

CJ's City – 28 May 2006

Speaker: Stuart Kibbe

Text: Romans 1:18-32

Other Scriptures: Romans 1:16-17, Romans 10:9-10, Hebrews 11:1-6, 2 Corinthians 3:7-18

Romans 1:16-17

6I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. 17For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

Declare:

I am clean before God

By FAITH in Christ

and the confession of my mouth

Romans 10:9-10

I am righteous

By FAITH

And I will live

By FAITH

See Paul was declaring that the righteous man is the one who walks, talks, eats, sleeps, breathes, moves – LIVES... by faith.

So what is faith?

Hebrews 11:1-6

1Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. 2This is what the ancients were commended for.

3By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. 4By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

5By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. 6And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Verses 2-5 give the statement in verse 1 credibility. In verse 6, the biggest “backer” steps up. Imagine you came up with the phrase, “I’m lovin’ it”. By your self, among your friends, it may give you some credibility, but when Mc Donald's shows up and you go into business together, it becomes a billion dollar job! In the same way verse 6 lends tremendous credit to what Paul writes in verse 1.

6And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Read Romans 1:18-32

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

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

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

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

28Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. 29They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, 30slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; 31they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. 32Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

This is where we find ourselves in this passage. Paul has just greeted the believers in Rome, and us. He has also encouraged us. (How? V16!)

But Paul lives on the earth, as we do – An environment of GOD-less-ness...

An environment without God.

No KNOWLEDGE of Him, no TRUST in Him, no EXPECTATION of Him.

You have to KNOW Him to TRUST Him and you must TRUST Him to EXPECT of Him. We cannot EXPECT if we do not TRUST, and we cannot TRUST if we do not KNOW... Him.

And without the KNOWLEDGE of God, you are God-less.....

Most acquisition of knowledge is choice. Notice I said knowledge, not information. When information is retained, concretised – that is, added to your current schema, when the information is applied, used, manipulated, viewed, reviewed, turned upside down, shaken, tested, ... it is transformed from information into knowledge.

Information becomes knowledge when it is linked into the current framework of your mind.

Romans 1:20-21

20For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

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

Although they KNEW - The information was there. The ocular senses registered it. But they didn't DO anything about it.

They neither:

- Glorified Him as God
- Gave thanks to Him

They made a choice.

Now some of you may be saying – I have seen the trees, the sun, moon and stars, the rain... lots of rain(!) for the past 45 years, but still have never connected it to God.

My answer to you is... Over time.

Their thinking became futile... they became fools...

When something becomes something else, it does not happen instantly, it goes through a process. “The man became angry” – There were a series of events that led to him changing to an angry state. “He became known as a man of his word.” - This doesn't happen right away, but takes time to develop.

It took time for man to disassociate creation with God.

Now I am not saying you are off the hook – Remember what Paul says in verse 20:

20For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Each person still has the responsibility of taking all that you see, hear, smell, taste and feel – and sorting it into that which has value, and that which doesn't.

Information and Knowledge

When you are God-less, you live God-less. Wickedness.

22Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

They exchanged the glory of the immortal God.....

The glory of God ...

Have you ever reflected on something that your body has done and ever wondered at the complexities of it? (Something simple, like changing focus from something a few inches from your eye, to something several yards away.) God's master creation, his children. Far and above all of his other creations.

2 Corinthians 3:7-18

7Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, 8will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? 9If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! 10For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. 11And if what was fading away came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!

12Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. 13We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away. 14But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. 15Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. 16But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Moses' face glowed so powerfully because of the presence of God in him that he had to cover his face with a veil –

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory...

When the Spirit of God indwells us we become “locked in” with God. As we were meant to be. We are his manifold creation; we are his Glory.

The glory of God is the beauty and excellence of His manifold perfections.¹

The glory of God is the majesty and splendor of the perfections of God's character.²

The glory of God is His intrinsic greatness or weightiness, His manifold majesty, brilliance, depth, awesomeness.³

1 <http://www.soundofgrace.com/piper80/072780m.htm>

2 <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Delphi/8449/cross.html>

3 http://www.bible.org/page.asp?page_id=535

22Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

To exchange is to give up for a substitute, or to turn in for replacement.⁴

Usually, for the person exchanging, the item is something deemed to have equal value to the substitute.

When we EXCHANGE THE GLORY OF THE IMMORTAL GOD for anything else, anything else – ANYTHING... We make a fool of ourselves and of our creator! We are saying, “YOU are not important to me.”

We are the glory of God. In denying your maker, you deny yourself, your background, your identity, your inheritance. In denying your maker, you are no longer as you should be. You are a pirate copy. You are a rip off.

We are His creation. We are His glory. This is about Him – His power, His craftsmanship, His authority.

EXCHANGE IT?? ... what are you thinking!?

This exchange, this replacement, this... idolatry, QUALIFIES God's anger. Let's go back to the beginning.

The wrath of God is being revealed...

It is being revealed...how so?

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

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

28Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.

Did you see it?

⁴ *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition, Copyright © 2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company, <http://dictionary.reference.com/search?q=exchange>*

We have seen that man was (and is) up to! ... So what does God do?

He... GAVE... THEM... OVER...

It didn't say that God destroyed them all with a flash of lightning.

Look quickly at the end of verse 27:

Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

...Men did what?

...and received what?

...and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

The Almighty, like any good father, has set boundaries for His children. Like any strong father, he has also laid out the consequences.

The Father's wrath is most powerful in that it is silent. You won't hear him storming up the stairs to your room, while you wait in terror, reflecting on what you have done wrong.

...revealed against ALL Godlessness and wickedness of men...

Where does this ultimately lead to?

...he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.

A depraved mind. A deadened mind. Like when you burn your tongue on a really hot drink, you cannot sense anything. You are senseless.

29They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, 30slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; 31they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. 32Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL BECAUSE IT IS THE POWER OF GOD FOR THE SALVATION OF EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES.

The power to change you, the power to heal you, the power to restore you.

This salvation is about more than eternal salvation. It's about salvation for now!

But only by the gospel. The story of Jesus. The person of Jesus. The information of Jesus.
The knowledge of Jesus.

The righteous shall live by faith.

The righteous shall have the knowledge of God.

The righteous one says, I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL ... because he knows
where he has come from – AND he knows his God!

*The wrath of God is being revealed against all the godlessness and wickedness of
mankind...*

Count yourselves among the righteous. Know your God. KNOW Him.