

Romans 1:18-32—The Human Race Needs to be Saved From God's wrath

Memory Verse:

Romans 12:1-2 NKJV

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Outline:

1. The wrath of God—what we are saved from (v 18a)
2. The testimony of God's creation—if there is a creation, there must also be a Creator (vs 18-20)
3. The slippery slope of self-deception and self-delusion which leads to self-destruction (vs 21-23)
4. The tragic result of worshipping a substitute God—our sinful nature exposed and judged (vs 24-32)

Introduction:

In Romans 1:16 Paul talks about salvation, but salvation from what. Now we have the answer—the human race needs to be saved from God's wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Romans 1:18-3:20 demonstrates the absolute necessity of the good news of salvation to deliver us from God's righteous wrath against sin.

“Here, Paul puts in the clutch and changes gears as he paints the canvas black in order that the gem of the Gospel might stand out against the dark backdrop of human depravity.” (Jon Courson)

Romans 1:18-32 NKJV

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, ¹⁹ because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, ²¹ because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

²⁴ Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonour their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

²⁶ For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. ²⁷ Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; ²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, ³⁰ backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, ³¹ undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; ³² who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

1. The wrath of God—what we are saved from

Romans 1:18a NKJV

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.

v 18 **Wrath of God:** The Greek word translated **wrath** means: anger, abhorrence, indignation, vengeance, rage, punishing destructive anger, or fierce anger.

v 18 **against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men:** This is what sinful man needs to be saved from (see v 16); God's wrath is against us because we have an inherently sinful nature, and **the wrath of God** will destroy us—*unless there is a substitute, a Saviour Who is willing to be punished and suffer the full force of God's holy righteous anger against sin*. "Unless there is something to be saved from, there is no point in talking about salvation." (Morris) The gospel is the good news of being delivered or saved from God's infinitely holy, righteous, furious, hot, and well deserved wrath directed against our inherent sinfulness.

v 18 **The wrath of God:** The wrath of God can be described as "the holy revulsion of God's being against that which is the contradiction of his holiness" (Murray). In other words, God doesn't just judge sin by an arbitrary standard of right and wrong without being emotionally affected. It's not like me when I'm marking a student's maths test; yes, I'm making a judgement concerning which questions they got right or wrong, but there's no emotional involvement because it's not a moral issue.

With God it's just the opposite. Sin, and therefore sinful man, is morally so utterly disgusting and revolting to God that it/we cannot be in His presence—He cannot tolerate sin/us—God has a severe and negative emotional and physical response to sin—infinite righteous wrath. God and sin are like a fish out of the water or a pig having a shower and applying deodorant—*it's completely opposite to His character and nature*.

What sinful man fails to understand is the **holiness** of God. Many see God's wrath towards man as being way over the top, like God is overreacting to their sin. They say or think things like, "I don't think that what I've done really deserves eternity in the Lake of Fire", I'm not that bad a person. But that is only because they fail to see that God is absolutely pure, perfect, and therefore completely holy.

The word **holy** means: to command respect, awesome, sacred, set apart, singled out, and consecrated for. Here are some Scriptures that help us understand what it means for God to be **holy**. This is important because unless we first understand God's absolute perfection and **holiness**, we will not appreciate just how wicked and rotten our sinful human nature is, and therefore just how completely deserving of God's wrath we are. God's perfect nature and the sinful nature we are born with are literally like day and night, light and dark.

Habakkuk 1:13 NKJV

You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on wickedness.

Psalms 99:1-5 NKJV

The Lord reigns; let the peoples tremble! He dwells between the cherubim; let the earth be moved! ² The Lord is great in Zion, and He is high above all the peoples. ³ Let them praise Your great and awesome name—**He is holy**. ⁴ The King's strength also loves justice; you have established equity; You have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.

⁵ Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at His footstool—**He is holy**.

Isaiah 6:1-5 NKJV

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. ² Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³ And one cried to another and said:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!”

⁴ And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.

⁵ So I said: “Woe is me, for I am undone [destroyed, cut off, cause to cease]! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.”

It's amazing how Isaiah's view of himself changed so much and so quickly when he was given a glimpse of God's perfection and holiness. Consider that Isaiah was most likely a priest, and therefore lived an outwardly godly and pure life compared to the vast majority of people. Despite this, the first thing he realised when He was in the presence of God was that he was a ***sinner or evil by nature, and that sin and therefore the sinner don't belong in the presence of God. It wasn't necessarily what he said or did that was the real issue, but rather who he was—he was inherently evil—“a man of unclean lips”*** (what's in our heart comes out of our mouth).

“I am a man of unclean lips; I cannot say, Holy, holy, holy! which the seraphs exclaim. They are holy; I am not so: they see God and live; I have seen him, and must die, because I am unholy.” (Clarke)

“When Isaiah saw the Lord, he knew what kind of man *he* was. ... This vision (or actual experience) of the throne of God did not immediately make Isaiah feel *good*. The more clearly he saw the Lord, the more clearly he saw how bad his state was. [This is what it will be like for us as we go through chapters 1-3 in Romans]

Isaiah's deep sense of depravity is consistent with the experience of other godly men in the presence of the Lord. Job (Job 42:5–6), Daniel (Daniel 10:15–17), Peter (Luke 5:8) and John (Revelation 1:7) each had similar experiences.” (David Guzik)

The only way a person can really understand their sinful nature is to first understand that God is holy, that He is completely set apart to purity and perfection—in contrast to the sinful nature that we are born with which is completely set apart to evil. Only by seeing and comprehending God's holiness will our pride be dealt with; there is no other way to see our sinful nature for what it really is and therefore have the desire to put the old man or sinful nature to death.

Romans 8:7-8 NLT

For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. ⁸ That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.

Jeremiah 17:9 NKJV

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?

God is so pure and holy that His wrath or righteous indignation against even just one lie is infinitely greater than the whole world's reaction to the 1,400 Jews who were tortured, tied up, burned, raped, and finally butchered or executed on October 7, 2023. Like the physical repulsion we feel when around the rotting carcass of a long dead animal, which makes us want to run away so we don't throw up, so God in His infinite holiness is infinitely more morally repulsed and disgusted by any one sin.

Here is a good way for us to begin to understand just how different our sinful nature is to God. Often when we sin it doesn't even bother us very much; we easily justify ourselves. Romans 7:18 bluntly points out the total depravity of mankind—"And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature". Our sinful nature actually very much enjoys the smell of a rotting carcass, morally speaking. We are tempted to say that, "well I'm a pretty good bloke", but the real test of godliness is how much we hate evil. Our sinful nature loves evil, and if not for our God given conscience, and the conviction of the Holy Spirit, we would all sin with no restraint—our sinful nature is completely corrupted. This is what the next two and a half chapters will show us.

2. The testimony of God's creation—if there is a creation, there must also be a Creator

Romans 1:18-20 NKJV

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, ¹⁹ because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.

v 18 **Ungodliness... unrighteousness:** **Ungodliness** refers to man's sins and offenses against God (the first four of the ten commandments). **Unrighteousness** refers to the sins and offences of man against man (the last six of the 10 commandments).

v 18 **Who suppress the truth in unrighteousness:** This deliberate denial or suppression of the obvious truth of God's existence, His attributes, and His holy character has been going on since the garden of Eden. Today in our schools, universities, and government institutions satan is still working overtime to suppress the truth and promote the lie instead, whether it be in the sciences, literature, history, morality, or religion.

v 19-20 **Because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead [divine nature or deity], so that they are without excuse:**

This is referring to the unchanging witness of God's creation. What does creation tell us about God?

1. God is infinitely powerful (omnipotent). Only an infinitely powerful God could create a universe as big and as complicated as ours, speaking it into existence out of nothing (science tells us that the universe had a beginning, and God is the only rational or logical explanation—it's either God made everything or nothing made everything, which is a scientific impossibility).

2. God is everywhere at once (omnipresent). How many stars do you think there are? *“Astronomers estimate that the universe could contain up to one septillion stars - that's a one followed by 24 zeros (one million, million, million, million). Our Milky Way alone contains more than 100 billion stars.”* (NASA)

Also, how big is the universe? One website said that it is 93 billion light years across, but nobody knows for sure. All they know is that the further they can see, the more there is to see. From a human perspective the universe is infinitely big.

Only if God is everywhere at once could He create all those stars in such a vast area of space in one day, or very likely as long as it took to speak them into existence.

3. God knows everything (omniscient). God knows the name of every one of those septillion stars. Also, to create DNA and all the other complex features of life, our earth, our solar system, our galaxy etc, God must be infinitely intelligent, He must know everything.

Psalm 147:4-5 NKJV

He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name. ⁵ Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite.

Psalm 19:1-3 NKJV

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. ² Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. ³ There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.

Here is the conclusion of one honest scientist, Robert Jastrow, an astrophysicist and director of NASA's Goodard Institute for Space Studies. He wrote:

“Now we see how the astronomical evidence supports the biblical view of the origin of the world. The essential elements in the astronomical and biblical accounts of Genesis are now the same. Consider the enormity of the problem. Science has proved that the universe exploded into being at a certain given moment [it had a beginning]. It asks what cause produced this effect. Who or what put the matter and energy into the universe? And science cannot answer this question. For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of his own reason, the story ends now like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance. He is about to conquer the highest peak. He pulls himself over the final rock, and he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been there for centuries.”

Here's more logical thinking. “Walking with a group of admirals one evening who were discussing whether or not God existed, Napoleon is said to have pointed to the heavens and said, “Sirs, if you're going to get rid of God, you must get rid of those.” Napoleon was right. The heavens declare the glory, the reality, the substance, the weight of God.” (Jon Courson)

3. The slippery slope of self-deception and self-delusion which leads to self-destruction

Romans 1:21-23 NKJV

Because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

v 21 **Because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful:** We either glorify God, or we glorify ourselves. We either seek our praise from God or from man. There are only two options—look to God or look to ourselves. What we see here is that unbelief is a choice. Unbelief both blinds us to reality, and also makes us ungrateful (**nor were thankful**).

v 21-22 **But became futile in their thoughts [their thoughts or reasoning came to nothing], and their foolish [senseless or stupid] hearts were darkened [blinded or unable to understand]. ²² Professing to be wise, they became fools:** This is the obvious description of the atheist. The universe proclaims, “God exists!”, and the atheist responds, “No He doesn’t!” They choose to instead believe *the scientific impossibility that nothing created everything*.

Why go down this road of insensibility? Because if they admit that God exists, then they are also admitting that they are accountable to Him, and therefore must or should submit to Him as their Creator. So we see that unbelief is really the same thing as a refusal to submit to God—it’s pride. The atheist vainly believes that they know better than God, because they want to live their own way, doing what they want to do—they want to be independent of God.

Then there’s the practical atheists, those who either believe in God but live life doing what they want to do. Just like the atheist, they refuse to submit to God and instead follow satan’s motto, “do as you will” or “my will be done”. This is the opposite of Jesus’ example of submission to the Father when He said, “*Not My will, but Yours, be done*” (Luke 22:42 NKJV).

“Will you kindly notice, that, according to my text, *knowledge is of no use if it does not lead to holy practice?* ‘They knew God.’ It was no good to them to know God, for ‘they glorified him not as God.’ So my theological friend over there, who knows so much that he can split hairs over doctrines, it does not matter what you think, or what you know, unless it leads you to glorify God, and to be thankful.” (Spurgeon)

John 5:30 NKJV

I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

v 23 **And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things:** *Suppression leads to substitution.* If a person chooses to reject the true God by suppressing the truth about Him, then they must invent a false god, a substitute god, a god that they are comfortable with, a god in their own image that agrees with them.

The atheist makes themselves god, they worship their own intellect and reason. But there are many others who invent another god; thus all the other religions (e.g. Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, New Age, the occult, animism etc), and also the various christian cults (e.g. Jehovah's witnesses, Mormons etc)

The fact is that we become like the god we worship. This truth is a double edged sword. If I worship Jesus, I will be transformed into His glorious and perfect image, but if I worship any other god, I will become like that other image. We will now see the sad consequences of choosing to not believe and submit to the One True God.

4. The tragic result of worshipping a substitute god—our sinful nature exposed and judged

Romans 1:24-32 NKJV

Therefore **God also gave them up** to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonour their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

²⁶ For this reason **God gave them up** to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. ²⁷ Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, **God gave them over** to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; ²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers [gossipers], ³⁰ backbiters [slanderers], haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, ³¹ undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; ³² who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

v 24, 26, 28 **Therefore God also gave them up... God gave them up... God gave them over:** Often the judgement of God is simply allowing us to do what we want, and allow us to self-destruct as we follow the desires of our sinful nature. It's obvious—sin kills, destroys, deceives, binds, blinds, makes foolish, and causes us to become morally depraved. All this results in immense suffering and pain—which all could be avoided if we had only first submitted to God. We will see three levels or phases of God's righteous judgment of our sin while we are living on this earth.

God punished Israel (Ephraim) in the same way— "*Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone*". (Hosea 4:17) Looking back we can see that the nation of Israel literally self-destructed, they destroyed themselves. God in his righteous wrath says, "If you want to follow your own way, then go down that path, but that path will destroy you—you are creating your own punishment and suffering."

"We make a mistake when we think that it is God's *mercy* or *kindness* that allows man to continue in sin. It is actually His *wrath* that allows us to go on destroying ourselves with sin." (David Guzik)

Phase one of God's judgement—allowing sexual immorality (fornication)

v 24 **To uncleanness [filth, dirt, rubbish, foulness, immorality], in the lusts [desires and cravings] of their hearts, to dishonour [shame] their bodies among themselves:** The first level of punishment is people living an immoral life. Put simply this is the rejection of marriage and God's standards of moral purity and goodness. It's getting worse and worse in these last days. Consider the following:

- more and more primary school aged kids have given themselves away and/or are addicted to pornography.
- it is culturally acceptable for couples to choose not to get legally married
- a massive divorce rate (almost 50%)
- close to 5% of marriages in Australia are same-sex marriages

In 2019, 113,815 marriages were registered and 49,116 divorces were granted in Australia. There were 5,507 same-sex marriages in 2019, accounting for 4.8% of all marriages. Provisional data released for January to June 2020 shows a 31.9% decrease in marriages. (from abs.gov.au)

Fornication (sexual immorality) has become accepted in the world, with people refusing to do things God's way (marriage). Instead they bring judgement on themselves by living together (*Let marriage be held in honour (esteemed worthy, precious, of great price, and especially dear) in all things. And thus let the marriage bed be undefiled (kept undishonored); for God will judge and punish the unchaste [all guilty of sexual vice] and adulterous.* Hebrews 13:4 AMP). They think that they are happy but they are actually experiencing God's wrath as they continually give their bodies away to one or more people that they are not married to in order to satisfy their sexual cravings. Two consequences of this sin are dysfunctional families and many fatherless children.

John 4:16-18 NLT "Go and get your husband," Jesus told her. ¹⁷ "I don't have a husband," the woman replied. Jesus said, "You're right! You don't have a husband—¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and you aren't even married to the man you're living with now. You certainly spoke the truth!"

v 25 **Who exchanged [substituted] the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen:**

Notice that it's **the lie**, referring to a specific lie. The lie is that we substitute ourselves for God. This is called idolatry, where we submit to and worship our own desires and cravings instead of doing what God wants. This is the original lie, "*you will be like God*" (Genesis 3:5).

Phase two of God's judgement—allowing vile passions (homosexuality)

v 26-27 **For this reason God gave them up to vile [disgraceful, dishonourable] passions [lust]. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. ²⁷ Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due:** We come to the second stage of moral depravity. If phase 1 of God's judgement is living together, the rejection and dishonouring of marriage, phase 2 is the redefinition of marriage and sexual relationships to include male-male and female-female sexual relationships.

Notice what God thinks about homosexuality and lesbianism—it's vile, dishonourable, disgusting and shameful. We should also realise that the world we live in now is very similar to what it was in Paul's day. Listen to David Guzik's summary of what it was like then in the Roman empire and see how similar it is to how things are now.

“Paul wrote to a culture where homosexuality was accepted as a part of life for both men and women. For some 200 years, the men who ruled the Roman Empire openly practiced homosexuality often with young boys.

At times the Roman Empire specifically taxed approved homosexual prostitution and gave boy prostitutes a legal holiday. Legal marriage between same gender couples was recognised, and even some of the emperors married other men. At the very time Paul wrote, Nero was emperor. He took a boy named Sporus and had him castrated, then married him (with a full ceremony), brought him to the palace with a great procession, and made the boy his “wife.” Later, Nero lived with another man, and Nero was the “wife.”

In modern culture, homosexual practice reflects the abandonment of giving **them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonour their bodies among themselves**. Statistics tell us that on average 43% of homosexuals say they have had 500 or more sexual partners in their lifetime, and only 1% of homosexuals say they have had four or less sexual partners in their lifetime.

According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, ... only 28% of homosexuals said that they knew their partners for at least a week before participating in homosexual sex.

Homosexuals often seem to specialise in anonymous sex with no emotional commitment. At one time, London AIDS clinics defined a woman as promiscuous if she had more than six partners in her lifetime. They gave up trying to apply a workable definition to male homosexuals when it became clear that they saw almost no homosexual men who had less than six sexual partners a year.”

v 27 **Receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due:** This penalty is obviously partly something that is literally **in themselves**—this includes disease. The number of homosexuals who have died from aids and other sexually transmitted diseases is very high. In some countries the vast majority of the older (sexually active) generation died of STD's, leaving behind a younger orphaned generation. Like the Israelites found out, not restraining ourselves and indulging ourselves to satisfy our cravings will often lead to physical death—*graves of craving*.

Numbers 11:33-34 NKJV

But while the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was aroused against the people, and the Lord struck the people with a very great plague. ³⁴ So he called the name of that place Kibroth Hattaavah [literally *graves of craving*], because there they buried the people who had yielded to craving.

When will we learn that giving into the desires or cravings or lusts of our sinful nature will kill or destroy us. Sin is by nature self-destructive. The consequence may not always be physical. Often the result is spiritual emptiness. Think about the mental health epidemic in the world today—depression, self-harm, suicide, and addictions to mind numbing substances like drugs and alcohol are all becoming more and more common. *People think that they are “free” and will be “happy” because they are getting what they want, but they are suffering greatly for it. They are being judged by God. They are **receiving in themselves the penalty of their error**.*

Phase three of God's judgement—allowing a debased [worthless] mind

We now move from what we do and how we act to how we think. Again, this all happens after people reject God and His truth. As you read this list of things **which are not fitting** that are done by people with a **debased mind**, consider if they accurately describe our modern society.

v 28-32 **And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; ²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers [gossipers], ³⁰ backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, ³¹ undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; ³² who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.**

“As further judgment, God gives man **over to a debased mind**, so that things that are disgraceful and sickening are readily accepted and approved.

The word **debased** originally meant “that which has not stood the test.” It was used of coins that were below standard and therefore rejected [they were counted as worthless].” (David Guzik)

v 32 **Who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them:** This is a difficult pill to swallow. It's not just what I do, but also what I approve of or get pleasure from that is deserving of God's wrath. For example, if I choose to watch a movie where there is any kind of sexual immorality (including people either having sex or living together and not being married), then I am agreeing that fornication (sexual immorality) is good, and am just as guilty as the one who is actually committing the sin—my mind and thinking is **debased [it doesn't meet God's standard, it is worthless and rejected]**.

““Oh, I would never murder anyone. I would never invent an evil thing,” we say. But do we enjoy watching the inventions of evil things and murder in movies? “I would never commit adultery,” we say, “but I love to watch the soaps.” We're guilty! You see, gang, if you are one who enjoys watching murder after murder after decapitation after adulterous affair because you've allowed your carnal appetite to be developed, you are guilty. And death will come to you. I don't mean necessarily you're going to die physically—but watch what will happen to your marriage. Watch how it will cease to be vital and warm. Watch how your kids will grow up and you'll wonder why there's darkness on their faces and posters of despair in their rooms.

“Be ye holy,” the Lord says to us (Leviticus 20:7)—for our choice to live either in holiness or carnality will greatly affect not only us, but also those around us.” (Jon Courson)

As believers we need to actively fight against the tremendous pressure that the world, the flesh, and the devil put on us to suppress the truth and compromise, seeking to please or gratify our sinful nature. We need to put into practice Philippians 4:8-9:

And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honourable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. ⁹ Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you. (NLT)