

The ultimate sin is suppressing God's truth, not honoring or thanking Him.

In **Rom. 1:18-32** we have the results of individuals and societies that have suppressed God's truth, ignored God's existence and power, not giving thanks to Him or honoring Him as God. So "**God gave them over...**" Results? (1) Idolatry, (2) Dishonored bodies, (3) Degraded passions, (4) Depraved minds.

Here are listed specific sins (effects) that characterize the lives of those who are suppressing the God's truth and exchanging His glory for idolatry (**1:18-23**). Here we see God withdraws His restraints and mankind is abandoned to the consequences of his/her rejection of God and His truth. However, judicial abandonment is not the same as eternal rejection or condemnation to hell.

These verses explain why there are (1) idolatrous practices, (2) sexually immoral acts, (3) unnatural sexual practices, and (4) depraved repulsive relationships. In **:18-23**, we have these people who are practicing ungodliness and unrighteousness becoming fools and practicing idolatry. Remember, these are not actions of people *seeking* God, but results of people *rejecting* God! In **:24-25**, we have these people who are suppressing God's truth practicing sexual immorality. Plus, the results listed in **:21-32** show our society they are not worshiping the true God. Something's wrong! Listen up! God is calling all to repentance and belief in the only One who has dealt with sins and sinners and can deliver—His name is Jesus. **Read 1:18-32.**

:26-27 THE THIRD RESULT OF REJECTING GOD AND HIS TRUTH: DEGRADING PASSIONS, SEXUAL PERVERSITY. **:26 For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women (females) exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural** (lit. against nature), **:27 and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman (female) and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent** (lit. the shameless deed) **acts and receiving in their own persons** (lit. themselves) **the due penalty of their error.** The second indication/sign of a God-less, unjust, and idolatrous society is degrading passions. Here we see truth that you won't hear taught in schools, advocated in the media, or proclaimed by our politicians. But, it's *God's Word* on this issue that we need. How desperately we need a trustworthy base of authority, a plumbline, by which to evaluate current opinions, by which to speak the truth in love. We have that truth in Jesus and in the Bible. God says homosexuality is abnormal, not normal! Homosexuality is not a condition; it's a choice and practice.

The first exchange, that of the truth for the lie (**:25**) is followed by another—the upsetting of the normal course of nature in sexual relations. We not only see sexual immorality but even perversion in sexual relations, a complete reversal from God's revealed will and design. God's plan is and always has been one man, one woman, married, permanent, united, intimate. Both Jesus and Paul in the NT restated God's plan (**Gen. 1:28, 2:24, 9:1, Mt. 19:3-9, Eph. 5:22-33**).

Today homosexuals are allowed to believe the lie that this is a biological condition which they can't help. But look what God's Word says: Both men and women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural (against

nature). Homosexuality is clear testimony the Biblical God and His revealed truth have been rejected and people are putting substitutes in His place. By the way, the word homosexual appears in **1 Cor. 6:9 & 1 Tim. 1:10 (READ)**, both revealing non-Christian hearts & practices. Also see **Gal. 5:19-21, Eph. 5:3-5, Jude 7**.

Can a Christian practice it? Yes, if that's his/her flesh pattern. But, it's not 'who' he/she is. It's sin. Under the Old Covenant it was punishable by death. There's no justification for its practice. Yes, it can be forgiven and cleansed just like any other sin, but no unrepentant homosexual is right/just with God.

People rejecting God become controlled by passions that aren't even God-given desires—degrading, dishonorable, disgraceful longings, sexuality out of control. Notice what is natural here—men with a natural function for females. But they abandoned that and literally burned out, an intensive word, an all-out effort. Degrading passions are practices that people choose. It is not natural but a chosen behavior, after rejecting God and suppressing His truth. No one is born a homosexual any more than anyone is born a thief or murderer or a liar or a slanderer or a prideful person. We are born sinners with flesh patterns.

They burn themselves out in their eager appetite for individuals of the same sex. Indecent means disfiguring, deformed, shameful. God in His wrath lets people demonstrate their sin so all can see what's going on in their lives and in society. The due penalty in this case is a crisis of identity, an uncertainty as to one's role and place in life, always having to defend who they think they are. This type of person believes that if he/she can just get society to accept their practices, then they won't feel ostracized or out of place. Yes, it's right to love them, but love them enough to hate their sin and speak God's truth. Their issue is making a 'flesh pattern' their identity. Without God, a person is by nature a sinner who has certain flesh patterns. They usually blame society for their sin. But it is not society that makes a homosexual's life miserable; it is God and a result of the choices they are making concerning His truth! Homosexuals must understand that their sin is a sin like other sins. It's an action, not a condition. When one violates God's natural laws, one must pay the price. Their ultimate sin is rejecting God. So...

The deterioration we see in **:18-27**: from suppressing God's truth to not honoring or thanking God to idolatry to dishonoring sexual sin to degrading sexual passions. What more perfect account is possible of our society's sex-ridden mentality? Pornography, infidelity, divorce, homosexuality, incest, rape, prostitution, sex slaves. These verses in Romans tell us why. Remember, the basic sin is suppressing truth about God, not honoring or thanking Him.

Listen carefully! If a person is told he/she is just that way, it condemns him/her to the enslavement of their flesh and practices. The worst thing we as Christians can do is overlook or encourage or legalize people's flesh patterns and destructive lifestyles. Christians have good news and help for those who struggle with these fleshly patterns. Do we as Christians view these practices as irresolvable issues or an opportunity to share the answer, Jesus as Lord?

We realize some of you may have children or parents or friends who struggle with these flesh patterns. What godly compassion we should have for them.

However, remember what these chosen practices are signs of: Suppressing God and His truth! We have liberating news to share with them! Jesus fully dealt with sinners and all sins! All of them! In Him there is deliverance! Pray!

God's solution is not to legalize the sins of people or change the laws so that sins are acceptable or to give special 'rights' to people who are living in sin. His solution is to come to know Jesus as Lord, to share His Good News—remember, it's the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes!

:28-32 Almost all have family or friends who practice a sexually immoral lifestyle or are living in a gay relationship or are **:28-32**. These are signs/results of one sin. Each person knows truth about God, but, he/she is suppressing it! *God* has good news for them & us! But first, He must get their & our attention.

According to the Bible, each person is made up of spirit, soul, and body. The human spirit/nature/identity/heart is the core of who every person is. You are either a sinner by nature or a saint by nature; there are no other options. The soul is made up of the mind, emotions, and will (thinking, feelings, and choice). The body or flesh is just the various ways we express who we think we are. For the sinner by nature, he/she is making his/her flesh patterns his/her identity!! This is so vital to understand.

Rom. 1:18-32 is addressed to the unbeliever, the person who is a sinner by nature, which results in different fleshly practices: idolatry, sexual immorality, sexual perversity, sins against others. This person needs Jesus as Lord and to learn to walk in the Spirit's strength. God's wrath (which in **Rom. 1:18-32** is letting a person choose his/her own way) is designed to let a person see his/her need for Jesus as Lord and to see his need to follow God's revealed truth. God's wrath is poured out against their Godlessness and injustice/wickedness. This is to show people they can't truly 'live' without Him!

God's wrath is not poured out against the saint. Through Jesus we are saved from the wrath of God (**Rom. 5:9, 1 Th. 5:9**). Yes, the Christian can choose to walk by the flesh, but when we do, we experience the *discipline* of God. This is to bring us to our senses, to remember who He is, who we are in Christ, and to rely on the indwelling Holy Spirit to experience life! The need for both the believer and unbeliever is to repent of the sin and believe in (trust) Jesus.

Romans 1:28-32 draws a picture of the chaos brought in human relations because of suppressing God's truth (which is the ultimate sin)! **:21-32** are the results of suppressing. The 1st sign of a God-less and unjust individual or society is idolatry. The 2nd sign of a God-less, unjust, and idolatrous person/society is dishonored bodies. The 3rd sign is degrading passions. The 4th sign is depraved thinking. All these are 'results' of the ultimate sin of the 'choice' to suppress God's truth He has given everyone.

Read 1:28-32. THE FOURTH RESULT OF REJECTING GOD AND HIS TRUTH: DEPRAVED MINDS, FILLED WITH UNRIGHTEOUSNESS. **:28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper.** The final outcome of rejecting God and His truth is not sexual sin but the sins of the soul, social disintegration,

when people applaud sins—of themselves and others. Just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer (they gave God up), so **He gave them over**.

The words did not see fit mean they put the Biblical God to the test and decided He wasn't worth knowing; they didn't approve of Him because He didn't meet their specs! They made the choice to reject God!! For a third time, God gives them over—to a depraved mind, an 'unfit and not-approved mind', a mind that refuses to fit into any kind of society. God put mankind to the test by giving them over to their sin, proving them to be not worthy or genuine. A depraved mind can't distinguish between Godly right and wrong. Since they don't approve of God, they become susceptible to any and all forms of evil. Even the basic bonds that hold society together are shattered. Depravity of mind is revealed in specific behaviors: "The darkness of unrestrained animal-like impulses." They willingly reject their Creator.

:29-32 :29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, :30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, :31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; :32 and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them. These are marks of individuals and a society nearing collapse—reflected in their disregard for other human beings. Once God is rejected, civilization collapses.

Filled with all unrighteousness, the absence of what is just. Remember **:18**. In their character, humankind is filled with all unrighteousness, sins against each other. These sins come from the heart/spirit. They are spiritual sins. They are the worst because they are spiritual sins, sins in the spiritual realm. As someone well said, "Men's lostness is not determined by the outward circumstances of their lives but by the inner condition of their hearts." **Read Mk. 7:17-23, Jer. 17:9.**

3 groupings: The first grouping: Wickedness is depravity, bad, worthless. Greed is literally a desire (the relentless urge) to acquire more. Evil is a deliberate desire to injure, vicious disposition. Even describes Satan. Full of envy—desires to deprive another of what he has; can't stand it that someone has something that he doesn't. Even goodness in others is resented. Murder—killing, the deliberate taking of another's innocent life. Only government has the God-given authority to take a guilty person's life. Strife means quarrels, contention. Deceit—snare, bait, crafty, devious methods, lies. Crafty cunning. Malice—literally bad manner or character, the evil perspective that tends to put the worst construction on everything, wants to injure another.

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feel small. Boastful—swaggerers, empty pretenders; lit. a wanderer, claiming to do things he can't do so keeps moving on to new listeners.

The third grouping: Inventors of evil—come up with new forms of evil. Shows up in senseless, vicious, and unprovoked attacks upon often helpless people. Child abuse. Rapes. Abortion (can you believe our nation/world has actually legalized it and encourages it!). Disobedient to parents—unwilling to be persuaded, deliberate rejection. Without understanding—senseless, not to understand; they don't learn from experience. They won't use the minds God had originally given them. **:31 Untrustworthy**—don't keep their word, faithless, breakers of agreements. Unloving—without natural affection, human affection, not loving family. Unmerciful—without mercy, no help for the helpless. They don't value or practice mercy. **Rom. 1:29-31** is not an exhaustive list; see **2 Tim. 3:1-7** and **Gal. 5:19-21** for more examples.

These sins are not the result of sudden yielding to temptation but are indulged in deliberately. They aren't due to ignorance but to self-will and rebellion. These are evidences of an individual or society rejecting the Biblical God. The shame of the situation ought to be overwhelming. Repentance and a reaching out for deliverance ought to be people's longing, but such is not the case.

:32 and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them. They know the ordinance of God (people don't lack knowledge of God or His truth: **1:19-20, 2:14-15**) yet what God stands for is everything they are not. These actions are a defiant revolt against the righteous God. Not repenting but celebrating. Not regretting but applauding. Callous to sin, all sensitivity gone.

And they try to spread their practices—through fields of education, dominating media, seeking legal status, parades, politics, demanding 'rights'. Today sinning is not only ceasing to be taboo, it's becoming politically correct. Spirit, body, and soul—the human race has regressed from knowing God's truth to living in depravity. Worthy of death yet they continue!

A society that openly condones and defends such evils has reached the deepest level of corruption. C.S. Lewis: The sins of the flesh are bad but they are the least bad of all sins. All the worst pleasures are purely spiritual. That is why a cold, self-righteous prig, who goes regularly to church, may be far nearer to hell than a prostitute. But of course, it is better to be neither."

If you find yourself or another person who claims to be a Christian practicing these things, you are either not a Christian, OR, you don't know who you are in Jesus, OR, you don't know how to walk, OR you're just plain disobedient.

Idolatry, sexual immorality, unnatural sexual practices, unrighteous practices. Why does God give individuals and civilizations over to these kinds of practices? First, it is right for a holy, just Judge to reveal His wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness. Second, to reveal that mankind has suppressed His truth. Third, to make people realize their need of deliverance. It's only when darkness is encountered that we're able to see the need for Light. Only when the dark background of human rebellion is understood can we

begin to appreciate the mercy and grace of God. God made a Way to break through to people suppressing His truth, practicing idolatry, dishonoring their bodies, performing degrading passions, and operating with depraved minds: His name is Jesus. **Mt. 1:21** says, "**You shall call His name Jesus** [OT Joshua = Yahweh saves], **for He shall save His people from their sins.**" He's the Jewish Messiah, the Lord of all. Our Savior and Lord Jesus is our hope for victory over our sinful natures and these sins of the flesh and heart.

God will not lead those who are His down the path of **Rom. 1:18-32** but down the paths of righteousness. To non-Christians, God is drawing to repentance, belief, and a Father-child relationship with Him, a work that only He can do. As Christians, when we don't follow Him, look at the fellowship with God and His glory we're missing out on, fellowship we were created to enjoy forever! As Jesus-followers, our created purpose is to be a dwelling place for God to display the essence of who He is through us! What worth and value every person has in God's eyes!

God's wrath and the inevitable results get our attention and bring understanding to what is happening in the world today. They show people their need of Jesus. May we Christians have great compassion for those ensnared by the devil, by faith practicing **2 Tim. 2:24-26 (read)**. Let us first respond to Him ourselves, then share His Good News with others. We need to look at our society and say, "What a great time to live! People may not know it, but everyone is crying out in need." Though we have to confront a world that is destroying itself by sin, we do so with a Lord and a message that are life-giving and life-changing. It is the greatest love story! Jesus took care of the sin issues! Understand this! The most wicked person you know, the most wicked sin of which we as individuals and/or as a nation are guilty, the awful hidden things that are ours and no one else knows anything about—all these were dealt with on the Cross by Jesus. The good news is **'the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes' (1:16)**. We need to worship our God and proclaim His truth. "The world will never be reached by a church that looks more like the unsaved than the saved!" How do you need to make these truths practical in your life? Let's use the many opportunities God is giving us. The crucified and raised from the dead Jesus is our message!

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feel small. Boastful—swaggerers, empty pretenders; lit. a wanderer, claiming to do things he can't do so keeps moving on to new listeners.

The third grouping: Inventors of evil—come up with new forms of evil. Shows up in senseless, vicious, and unprovoked attacks upon often helpless people. Child abuse. Rapes. Abortion (can you believe our nation/world has actually legalized it and encourages it!). Disobedient to parents—unwilling to be persuaded, deliberate rejection. Without understanding—senseless, not to understand; they don't learn from experience. They won't use the minds God had originally given them. **:31** Untrustworthy—don't keep their word, faithless, breakers of agreements. Unloving—without natural affection, human affection, not loving family. Unmerciful—without mercy, no help for the helpless. They don't value or practice mercy. **Rom. 1:29-31** is not an exhaustive list; see **2 Tim. 3:1-7** and **Gal. 5:19-21** for more examples.

These sins are not the result of sudden yielding to temptation but are indulged in deliberately. They aren't due to ignorance but to self-will and rebellion. These are evidences of an individual or society rejecting the Biblical God. The shame of the situation ought to be overwhelming. Repentance and a reaching out for deliverance ought to be people's longing, but such is not the case.

:32 and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them. They know the ordinance of God (people don't lack knowledge of God or His truth: **1:19-20, 2:14-15**) yet what God stands for is everything they are not. These actions are a defiant revolt against the righteous God. Not repenting but celebrating. Not regretting but applauding. Callous to sin, all sensitivity gone.

And they try to spread their practices—through fields of education, dominating media, seeking legal status, parades, politics, demanding 'rights'. Today sinning is not only ceasing to be taboo, it's becoming politically correct. Spirit, body, and soul—the human race has regressed from knowing God's truth to living in depravity. Worthy of death yet they continue!

A society that openly condones and defends such evils has reached the deepest level of corruption. C.S. Lewis: The sins of the flesh are bad but they are the least bad of all sins. All the worst pleasures are purely spiritual. That is why a cold, self-righteous prig, who goes regularly to church, may be far nearer to hell than a prostitute. But of course, it is better to be neither."

If you find yourself or another person who claims to be a Christian practicing these things, you are either not a Christian, OR, you don't know who you are in Jesus, OR, you don't know how to walk, OR you're just plain disobedient.

Idolatry, sexual immorality, unnatural sexual practices, unrighteous practices. Why does God give individuals and civilizations over to these kinds of practices? First, it is right for a holy, just Judge to reveal His wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness. Second, to reveal that mankind has suppressed His truth. Third, to make people realize their need of deliverance. It's only when darkness is encountered that we're able to see the need for Light. Only when the dark background of human rebellion is understood can we

begin to appreciate the mercy and grace of God. God made a Way to break through to people suppressing His truth, practicing idolatry, dishonoring their bodies, performing degrading passions, and operating with depraved minds: His name is Jesus. **Mt. 1:21** says, "**You shall call His name Jesus** [OT Joshua = Yahweh saves], **for He shall save His people from their sins.**" He's the Jewish Messiah, the Lord of all. Our Savior and Lord Jesus is our hope for victory over our sinful natures and these sins of the flesh and heart.

God will not lead those who are His down the path of **Rom. 1:18-32** but down the paths of righteousness. To non-Christians, God is drawing to repentance, belief, and a Father-child relationship with Him, a work that only He can do. As Christians, when we don't follow Him, look at the fellowship with God and His glory we're missing out on, fellowship we were created to enjoy forever! As Jesus-followers, our created purpose is to be a dwelling place for God to display the essence of who He is through us! What worth and value every person has in God's eyes!

God's wrath and the inevitable results get our attention and bring understanding to what is happening in the world today. They show people their need of Jesus. May we Christians have great compassion for those ensnared by the devil, by faith practicing **2 Tim. 2:24-26 (read)**. Let us first respond to Him ourselves, then share His Good News with others. We need to look at our society and say, "What a great time to live! People may not know it, but everyone is crying out in need." Though we have to confront a world that is destroying itself by sin, we do so with a Lord and a message that are life-giving and life-changing. It is the greatest love story! Jesus took care of the sin issues! Understand this! The most wicked person you know, the most wicked sin of which we as individuals and/or as a nation are guilty, the awful hidden things that are ours and no one else knows anything about—all these were dealt with on the Cross by Jesus. The good news is '**the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes**' (1:16). We need to worship our God and proclaim His truth. "The world will never be reached by a church that looks more like the unsaved than the saved!" How do you need to make these truths practical in your life? Let's use the many opportunities God is giving us. The crucified and raised from the dead Jesus is our message!

Swindoll notes:

Tough love is tough on everybody. Good parents don't enjoy disciplining. However, if we genuinely love someone, we can't remain passive while sin destroys the sinner and everyone affected by his/her evil deeds.

:24-25 Giving over describes an active, not passive neglect. It is accomplish a specific purpose.

:24 God gave them over to impurity, akatharsia is used by Paul instances of sexual immorality and ritual impurity. God's purpose for turning people over to their impurity is redemptive.

Worshipping the creature rather than the Creator. Amazing!

:26-27 God gave them over to degrading passions. Paul wrote this letter from Corinth, with the temple of Aphrodite, the goddess of love, beauty, and sexual pleasure. They turned a blind eye to adultery and openly condoned homosexuality. Their passion is degrading or dishonoring. God created the human body with the capacity to enjoy intense sexual pleasure within the context of a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman.

:28 Depraved mind, adokimos means worthless as proven by testing. Dokimazo means to prove worthy or genuine by observing or testing. Humanity put God to the test, judged Him, and decided against acknowledging Him. God put humankind to the test by giving them over to their lust, proving them to be adokimos, not worthy or genuine. When shielded from the consequences of their choices, humanity proved to be the very opposite of God.

:29 In their character, humankind is filled with all unrighteousness, etc.. By their deeds they have proven to be gossips, etc.

They rejected Him as Creator, rejected His character as the standard of good, rejected His authority to determine right from wrong, and rejected His judicial right to hold them accountable.

Depraved doesn't mean as bad as they can possibly be; it means as bad OFF as they can possibly be. Their deeds reveal their utter moral bankruptcy. They willingly ignored their creator, their knowledge of right and wrong, and the penalty for sin, even to the point of praising the wrongdoing of others. This indictment of creation applies to all. Humankind is judicially separated from God, helpless estranged, and willfully ignorant of the peril they face.

Judicial abandonment is not the same as eternal rejection or condemnation to hell.

The relentless redeeming love of His Father in the parable of the lost sheep. (Mt. 18:12).

1st, we must bring an offense to the other person's attention (Mt. 18:15). 2nd, if the person denies the truth or refuses to accept responsibility, enlist support (Mt. 18:16). 3rd, if other are unable to help, appeal to the authority of church leaders (Mt. 18:17). Obviously this is only appropriate if the offending person is a believer. Finally, if the person stubbornly refuse to repent, we must hand him/her over to sin (Mt. 18:17). Paul tells us that God did the same with humanity so that we would grow sick of our sin and return to Him. 1 Cor. 5:13. The goal is repentance followed by restoration (Gal. 6:1-2). If someone stubbornly refuses to repent of sin, we may discover that person is not a believer. Not a Christian, or, don't know who they are. Or, don't know how to walk. Or just plain disobedient.

MacArthur notes:

:24 Although God revealed Himself to man :19-20, man rejected God :21, and then rationalized his rejected :22, and created substitute gods of his own making :23.

In an indirect sense God gave them over simply by withdrawing His restraining and protective hand, allowing the consequences of sin to take their inevitable, destructive course.

The divine abandonment of men is not here an eternal abandonment.

Men's lostness is not determined by the outward circumstances of their lives but by the inner condition of their hearts. Mk. 13, "the heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick (Jer. 17:9).

Lusts can refer to any desire. James 1:14. Eph. 2:3.

Akatharsia was a general term for uncleanness and was often used of decaying matter. 2 Cor. 12:21, Gal. 5:19-23, Eph. 5:3, 1 Th. 4:7.

To satisfy their bodies through shameful indulgence in sexual and other sins, their bodies, along with their souls, are instead dishonored.

1 Cor. 6:13,18, sexual immorality not only is sin against the Lord but is sin against one's own body.

1:24 This is a judicial term in Greek, used for handing over a prisoner to his sentence.

He accomplishes this (1) indirectly and immediately by removing His restraint and allowing their sin to run its inevitable course, and *2) directly and eventually, by specific acts of divine judgment and punishment.

Decaying matter, like the contents of a grace. It speaks here of sexual immorality (2 Cor. 12:21, Gal. 5:19-23, Eph. 5:3, 1 Th. 4:7), which begins in the heart and moves to the shame of the bod.

:25 A denial of God's existence and His right to be obeyed and glorified.

:26 He abandoned them not only to idolatry, the ultimate sexual expression of man's spiritual degeneracy, but also to degrading passions, which he identifies in these 2 verses as homosexuality the ultimate expression of man's moral degeneracy.

Paul doesn't use gunee, the usual term for women, but rather theelea, which simply means female. In most cultures women have been more reluctant than men to become involved either in sexual promiscuity or homosexuality. Hodge: They are always the last to be affected in the decay of morals."

Chreesis function was commonly used of sexual intercourse. Homosexuality is abnormal and unnatural. It is also an abnormality that is unique to man.

Instead of trying to help their children become free of sexual deviation, many parents of homosexuals have banded together to defend their children and to coerce society, government, and churches to recognize and accept homosexuality as normal.

Under the Old Covenant it was punishable by death. Although homosexuality can be forgiven and cleansed just as any other sin, no unrepentant homosexual will enter heaven. 1 Cor. 6:9-11, Gal. 5:19-21, Eph. 5:3-5, 1 Tim. 1:9-10, Jude 7.

All people are born in sin, and individuals have varying tendencies and temptations toward certain sins. But no one is born a homosexual, any more than anyone is born a thief or a murderer.

They would be judged by the self-destructiveness of their sin.

:26 Identified in :2-27 as homosexuality, a sin roundly condemned in Scripture (Gen. 19; Lev. 18:22, 1 Cor. 6:9-11, Gal. 5:19-21, Eph. 5:3-5, 1 Tim. 1:9-10, Jude 7).

A general word for female.

In most cultures women are the last to be affected by moral collapse.

:27 The law of sowing and reaping (Gal. 6:7-8). The self-destructive nature of this sin, of which AIDS is one frightening evidence.

:28 The godless mind is a depraved mind. Adokimos depaved is that of not standing the test, commonly used of metals that were rejected by refiners because of impurities. Came to include the ideas of worthlessness and uselessness.

:28 Unfit—not passing the test. Used to describe useless, worthless metals, discarded because they contained too much impurity.

:29 It is not an exhaustive list; it is representative of the virtually endless number of vices with which the natural man is filled. See 2 Tim. 3:1f, Gal. 5:19-21.

:31 Untrustworthy means literally to break a covenant. Unloving relates especially to unnatural family relationships, such as that of a parent who abandons a young child or a grown child who abandons his aging parent.

:32 People do not recognize God because they don't want to recognize Him.

Instinctively aware of His existence and of His basic standards of righteousness. 2:15.

To justify one's own sin is wicked enough, but to approve and encourage others to sin is immeasurably worse. A society that openly condones and defends such evils as sexual promiscuity, homosexuality, and the rest has reached the deepest level of corruption.

:32 Not ignorance, but blatant rebellion.

Stedman notes:

In :24-32 the apostle traces the effects of this godlessness in human society, the wickedness which inevitably follows. The first mark of wickedness which inevitably follows is in :24.

The first mark is widespread sexual immorality. Therefore :24, this immorality is a result of the idolatry into which men fall. Sexual immorality becomes widely accepted and practiced. He allows us to experience the effects of our attempts to satisfy our hungers and our cravings and our desire without Him. God forces us to harvest the crop we insist on sowing. You are going to have to live with the result. This is what Paul calls the wrath of God among us. Many Christians have wrongly concluded that sexual sins are the worst kinds of sin. But that is not true. C.S. Lewis: “The sins of the flesh are bad, but they are the least bad of all sins. All the worst pleasures are purely spiritual. That is why a cold, self-righteous prig, who goes regularly to church, may be far nearer to hell than a prostitute. But of course, it better to be neither.”

It begins with sexual impurity and proceeds to sexual perversity. But the final result are sins of the spirit.

Why God allows practices to become public; He allows it to show us what is going on in our spiritual lives. Only God can satisfy that deep sense of longing for complete identity and unity with another person. That is what we call worship.

People indulging in these things will finally find themselves just as dissatisfied, empty and hopeless as they were when they started. Sex is not the way by which people find fulfillment. This is true even in marriage. People only find their fulfillment in a relationship to God.

:25-27 Homosexuality is the second mark of a godless and wicked society. In the first step of this process, bodies were dishonored. In this 2nd step, Paul speaks of shameful lusts arising from inside, desires that are part of the soul of man. God allows them to exchange natural functions for unnatural functions—to use a man for a woman, and a woman for a man. In the 1st century, homosexuality was a commonplace thing. The great philosophers like Socrates extolled it and practiced it. Stedman: Out of the 1st 15 Roman emperors, 14 of them were homosexuals.

Today homosexuals are allowed to believe the lie that this is a biological condition which they can't help. “Don't believe the lie so widely circulated today, that this is a biological condition and they can't help themselves. This lie: as long as homosexuals believe that, there is no help for them. But if they understand that homosexuality is a sin, like other sins, that it can be forgiven and they can be delivered, there is tremendous hope. The “due penalty” is a loss of their sense of identity, an uncertainty as to their identity and place in life.

:28-31 This is a terrible list of sins, but it is the mark of a civilization that is nearing collapse. This disregards others and describes a desire to exploit other people. Depraved lit. means an unacceptable mind, a mind that can't be lived with, that simply will not fit. The rise in child abuse is a symptom of this in our society.

:32 Knowing that harm is coming from their wickedness, nevertheless they attempt to spread it more fully. They invade the field of education; they dominate the media; they seek legal status for their wickedness and defy all attempts to control.

Yet God does not turn His back on mankind. God's concern underscores this whole passage. He is at work to try to bring men to their senses, and to show it how desperately it is in need of deliverance.

God hands mankind over to this because it is only when darkness prevails, and despair and violence are widespread, that men are ready to welcome the light. Is. 9:2 read. In the 1st century, hopelessness and rank despair lay like a heavy blanket upon the earth. Yet fear not; for beyond I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord (Lk. 2:10-11).

Everywhere we need to make this message as clear as we possibly can—by our testimony, by the way we live, by the joy and peace of our heart. This is the good news of the Gospel. In this decaying world in which we live we can see again the glory of this truth as it delivers

people from their sins (Mt. 1:21).

We know 3 things: 1st, we know you have not forsaken this world. 2nd, we know the message of truth and light is still as available as ever. And 3rd, we know that love is behind it all.