduction to this part of the text. Verse 24. Notice the word, therefore. God gave them up in the 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. For this reason, God gave them up to dishonorable passions. Further, women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature. And the men likewise gave up natural relations 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.

They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of enemies, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them, but give approval to those who practice them.

[16 : 01] So this morning, I want to share with you four truths that we can learn from this passage that will help us, give us a greater understanding of this passage.

But before I do, let me pray. Dear Holy Heavenly Father, you're the one who knows each and every one of us. What's interesting about this passage of Father is not meant as a passage of condemnation, but it's meant as a passage of understanding of who you are and your feelings towards ungodliness and unrighteousness.

To say feelings is such an understated term. But Father, it does provide us knowledge, and knowledge is good. It helps us understand. It helps us make decisions.

It helps us gain wisdom. Father, I pray that the words that I speak would be clear, and that you'd open our ears to your truth.

I pray that your word would have its way with each and every one of us. If it's praise, let it be praise. If it's conviction, let it be conviction. Father, you know each and every one of us.

[17 : 13] As we've clearly stated, there's nothing that you do not see, and nothing is hidden from you. You know all. Father, let's begin by being honest with ourselves before you.

We need you, and we need your word, and we thank you for the warnings that you give and the promises that you've made to us. We give you praise for all these things, and God's people said, Amen.

So the first truth that I want you to understand is that God is justified in bringing judgment against all mankind. God is justified in bringing judgment against all mankind.

Note verse 24. It begins with the words, therefore. Therefore is the logical argument based on the preceding text. Because of man's ignorance, his ingratitude, and his insolent, God is handing mankind over to their sin, and he has every right to do so.

There is no doubt to the verdict. We do stand guilty before God. Now mankind rightfully stands before judgment, which is to bear his rightful wrath.

[18 : 30] The not fair argument does not work with God, because God in his kindness, his grace, and his love has made himself known.

God's display of wrath on all mankind has three aspects to this, and we're going to be discussing each aspect in this series. But each of these aspects is identified by four words.

God gave them up. Notice it's used in verse 24. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity.

Verse 26. For this reason, God gave them up to dishonorable passions. Verse 28. 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.

So the first truth, we understand that God is justified to do what God does. The second truth that I want you to understand here is that man is solely responsible.

[19 : 46] Man is solely responsible. Note, God gave them up. One of the questions that is often asked about this term, God gave them up, take it to mean that God made man sin.

As an example, that God puts BK in the casino to test him or to hand him over to his gambling. But that's not what's going on.

It's like BK is in the casino, I'm gambling, and God gives me over to that gambling. You with me on that? God is not placing me in there for the sin.

I'm already immersed in that sin. If you are familiar with God's words, you know that it is impossible for God to make us sin.

James 1.13 said, Let no one say when he is tempted, I am being tempted by God. For God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no man.

[20 : 43] So we're there because we've wanted to be there. R.C. Sproul writes, and it's a lengthy comment or quote, but I think it'll prove the point.

R.C. Sproul writes, Like an untended garden, when man is left to himself, the bad always chokes out the good, because that is the inclination of his fallen nature.

Man has no capacity in himself to restrain the weeds of his sinfulness or to cultivate the good produce of righteousness.

Man's natural development is not upward, but it is downward. Man does not evolve. Man devolves. He is not ascending to God, but he is descending from God.

He has continued a downward spiral of depravity throughout history, getting worse and worse, and when the restraints of the Holy Spirit are removed during the final tribulation period, all hell will break loose on earth as evil reaches its ultimate stage.

[21 : 57] Man cannot stop this slide because he is innately a slave to sin. And the more he pursues his deceiving efforts at self-righteousness apart from God, the more he becomes enslaved to sin.

As C.S. Lewis perceptibly observes in the book *The Problem of Pain*, says, The lost enjoy forever the horrible freedom that they have demanded and are therefore self-enslaved.

So God is not causing man to sin in any way in his judgment. Mankind clearly got there on their own because they chose to be there.

So the first truth is God is justified. Second truth is man is responsible. And the third truth I want you to understand as we get into this text is God is purposeful in giving us up to our sin.

God is purposeful in giving us up to our sin. And I think it's important for us to truly understand this point. It is not God simply letting us go.

[23 : 19] It's not like we're in this boat and we're in this river and God's got his finger on the boat to stop us from going down the current and he just takes his finger off the boat.

You guys want to go down that way? You guys go down that way. That's not what he's saying. He's not saying, hey, boys and girls, I tried my best to protect you from yourselves, but you didn't listen. But since you want to go down the river, have at it. See how you do. You want your sin now? Go on it. This isn't what God does.

What scripture is communicating here, it is God pushing the boat down the river. It's not letting the boat down. God is pushing the boat down.

You see, one of the lies that man believes if they are honest enough to believe in God or some other God is that God must be impersonal or that he is so far off that God truly doesn't care.

[24 : 24] And any type of wrath that God would dispense on mankind must mean that God is somehow an arbitrary or a fruit of some impulsive anger that God has towards us.

It is the law that says God doesn't care about me. It's the God, it's the, it's the lie that says God does not care about my plight in life.

Let's be honest. Even as Christians, we're prone to think this way. Especially when we're in the midst of trials of suffering or some hardship of life and we do not know what's going on, we often ask, where are you God?

then maybe we begin to think, maybe I need to do something greater or religious to get God's attention. Maybe I need to become even super religious.

But God is a personal God. There's the word Elohim that we read in the Old Testament that's translated God and what it means, He's Creator, He's God over all.

[25 : 55] But then there's that word Lord which we translate as Yahweh which means He's the personal God. That's how God introduced Himself to His people, the Jews.

But what God is doing, this isn't Elohim, the God, pushing the boat down the river. This is Yahweh, God, pushing the boat down the river.

Because it says in all three instances, God gave them up. What God does in handing mankind over is personal to God.

By handing mankind over, God is in His holiness and righteousness responding to those who choose not to believe or follow Him, to not honor and worship Him, to those who have created false gods to Him.

God is purposeful in giving them up. God is purposeful in giving them up. You know where else this word is used? It is the kind of purpose that Jesus Christ had when He gave Himself up to the death on the cross.

[27 : 18] He went to the cross with an absolute purpose. It is the kind of purpose that Jesus has for Himself when He gives Himself over to the care of His Father.

1 Peter 2.23 says, When He was reviled, Jesus did not revile in return. When He suffered, Jesus did not threaten, but continued entrusting Himself to Him who judges justly.

So when it says He's giving them up, He's entrusting them up. So the first truth that we need to understand is God is justified.

Second truth is that we are responsible. And the third truth is God is purposeful in giving us up to our sin. Now the fourth truth that goes hand in hand with this third truth, and it's my prayer that all of you will understand this at the deepest parts of your relationship with Him, is that God is never indifferent towards us.

God is never indifferent towards us. Sometimes we may want that, but who would want a true God or even a parent that is indifferent towards us?

[28 : 44] The fact of the matter is, I know when we begin to speak about sin, the subject is overwhelming. This is discouraging. This brings thoughts and feelings about our own shame, our own guilt.

The truth of the matter is, maybe you are here today living under the wrath of God. I'm not saying that you are living with the consequences of sin, but you may right now be living under the wrath of God.

You know it. You feel it. You feel as if your prayers are dead. You feel no satisfaction with God, no comfort with God.

And because of your unconfessed sin or your unwillingness to obey that you know needs to be made right, you are still not indifferent towards God.

In fact, the Bible never ever teaches or demonstrates that God is indifferent towards us. If God were indifferent towards us, he'd just take his finger off the boat and let us float along our very damned way.

[30 : 01] God's love is demonstrated toward you that even with wrath, there is hope. In his wrath, there is salvation.

You know, what kind of parent doesn't discipline his children? Or let me ask that question again. What kind of good parent doesn't discipline their children?

It's not an enlightened or a progressive parent. A parent who disciplines with purpose and love is a kind, loving parent who knows their child.

It's a parent that cares for their child's soul. Hebrews 12, 7 and 9 reads, It is the discipline, it is for discipline that you have to endure.

God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

[31 : 07] Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the father of spirits and live?

You see, God even loves mankind in his wrath towards mankind. In fact, the Old Testament is full of examples of this happening. Many times, God temporarily abandoned his own people when they chose to ignore and disobey them.

Psalms 81, 11, verse 12 reads, But my people did not listen to my voice. Israel would not submit to me.

So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts to follow their own counsels. The prophet Hosea, and if you know his story, it is indeed a tragic story, but he speaks of how God, voicing the word of the Lord to Israel, the northern kingdom, which says that they have joined idols, just leave them alone. The book of Revelation, in case you did not know, is a book of worship. It's a book where God is displaying himself visibly before all the world.

[32 : 37] And the wrath is being poured out on mankind so that they would lift their voice and believe in the Lord God Almighty to save them from themselves.

Do you know what the Jews did to get Jesus to come in the world? You know, that they had been living under judgment and Israel had been taken away to Babylon.

You know what Israel did in the time frame? Absolutely nothing. They didn't deserve them. They hadn't reached some point of super spirituality where Jesus said, I can come now.

They did nothing. They didn't deserve anything. They hadn't reached a special place or passed some holiness benchmark.

But he was recognized by those who believed, even Simeon and Anna, before Jesus could even say a word, knew and gave praise that God had indeed answered the prayers of his people and they recognized him as the coming Messiah.

[33 : 51] Maybe, if you have been experiencing this wrath, maybe it's time for you to now recognize that you're indeed under God's wrath and maybe it's time now to confess.

Maybe today is the day of repentance. Maybe today is the much needed day of salvation. The fact of the matter is sometimes God only shows himself for so long and then he begins to harden your heart because you continue to choose your way.

Maybe this is the day where you cannot give an excuse. You did not know. You didn't have an opportunity to confess. You didn't have an opportunity to repent.

Here's the thing and I'm getting ahead of this text a bit. As hard as Paul is on these Gentiles, wait till you see till he gets to the Jews.

They had Moses. They had the law. They had the prophets. They had the promises. They can't claim ignorance.

[35 : 09] But maybe you're like one of the Jews. Maybe you grew up in the church. You knew God's law.

You have loving, godly parents. You've heard the gospel over and over. Maybe you've repeated John 3.16 many times. Perhaps you attended a church or a youth group growing up and you're just

kind of coming back because it seems the thing to do.

perhaps you know the gospel. But you are choosing to live by the ways of the world rather than the way of God, the God who sits on high, the God who sees and knows all.

Maybe you just had this thought, hey, I'll get back to it when I've got time. Maybe I'll take these things more serious when I have kids. Or maybe if God should grant me a spouse, I will get in line. May I tell you that maybe today is the last day that you will get a chance to respond to him. In Acts 7, there's this man named Stephen who preached a sermon that would cost him his life.

[36 : 27] And he preached the sermon to the Jews who were centered in Jerusalem who knew Jesus, knew all his mighty works. And he had to remind them that they too, as religious as they were, turned their backs on God.

And like those who forefathers had, when Moses went up into the mountains, they built the golden calf and worshipped them.

He said, you are no different. So the truth is you may be indifferent towards God, but God is never indifferent towards you.

So if I may conclude, the truth is when God abandons men and women to their own devices, God partially divides, withdraws his divine protection.

When this occurs, men and women not only become more vulnerable to the destructive strategies that Satan uses against us, but they also suffer the destruction that their own sin as that sin works in and through them.

[37 : 41] please, if you are serving sin, repent today. If you have made something in yourself another God over the God who reigns on high, repent, burn it, get rid of it.

Maybe it's your reputation, your family, your money, your own self-righteousness. give it to God. Please, do not put yourself in a position where you would ever hear God's word as it's written in Judges 10, 13.

It says, yet you have forsaken me and served other gods, therefore I will save you no more. Go and cry out to the gods whom you have chosen.

Let them save you in the time of your distress. my friends, rejoice that God is not indifferent towards you or your sin.

I read Psalm 81 to you previously and now I'm going to finish it in verse 13. God says, oh, that my people would listen to me, that Israel would walk in my ways.

[39 : 00] I would soon subdue their enemies and turn my hand against their foes. Those who hate the Lord would cringe toward him and their fate would last forever.

But he would feed you with the finest of wheat and with honey from the rock. I would satisfy you. Do you know that is God's heart?

Praise God that he's not indifferent. Amen? That he is calling out to you. I will end with the words of James chapter 4 verse 5.

He says, do you suppose it is no purpose that the scripture says he yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us? But he gives us more grace, therefore, it says, God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

submit yourselves, therefore, to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. My friends, that is a promise. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you.

[40 : 16] Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.

Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, your word is strong.

Your word pulls no punches. There is nothing I need to add to your word to make it more stronger. Father, I pray for each and every soul that is in here and not only their souls, but the souls of the families that they represent.

Their spouses, their children, their grandchildren. Father, I pray that they would indeed and do give this same message to their loved ones.

may they pray that you would indeed reveal yourself to them and demonstrate that you are not indifferent, that you matter.

[41 : 32] No matter how far one goes from God down this river, has sold their soul to the sin of this world, there is still coming back. God purposed it in the cross that we will be celebrating next week.

This week in history actually is Palm Sunday as we remember it. It is when Jesus Christ came into the city of Jerusalem being celebrated as a king.

The people were so great and their adulation towards you is like an earthquake. And yet in a week they would forget you, condemn you, and have you hung on a tree between two thieves.

A most ignoble death. But you purposed it. You were not indifferent towards Israel and you were not indifferent towards us.

In your grace you have caused the sun to shine on us. Some of us have experienced your grace.

You have given us good jobs. We can earn a healthy living.

[42 : 51] We can raise kids in a safe place. But let us not depend that your good grace will last forever.

That there is coming a day of judgment. so father on this day let this not be the day that our heart is hardened but our heart is turned from rock to flesh that a sinner or a saint that was lost can now be found because you like the old lady pursued that lost coin or like the shepherd who sought out the lost sheep the one who belonged to you but went his own way God you are good to us and we love you and we thank you may these words be weighty on our heart let us be sober minded people about the true reality of the times that we live in through your word and this text as this series as we go through may through the power of your

Holy Spirit and through the preaching of your word oh God may it lighten our lives to the truth that is around us and help us bring light to those who only know the lies in your name we pray amen to as one do■■ as do esp fan much about that there