

Romans 1 (Part 2) :18-32

The Wrath of God

Pastor Paul LeBoutillier · May 31, 2026

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Romans chapter one, as we get started I have a question for you. How many of you guys have been on jury duty? Okay, now you've been called for jury duty, but you've actually served on a jury. Wow, you've got a lot of people here, yeah. My wife loves being on jury duty.

I think that's weird. Me, not so much, but of the several times that I've actually been called to jury duty, I've only actually sat on a jury two times, I think. Two times, I think is right. I always have to look at my wife. Anyway, it was interesting in both instances when I served on a jury, we found the defendant not guilty.

We acquitted. I think it was a hymn in both cases. And if you've ever been on jury duty, you know that when somebody is acquitted, that doesn't necessarily mean that the jury believes they're innocent. It simply means that the prosecution didn't prove the guilt, because in our system of jurisprudence, of course, a person is innocent until proven guilty. Although I have to tell you, after being on a couple of juries, I realized there's a few people that don't really know about that principle.

And I heard some rather distressing things by some of my fellow jurors, you know, that we had to kind of talk through. But the reason I bring that up is because finding someone guilty is actually a difficult thing. It's hard. It's hard to prove someone's guilt. In this section of Romans, and in the following chapter, the Apostle Paul is going to talk about the guilt of humanity and why humanity deserves the wrath of God.

And we're going to talk about that. And to do that, Paul is going to outline his charges against three different kinds of people. We're going to put these up on the screen so we can see them together, these three different people groups. He's going to talk in this chapter about the godless, and when he refers to the godless, you and I might refer to them as heathens. Heathens are people who, you know, they just live a life completely apart from God.

God doesn't even come into, isn't even on their radar. They just live their lives. And then he's going to talk in, as we get into chapter two, about the moralist. And these are people who have a moral foundation, and they believe in right and wrong. They believe that there are things that are moral, and there are things that are immoral.

But Paul is going to explain why they also are under the wrath of God. And then he's going to talk about the religionist. And of course, for Paul, when he thought of religious people, he thought of the Jews, his own people. But we're going to apply it in a general sense. It doesn't really matter whether someone's a Jew or Gentile, they can be a religious person.

I was raised in a very religious home. We went to church every week, every week, whether I wanted to or not. I had to wear a suit. I had to put on a tie. Thankfully, it was one of those clip ties.

I could take it off quick. But, and you know, every Sunday, my dad got my brother and me up on a bench, and he'd shine our shoes. Does that sound like the 60s? And so I went to church, you know, up until I was at least 18. Never once heard the gospel.

Never once heard the gospel. Heard a lot about God in more generic sort of terms, but never heard the gospel until I was much older. So there was a lot of, so that's what, when I talk about religion, and when Paul makes reference here to the religionist, that's kind of what he's thinking about, too. He's thinking about religious people that may not know much about God, as strange as that sounds. Today, I tell people I'm not a religious person, because to me, religion is everything that is essentially man-made.

You know, everything from little small men with pointy hats throwing holy water on people, to people going to church and never hearing the gospel, but doing it every week, thinking that this is kind of what I need to do to be right with God, and so forth. And Paul's gonna, he's gonna also tell us why the religionist is under the wrath of God when we get in to the next chapter. Let's go ahead and read the verses that we're going to be covering this evening. Verse 18 and following, all right, so Romans chapter 1 beginning at verse 18. It says, for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

I forgot to tell you, I'm reading from the ESV. 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're without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but 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 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 for their 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, contentious, malice.

They are full of envy, 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. Let's pray. Father God, as we dig into your word tonight, we just really pray for your Holy Spirit to lead us.

We want to be receivers tonight. We want to hear your voice. We want to understand truth and we want to know about what this passage is saying. And so we ask you to guide us in this study. We pray that you'd strengthen each one of us to be receivers tonight, to tune into your voice.

We ask it in the name and authority that is granted us through Jesus our Savior. Amen. Verse 18, you'll notice once again begins by saying, for the wrath of God is revealed. You know, it's funny, a lot of people become very uncomfortable when we begin to bring up the topic of the wrath of God. And I find that this is also a matter or an issue of discomfort even for believers, which it shouldn't be, but for many it is.

And one of the big reasons I think that wrath is a problem or a strugglesome topic for many people is that I think folks struggle with comparing God's wrath with what they have seen in their life with the wrath of man. And so they think of wrath as just this flashpoint of anger that just explodes at any given time and you better watch out or you might be in the line of fire or something like that. And for them, the subject of wrath contains overtones of what they've experienced in life, which is cruelty and even brutality and things like, you know, evil. And so you will often hear people say, I just can't believe in a God of wrath. I'm not comfortable.

I would much rather embrace a God of love. Well, who wouldn't? But I really, truly believe. believe that that sort of an attitude or that sort of a belief comes out of an inability on those people's parts to be able to separate man's wrath from God's wrath. Here's the difference.

The wrath of man springs from a sinful heart, okay? Okay? The wrath of God springs from absolute purity of thought and motive. And I know that's not something that you and I can relate to. We know that God is absolutely pure.

And we hear it because we see it in the word of God, but we can't relate to it. Because I mean, do you know anybody other than God who's absolutely pure in thought and motive? Because I don't. And the person speaking to you tonight is certainly not one of them. So what do we have to relate to?

Well, really nothing except just getting to know God. But what that ultimately means is that God's wrath is untainted by human failings, right? The things that cause you and me to fail in our ability to convey our emotions when we get angry is not something that God struggles with. God's wrath is, this is gonna sound weird, but I'm gonna say it. God's wrath is always for the best because it is not divorced or disconnected from who he is as God.

I don't have a slide for this, but A.W. Tozer wrote, God's wrath is his utter intolerance of whatever degrades and destroys. Isn't that interesting? I think that's food for thought. God's wrath is his utter intolerance of anything that degrades or destroys.

And we forget that sometimes because we're used to people getting mad for reasons that are unjustified. Do you understand that God's wrath is never unjustified? It is always justified, and it is always for the best. As difficult as that is for us to understand, but that is why Paul wrote what he did in 1 Thessalonians. Let's put this up on the screen.

He wrote, you turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for his son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. I put that up on the screen for one reason only, and that is to remind you that when we say we are saved, and I'll say that, I'm saved. I hope you can say that with great confidence too. But when we say I am saved, do you understand that what we're saved from, not to, but from, is God's wrath? We have been saved from God's wrath.

Isn't that what that verse says? Absolutely, or I should say those verses, verses nine and 10. It's really interesting. There's a lot of things that people talk about today that they need to avoid. I need to avoid a life of sedentary whatever.

I need to avoid fatty foods. I need to avoid stressful situations. When's the last time you heard somebody say, you know what I really need out of life? I really need to avoid the wrath of God. I've never once heard someone say that.

You know what's interesting about that? That's bigger and more important than all the other things we think we need to avoid. Man, man's number one issue is his need to avoid the wrath of God. No, thankfully, God's given us a way to do that through Jesus Christ our Lord, amen? And because of that, as Paul said there in that passage in 1 Thessalonians, he is the one who enables us to avoid the wrath of God.

Paul goes on to describe what the wrath of God is aimed at. Look at verse 18 again. Here we're getting toward the end. He says, against it's all the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by those things suppress the truth. And first of all, you need to understand the difference between ungodliness and unrighteousness.

Ungodliness refers to offenses against God, man offending God. Unrighteousness is man offending man, okay? So that's why he brings up both of those, not just to be redundant, they have a different meaning. And Paul gets specific on one area where the sin of man has been most heinous. And he says, who by their unrighteousness do what?

Suppress the truth. That is one of the biggest issues with God. God's all about truth, by the way. And we ought to be as well. But he says here that the wrath of God is coming against the unrighteousness of man who suppress the truth.

And this is, again, something man does to man because he talks about it as unrighteousness. And it's a very serious charge. And he goes on to explain what he means by this in verse 19. Look with me in your Bible. For what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them, right?

What can be known about God, about the person of God, he says is plain to them because it's been shown to them. How did God show it to them? Verse 20, for his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been, look at this, look at these words, clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world. How? In the things that have been made.

Paul is telling us that the revelation of God in creation is plain. Isn't that interesting? And we've got all these, you know, PhDs and higher, or if there's something higher than that, I don't know. And they're saying that, you know, creation doesn't declare the existence of God. God's word says it's plain.

It's really something. By the way, I looked up that word plain in the Greek. It means apparent. It means evident. It means obvious.

And it means well-known. All those words could easily be put there in the place of plain. And you might ask, you know, how does creation reveal God? I mean, what is so plain? What is so obvious?

What is so apparent? Well, it all comes down to design. Some of you who go to Marathon, you're gonna hear a little bit of this. I brought a little bit of this to you, those of you who I filled in for three weeks in Marathon. Talked a little bit about this.

God has given every human being the ability to recognize something that is designed. It is fundamental to our human nature. We look at things and we just know. We know when something is designed. We recognize it as such.

And let me tell you something about the universe. Let me tell you something about your body. And all of the rest of creation. It looks designed. And you know, it's interesting, even atheists and evolutionists don't deny that.

Did you know that? They don't deny that it looks designed. In fact, I don't know if you, you probably haven't, but Richard Dawkins, famous atheist, evolutionist, wrote a book called The Blind Watchmaker. And in that book, he refers to the illusion of design in the universe. Isn't that funny?

He calls it the illusion. And what he basically means by that is everything looks designed, but it's not. And he says right in his book, even though things look designed, you have to keep telling yourself this is the byproduct of randomness, right? No intelligence and that sort of thing. And what is that?

What is that that Dawkins is doing? He's suppressing the truth. It's exactly what Paul's talking about here. He says, and this is one of the most heinous sins that mankind commits, to see what he knows innately is true and to say it's not. Suppressing the truth.

Let me show you on the screen from Psalm 19. Here's what God inspired David to write. The heavens declare the glory of God. And the sky above proclaims his handiwork. That's another word for design, handiwork.

Day to day pours out speech. In other words, the creation is constantly talking. And night to night it reveals knowledge. And where does this, is it spread everywhere? Oh yeah, he says there's no speech.

Nor are there words whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out throughout all the earth and their words to the ends of the world. Isn't that interesting? The revelation of God in creation is so clear and so obvious that what Paul says at the end of verse 20, look at the end of verse 20 in your Bible. What does it say?

It's so obvious that what? They're without excuse. Isn't that interesting? Mankind is without excuse because it's obvious, it's plain, it's apparent. Now in the following verses, the Apostle Paul begins to outline how that suppression of truth has affected mankind because people embrace it.

They swallow it, hook, line, and sinker, right? There's no God, you know. Verse 21, for although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but, and here's the first result, they became futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened. Futile, by the way, means pointless or worthless. And Paul says their hearts became dark.

And do you understand, people, that this is all because of the pride of man? This is where the pride of man leads. It leads to futility in thinking. Let me ask you a question. Do you see futility in thinking today?

Anybody? Like, oh, I don't know. What about people who say there's more than two genders? That's futility of thinking. What about people who think they can be a dog or a cat?

That's a darkened mind. There's no other explanation for it. Once we step over that area of denial where the truth is plainly given to us and we step over that line and we say, yeah, but I'm not going to accept that, even though it's plain, even though it's obvious. I'm going to deny it. Now, the sky's the limit.

I'll deny anything. I am free to, you know, call my own shots from here on out. I can believe anything. And that's really what Paul's talking about when he talks about this becoming futile in their thinking. It becomes literally futility.

He goes on, verse 22, claiming to be wise, they actually become fools. I don't know if you need to know this or not, but the root of the Greek word here for fools is pronounced moros, and it's where we get our word moron. And we're not being impolite here. We're simply saying that this is stupid. It is stupid to believe other, to ignore what's in front of your eyes and to see what is obvious and plain, right?

He says it literally gives rise to foolishness, which then moves on. He starts talking about paganism in verse 23. They go on to exchange the glory of the immortal God just for images or idols, you know? Some of them resemble men, some of them resemble animals, and they start worshiping. And you know, God goes into great detail if you've read through the Old Testament, books of Isaiah and elsewhere.

God goes into great detail to talk about how incredibly dumb it is for man to worship an idol. And he talks about the fact that, you know, he cuts down a tree, and with some of the wood, you know, he warms himself. With some of the wood, he cooks his dinner. And with another piece of it, he worships. And it's just ridiculous.

And you can imagine the downward spiral, a spiral, rather, isn't gonna stop there. Look at verse 24. It says, therefore, God gave them up. Now, I want you to take note of that phrase, okay? God gave them up.

Because Paul is gonna use it three times in this section. The NIV renders this as God gave them over. And this phrase speaks of turning men loose to just run with his sinful passions and his futile thinking. And that's what God will do, ultimately. He will just, he'll just say, okay, great.

He'll just set them loose, and he'll turn them over to this lifestyle of just ridiculousness, right? And the first area that he speaks of being given over, he says, he turns them over or gives them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves. And then Paul explains, it was because, verse 25, they exchanged the truth about God, which they saw in creation, for a lie, right? What a tremendously tragic thing to do, to exchange truth for a lie. And he says, and they went ahead and worshiped and served the creature rather than the creator who is forever blessed, right?

And so in this first area of sin, you'll notice that it centers on sexual impurity, which Paul calls the dishonoring of our bodies. And it's a really interesting phrase because this includes any sexual activity outside of marriage. God ordained human intimacy between a man and a woman to exist within the confines of marriage. And anything that exists outside those boundaries is considered biblically to be impurity, right? And so, and Paul says, it is a dishonoring of your body because your body was created to worship and serve God.

And you're using it for your own personal pleasure. And it is a dishonoring of that which has been given to you physically, your physical body. And he says that sexual impurity is an example of worshiping the creature. Isn't that interesting? Sexual impurity is a kind of worship of the creature, giving over of oneself to sexual pleasure, right?

Because listen, you worship what you give yourself to. That's why worship of God is defined as offering ourselves as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, which is our spiritual act of worship, right? So when you give yourself over to God, that is worship. You know, we had a time of singing tonight. That's not worship.

It is a mechanism that we use to worship, music. And there's lots of mechanisms and tools, you know, the raising of hands. That's an expression of worship, but it's not worship. Good grief, I raised my hand in school when I needed to go to the bathroom. I wasn't worshipping God.

But, you know, so this isn't worship. It's singing, dancing, jumping up and down, yelling. Those things aren't worship. What is worship? Paul describes it in the Bible.

It is offering yourself as a living sacrifice. And that's what we should be doing during the music. As we're reminding ourselves of the goodness of God, Lord, I worship you. Well, guess what? You can worship other things.

You can worship the creature. You can worship your own body. Whatever you give yourself to, it doesn't really matter. You know? And yet God refers to it as something that is impure in his eyes.

Now, one thing we can say about this kind of sexual activity, even though it's impure, it's at least according to nature. Because he's talking about men and women having sexual relations outside of marriage, all right? But you see, man's depravity never is satisfied. It always increases. And we see now he begins to sin outside the confines of nature.

Look at verse 26. For this reason, God gave them up. There it is again. To dishonorable passions, he's gonna describe the next level of sinful ways, starting with the fact that the women exchanged, look at this, natural relations for those that are contrary to nature. He's beginning to talk about homosexuality, something that the world is desperately trying to normalize everywhere we look.

The world is trying to soften the whole process by saying there's nothing wrong with love between two people. Well, the Bible says that there is a joining that is contrary to nature. And he begins to describe that. Look at verse 27. He says, and men likewise, look at this, gave up.

natural relations with women, and instead they were consumed with passion for one another. In other words, with other men, and Paul calls it, as he goes on here, he calls it shameless, committing shameless acts, men with men, and by the way, he says, receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error, and that's a very sobering reminder that when we choose to violate that which is grounded in nature, because nature is another word for God's order, the order that God created for man and woman, for the world, for everything, when we begin to violate that order, we invite consequences, you know, that are usually very painful and very destructive, and that's what he's referring to here when he talks about men who are literally receiving in themselves the due penalty. He's not talking about a judgment from God. He's talking about what happens when you try to violate nature. You know, it's really the same sort of a thing.

You know, if you jump out of the eighth-story window of a building, you know, without any way of softening your blow to the ground, you're going to suffer in yourselves the due consequences of your actions. Why? Because you can't violate nature, right? And it's the same thing with sexual relations that occur like this. It is a violation of nature and you're going to get hurt.

It's going to be painful, you know? It's one of the reasons why the average lifespan of a homosexual male is in his 40s. You know, that's not a word of judgment. It's a fact. And it is in line with what Paul is saying here about receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

We cannot cast aside nature and the order of it lest we invite disaster. The final verses of the chapter describe mankind's headlong plunge into destructive behavior. But notice what Paul says here in verse 28. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, did you notice it all comes back to that original choice on mankind's part to ignore what was plain, obvious, right? Because he chose not to acknowledge God.

It says God gave them up and that's that third reference. But this time he says to a debased mind. If you have a New American Standard Bible or an NIV, your Bible says a depraved mind to do what ought not to be done. And by the way, whether you have the word depraved or debased in your Bible, the Greek has a very interesting meaning. It means not standing the test.

Isn't that interesting? He gave them a mind that cannot stand the test and the test speaks of the standard of God's wisdom and order in creation. Okay, God has given you and me great wisdom and he has established order that cannot be violated in nature. And he says here that ultimately man is given over to this mind that thinks that he can do that. He's God, he literally has become his own God in this case, all right?

And he says, I call the shots. It's kind of like what we read at the end of the book of Judges, every man did what was right in his own eyes. That's what we're living in our culture today, are we not? So here's a mind that cannot stand the test of understanding the basic premise of God's order and because man has decided to reject God's order and God's wisdom, Paul says in verse 29, if you look with me in your Bible, they were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, and malice. And that's just the tip of the iceberg.

He's going to go on to cite another 17 things that are going to characterize the life of man apart from God, man who has rejected God. But you'll notice it says all manner of unrighteousness, all manner, and that gives you a sense of the immensity of man's potential for sin. I mean, just in my lifetime, I'm 68 years

old. That's weird coming out of my mouth because inside I'm 19. But in my lifetime, well, let me put it this way.

When I was a kid, Mayberry wasn't far off from reality, right? You guys remember Leave it to Beaver? That wasn't far off. You know, that was kind of the way life was. How things have changed.

Now, I'll tell you here right now, some things have changed for the better. But there's much that has just absolutely become so depraved in our culture. When I was a little boy, there was no such thing as a pride parade or Pride Month where literally people flaunted, you know, sexual perversion or perversity for all to see. That's not to say that those things weren't happening behind closed doors, but you understand the difference between something happening behind closed doors and happening out in the open. And it just invites this open sort of an attitude that begins to soften on the issues of sin to begin to say, that's not so bad.

I mean, you know, it's not such a big deal. I think God kind of has to change his mind on some of these things, you know, people might say because, you know, we've changed. So God has to, you know, yeah, God hasn't changed his mind. The world has changed and you know, I don't know if you would agree with this or not, but during the pandemic, it was like, it was like hell was loosed in a lot of different ways. Things that had been kind of a little bit more under wraps, just were just let loose.

I think it was Franklin Graham who actually made that statement as well. And this is, and this is the way the world goes. And so here we are, we're living, you know, here in 2026, we're, we're living in 2026. We're, we're dealing with things, you know, where you can't, you can't hardly watch a movie anymore that it doesn't include some aspect of homosexuality as a completely normal and good sort of a thing. Here's the point though.

You think it's going to stop there? Are we really that naive to think that it's going to stop there? You think sex with children is off the table? Heavens no, heavens no. Listen, we, we are living in a culture today that rather than living by the wisdom of God, we now live by our lusts.

Lust has now become the barometer of whether something is good or bad, right or wrong, rather than the word of God. See, the word of God has been put aside. And now lust has become the, the, you know, the, the, the defining element. And, and we, we've factored it into our songs. Good grief.

I was a disc jockey before I went into the ministry for years. I worked in secular radio and then I got to work in Christian radio. But while I was in secular radio, I was playing all these songs that were preaching this message. It can't be wrong if it feels so right. Right.

Those are, that's the song lyrics. What is that? What does that communicate? What is that preaching to the culture? If it feels good, do it.

And then now we've, and they soften that message a little bit in the Disney movies. You just need to follow your heart. And what that is all saying is that's the barometer of right and wrong. So you know what? If there's somebody out there, if we're going to say yes to these various kinds of, of sexual variations and, and, you know, perversions from when I say perversion, talking about something that is being perverted from God's original design.

Okay, it's being flipped on its head. And if we're going to begin to say yes to some of these, we have no right to say no to anybody else. Right? If you, if you look someone who is involved in homosexual activity in the eye and you say it's okay. A, you have no right to say to the person who wants to have sex with a six-year-old to say, that's wrong.

You can't, you see, you've lost your ability to define right and wrong because now it's all up in the air, you see. And so it's one of the reasons why the Spirit and the Bride say, come Lord Jesus, you know, before this thing gets any worse. Come Lord Jesus. I'm anxious for Him to come, you know, before this thing spins so out of control that there's no going back. And honestly, there's no going back now.

We are past the point of no return on morality in this country. First of all, you can't legislate morality anyway. So don't be, you know, counting on your politicians to make up rules and laws that are going to somehow bring morality back into vogue. It's not going to happen. You open that particular can of worms and you're not stuffing them back in, you know.

Every parent who's raised children knows this. You give your children permission to do something, just go and tell them, no, we're going to pull it back and see how that works for you. It doesn't work with culture either, you know. And that's why Paul's talking about it like this. He begins, and I'm kind of in the middle of verse 29, but he goes on here to talk about all of these characteristics of mankind's departure into sin.

And you know, you see it here, you know, people who are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness, which is, you know, malicious talk and actions. He says they're gossip, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, people who actually invent evil, disobedient to parents. I find that so interesting. That one seems kind of out of place. It's like, we kind of think that's kind of minor, you know.

Shouldn't that have been in some other list much earlier? No, it's a big deal to God. People who are foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. And then Paul ends by saying in verse 32, and this is so incredible,

though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them, but they also give approval to those who are doing them as well. This is the craziest statement.

Though they know. Here's the thing, and this is one of the reasons why people don't like you in the world, as a Christian, I'm saying. It's why people don't like Christians. They can smell it on you. You know that, right?

We are the aroma of Christ to those who are perishing, and it doesn't smell very good. It's the stunch of death, but you know whose death it is? It's theirs. And there is an innate understanding in people, and yes, they can become hardened in their thoughts, their consciences can become seared, but ultimately, when they are confronted with their actions, they know that they know they're wrong, even though they continue to do it. I was once counseling a couple who I knew were living together outside of marriage, and I was just kind of waiting.

I was waiting in the counseling sessions for them to admit what they were doing was wrong, and they didn't over a protracted period of time. And so I finally asked them, I said, can you guys think of anything in your life that is out of God's order that you maybe need to get resolved? And they kind of looked at each other, you know, I don't think so. I said, well, aren't you guys living together outside of marriage? And you know what they said?

They both instantly went, oh, yeah, that's right. Why didn't they say it? Why didn't they say it? Why didn't they, in answer to my question, say, well, we're living together and we haven't been married? They knew as soon as I mentioned it, yeah, you're right, we shouldn't be doing that.

It's fascinating. Even though they know God's righteous decree, they continue to walk in it, and they give approval to those who practice those things. And again, that's why the world hates you so much. I'm going to close here with a quick look at another psalm that exposes the same attitude of man. We'll put it up on the screen.

Psalms chapter two, I taught this in the marathon group, but we actually went through this psalm in detail. But I'm just going to do three verses. Why do the nations rage, the psalmist asks, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed, saying, let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us. Keep that verse, if you would, up on the screen for a bit because we're going to talk about it for a minute.

A rhetorical question begins with, why do the nations rage this way at God? And why are they plotting His overthrow? And that's what plotting really means, but it's all in vain because, you know, you're not

going to plot God's overthrow. But notice that it begins with those who are in charge. Did you notice in this verse it said, the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together.

Now this doesn't necessarily mean people who are in political power because in our culture, in our, you know, society today, it's, you know, politicians have a certain amount of influence. But you know who has more today? Influencers. That's what we call them, and they're on the internet. And you guys know that the network news agencies are struggling to keep up with the influencers.

The influencers are having a greater impact on culture than are the news agencies these days, which is really interesting, you know. And by the way, there's nothing wrong with being a Christian influencer. We need more of that. But it says the kings of the earth, and these are people who are literally ruling on the internet today. There is literally a rule that they have.

They're ruling people's hearts and minds. And they're all, and it says they take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed. Now that word anointed is very interesting. It's the Hebrew word mashiach. And when the Old Testament was translated into Greek, this verse says that they take counsel together against the Lord and against His Christ.

And so you can see that there's this attempt by the world to say, we're not going to have this, this constraining of our lifestyle. And so what do they say? They say, let us burst their bonds apart, which is a rather poetic way of saying I want nothing to do with God, and I'm going to throw off whatever I find from Him that constrains me. So God says there's only two genders, no, no, no. I get to say what there is.

You see? Do you see what man is doing? He's inserting himself in the place of God. He says, let us burst their bonds apart. Let's cast their cords away.

Let's get rid of all of this Christian junk that tells us how we're supposed to live. You Christians, you tell me I can't have sex with my girlfriend, man, it's wrong, it's a sin. Well, I don't believe it, and I'm not going to live that way. And that's the life of the culture in which we live, right? That's it.

This is life to you and me. There's nothing odd about this, but we see it happening. And so the psalmist here describes this defiance, and there's no really better word for it. It's defiance. Mankind is defiant against God.

He says, you're not going to tell me what to do. You are not going to tell me how to live. I refuse. I refuse to accept it. And so the hard attitude of man, the psalmist tells us, is to throw off whatever he considers to be that which constrains him.

He longs to be free. But in his search for freedom, all he finds is bondage, bondage to sin. We've all been there. And that's really what is at the end. In fact, I would be willing to bet if we had time to do it, some of you could stand up right where you are and give a testimony of how you lived your life just in rejection of God for years, but ultimately found yourself in bondage.

And you cried out to the Lord, and he set you free. And that's what God does. Thank you, Jesus. But, you know. The freedom.

that that the man of the earth seeks ultimately evaporates into bondage and and I am so thankful aren't you that Jesus is the bondage breaker oh thank you Jesus amen I mean it's so important so here we are we're talking about the wrath of God a relatively uncomfortable topic and we're gonna talk more about it next time as we get into those other two people groups that Paul describes the moralist and the religionist and how why they too are deserving of God's wrath but we are reminded here at the close of our study that Jesus once again has removed the wrath of God from us and there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus and I want to remind you of that again be and honestly as believers we should we should not be uncomfortable at all talking about the wrath of God it is simply a part of God's nature and and I want to remind you of something else concerning the wrath of God by the way is Andy still around we're gonna I'll invite the worship team to come back up to close us in a final song but listen when you and I get angry we have to set aside other aspects of our nature if I'm gonna really get angry I have to set aside compassion I have to set aside patience I have to set aside kindness so that I can express my anger do you understand that God never sets any part of himself aside if God is a God of love and he is do you understand that when he expresses his wrath his love is equally there his mercy is equally there his compassion and kindness is equally being expressed God never suspends one aspect of his nature in order to exercise another that's a human trait but not one that God shares with us so please do not think of God as suspending his mercy love kindness and so forth to bring about wrath wrath is simply an expression of who he is he hates sin and you know why it destroys lives that's why God hates sin it destroys people and it destroys their lives and that's why Satan is trying to keep us in bondage to sin because he's trying desperately to destroy everything that belongs to God so he wants to keep people caught in bondage to sin but Jesus Christ is the bondage breaker and we come to him and we cry out to him with all of our hearts and he hears us and he sets us free but we also have to be careful we have to be careful even as Christians you'll remember that Paul wrote to the churches in Galatia chapter 5 verse 1 he said it is for freedom that Christ has set you free now be free and don't fall back into a bondage to sin or the slavery of sin don't go back there because as Christians it's possible to go back let's pray Heavenly Father we thank you so much for your word your word is life and truth and we thank you for the blessing of it the richness of it and we

ask Lord God that you would just continue to speak to us words of truth and wisdom and grace we want to thank you Lord that even though wrath is the topic of our study tonight that Jesus Christ has borne our wrath the wrath on our behalf and we now stand forgiven cleansed and redeemed we praise you and thank you for that we rejoice in our redemption through Jesus Christ our Savior and our king and all God's people said together amen you