

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Turn your bibles with me to the Book of Romans 1

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through this very theologically deep letter that Paul wrote to the believers in Rome.

Over the last three Sundays as we have looked at the first 17 verses of this letter –

We have looked at Paul's greeting to the believers in Rome – he revealed to them who he is – that he is a servant who has been set apart by God – to share the Good News to them.

We have also looked at Paul's motivation for writing this letter.

How the gospel reveals the righteousness of God.

And this righteousness is based on faith – not by works

and it is made available – not only to Jews but to the entire world.

And so – the Good News is -

How God can make sinners, saints, and still satisfy His holiness and justice.

And last week – we looked at verse 16,17 – where Paul pretty much summarizes the gospel for the believers in Rome and for us.

Ending with the theme for the book of Romans – quoting from Habbakuk -

The just shall live by faith.

Now – Paul is going to turn his attention to describe man’s need for the gospel.

And He is going to begin by talking about God’s wrath.

Church – this is one of those areas of scripture that is not taught from the pulpit in many churches on Sunday morning.

The text this morning is not going to tickle our ears.

In fact, it is not going to be pretty.

And the reason is because nobody wants to talk about why righteousness is needed or the problem of sin.

And the problem with this is that if we don’t acknowledge that there is a problem in the first place – then, we are never going to seek God’s solution to the problem.

And that is what the gospel is all about.

Let’s pray...

Read Text –

The gospel is the Good News

To be honest, MOST people don't see the message of Jesus Christ as GOOD news, they consider it a bother, they consider it an annoyance.

It's only GOOD news when a person's experienced the conviction of the Holy Spirit and seen their sin for what it is.

Only then will the promise of forgiveness and new life appear as the wonderful thing it is.

Without the conviction of the Holy Spirit, the Gospel just comes off sounding like little more than a sales pitch for an irrelevant religion.

To many, the Gospel is an insult because it says man is fallen, broken, corrupt, & bent toward evil.

Those individuals think man is good.

Paul understood this.

So he begins by showing that not only is God a God of love & righteousness as he says in v. 17, He's also a God of wrath.

**[Rom 1:18-25 NKJV] 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,**

The wrath of God – many people don't like to talk about the wrath of God.

Many reject it –

Many people today who call themselves theologians, they have made themselves God's image consultants and have taken it upon themselves to change His attributes by stripping Him of any anger or wrath.

They've turned Him into a kindly grandfather who does little more than rock away the years on the front porch of heaven, telling stories to anyone who drops by.

They will quote 1 John 4:8 – God is love

And they will take the word is and use it as an equal sign.

So if God is love – then love is God

But 1 John 4:8 is not a math formula

God is not equal to love

There is so much more to God than just love

God is also righteous, just, holy and perfect in all His attributes

BECAUSE God is righteous, He opposes sin.

Because He's holy, He resists evil.

Because He's just, He rewards right & judges wrong

**[Psa 45:7 NKJV] 7a You love righteousness and hate wickedness;**

God loves people.

It's precisely BECAUSE He loves them that He hates what harms them.

Evil harms, sin destroys.

That's why God hates it!

This past Wednesday in our study in 1 Kings 11 – we looked at how bad Solomon ended as he began to worship false gods.

And the scriptures tell us that God became angry with Solomon.

He was angry at what sin and evil had done – as Solomon went from worshipping the One True Living God to worshipping a bunch of dead pagan gods.

God loves people, so He hates the sin & and the evil that tears them apart & drags them to eternal ruin.

It was God's love that moved Him to enter into the human race & take on Himself sin & death so man could be free.

It was God's love that provided us with the message of forgiveness through the Gospel of Jesus Christ

But His RIGHTEOUSNESS restrains Him from forcing His will on people.

He gives us free will and He will not take our free will away – therefore, He will honor the choice that we make.

Because God is holy & just, His wrath abides on sin.

Those who hold on to sin are under God's wrath because they've CHOSEN to be there.

Paul is going to tell us that those who reject the gospel of grace – those under the wrath of God – they are not helpless victims – they are willing rebels.

And the reason is because God has revealed Himself from the very beginning of human existence.

Therefore, we are without excuse concerning the character of God

And if we reject the revelation of God, then we are going to reject the message of God

And if we reject the revelation of God and the message of God – then we are going to reject the truth.

The truth about who God is and the truth about who we are.

Turn to John 3

**[Jhn 3:16-19 NKJV] 16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have**

**everlasting life. 17 "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.**

Pause right here –

Very comforting words – this is how much God loves us.

But Jesus does not stop there –

This is what people leave out.

**18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.**

And if you go further down in John 3 –

**[Jhn 3:36 NKJV] 36 "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."**

So the gospel reveals God's righteousness but it also reveals God's wrath – for those who reject the truth.

If God is not angry at sin, if He's not going to judge it, what need is there of salvation?

You see, many reject the gospel today because they have little awareness of the justice of God.

They see no need of a Savior because they think God has only one attribute—Love.

Let's talk about the word wrath –

Because this is the attribute that people have a hard time with.

Growing up with two younger brothers – we always used to get in trouble in the summer – and we had this habit when my parents were at work of breaking almost every window in our home – at least once.

And every time we broke a window – we knew that when my dad got home from work, we would have to deal with his wrath – his uncontrolled anger.

But that is not God's wrath

God is not waiting for us to stumble and then lose His temper

The wrath of God is God's firm, settled and perfect hostility toward all evil.

Again, the wrath of God is God's firm, settled and perfect hostility toward all evil.

Translation – God is never neutral toward evil.

And that's why Paul says here that this wrath of God is revealed –

He uses the present tense.



The wrath of God is being revealed right now from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,

Why is it being revealed?

Because they suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

They don't want the truth to be revealed.

We see it all the time on TV, on the news, as we read articles on the internet – even through our daily interactions with people.

It is the people who say that the bible is not true

And the revelation about God is not true

And the issue of sin isn't true

Therefore salvation is not true.

**19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown [it] to them.**

Simply put – what Paul is saying here is that God put His stamp in us and God put His workmanship around us.

So we can look inward – we all have a conscience – and in the conscience, there is the testimony of God.

And when we look around at the earth – at the stars – there is also the testimony of God.

But there are individuals that hold that down – they suppress it.

They know the truth – but they are holding it down – they don't want it to be revealed –

And the reason that they don't want it to be revealed is - in order to live unrighteous lives.

I have a family member – reached out to him – been over 20 years ago since I had talked to them, I began to share the gospel with him and he responded, "I can't believe that"

What part can't you believe?

All of it – I can't believe that

Is that you can't believe it or you won't believe it?

You see – it is not a matter of ability, it is a matter of will.

Many people don't believe not because they can't believe but because they will not believe.

They don't want to believe.

They suppress the knowledge of God

Why?

Because with the knowledge of God comes the understanding of the character of God

And with the knowledge of God and the character of God and the revelation of Jesus

Christ comes an understanding that there is an all powerful God who did create the

heavens and the earth and demonstrated His love for you and me.

But if an individual chooses to suppress the knowledge of God

And if the individual chooses to not believe what the bible says about Jesus

Then the same individual does not have to believe what the bible says about sin.

**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,**

Paul says that though God is invisible, His existence and power are made visible through what He's made – creation.

All human beings are exposed to the witness of creation

In other words, even people who have never had the gospel preached to them, have had the knowledge of God revealed to them—through the creation!

Turn to Psalm 14

**[Psa 14:1 NKJV] 1 To the Chief Musician. [A Psalm] of David. The fool has said in his heart, “[There is] no God.” They are corrupt, They have done abominable works, There is none who does good.**

Notice - He says this in his heart, not head.

Ultimately, it's not that the atheist can't believe; it is that that he won't believe.

**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.**

What are the consequences when someone willfully, knowingly deny the power of God and then that same person willfully and knowingly deny the person of God and then dismiss the revelation of God

That person is left with only one other option

Their opinion

Have you ever shared the gospel – and someone responded, “That is not what I think”

What are they responding with? Their opinion

But the revelation of God says this – “That’s not what I think”

So in effect what they are doing is elevating their opinion above the identity and the revelation of God.

They take the idea of God and they alter it, removing those aspects of His character they don't like – like His wrath, His holiness, His righteousness, His justice  
And replacing them with attributes that allow them to give lip-service to God but without having to change.

They make an idol, a deity of their own making.

**[Psa 115:8 NKJV] 8 Those who make them (false idols) are like them; [So is] everyone who trusts in them.**

We become like the god we worship,

And because they chose to worship dead idols, they begin a long slow ride into spiritual darkness.

**22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,**

Those who deny God think they are so smart BECAUSE of their unbelief.

In fact, they're fools because they reject the basis of all wisdom – the knowledge & fear of God.

Remember why the smart people who don't believe in God – it isn't based on their intelligence.

It is based on a darkened heart that wants to continue in sin.

**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.**

Man was created to worship God.

But what happens to those who reject the truth of God's character and God's attributes?

They don't get rid of God – all they simply do is they substitute God with an idol to worship.

Remember, the bible is very clear – if we have the wrong of God – we are an idolater.

A.W. Tozer – the Knowledge of the Holy

“What comes into our mind when we think about God is the most important thing about us.”

**24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor 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.**

At the beginning of the study this morning – Paul talked about how the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.

Here in verse 24 – Paul talks about how God's wrath is made known.

And how God's wrath is made known may come as a surprise to some of us.

I had you make note of the phrase – God also gave them up

This is a phrase that Paul is going to use three times at the end of chapter 1

Here in verse 24, later on in verse 26 and then in verse 28

In other words, God wrath is made known by allowing the individual who has suppressed the truth to do exactly what they want.

When a person constantly resists the Spirit of God, they run the risk of coming to the place where God says,

“Okay. You don't want Me to pursue you in love? Have your way.”

He lets them go to pursue the evil their hearts long for.

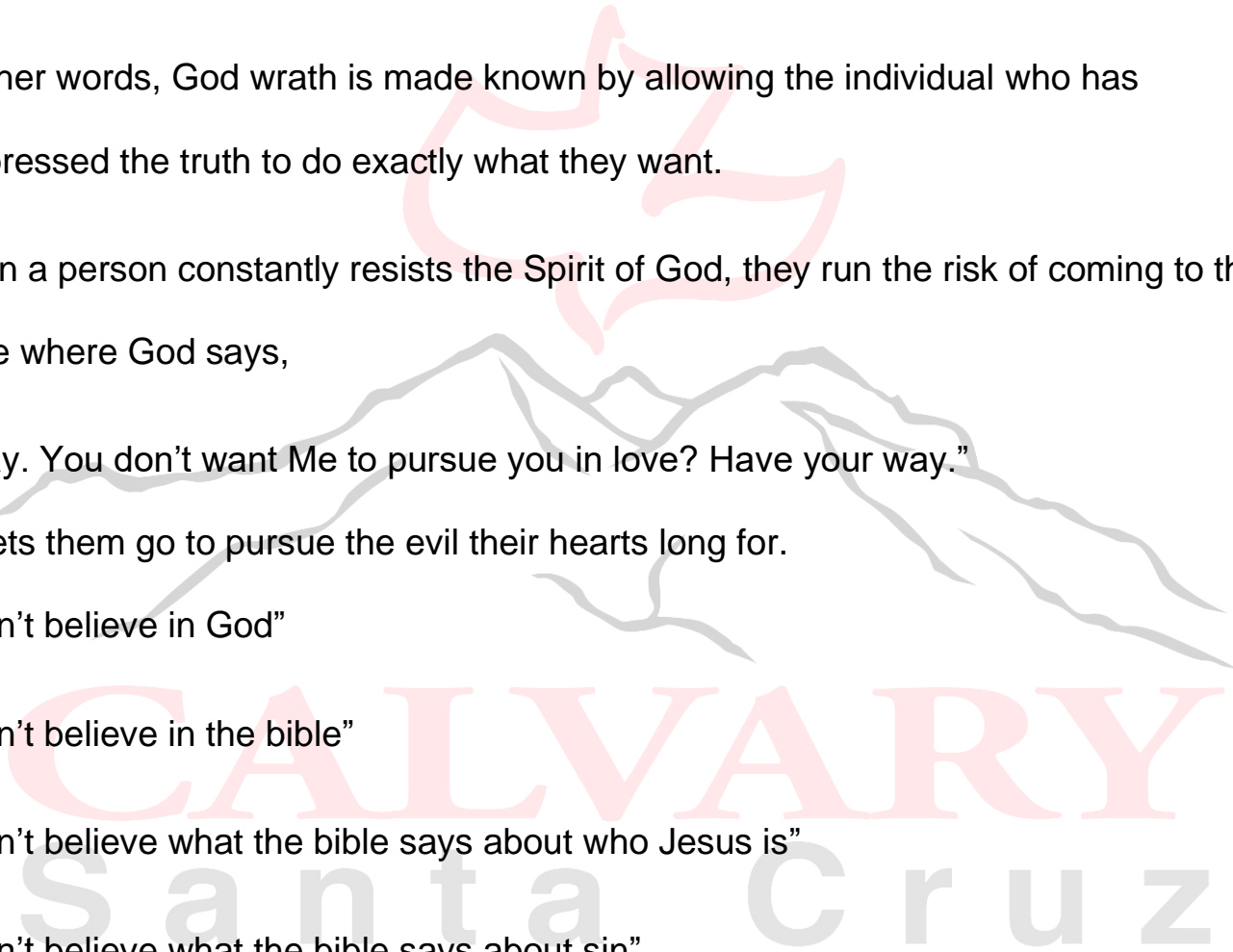
”I don't believe in God”

“I don't believe in the bible”

“I don't believe what the bible says about who Jesus is”

“I don't believe what the bible says about sin”

“I don't believe what the bible says about sex”



And because I don't believe in God and don't believe what the bible says about who Jesus is and I don't believe what the bible says about sin – I am going to do whatever I want – and then they do.

The bible's message is – give up sin (repentance) or give up hope

The unbeliever says – I am not willing to give up my sin so I am going to give up hope.

But the truth is, if we will believe the message of God and the revelation of God and the truth about God and the truth about the gospel of God

Then we get to believe that our sin can be completely forgiven

And we can be righteous in the eyes of God because we are covered in His righteousness – not our own.

And therefore we can hope –

Apart from God and Jesus Christ – no

Because that is the message.

It is the truth about God

It is the truth about His character

It is the truth about who we are in Christ

It is the truth about sin



It is the truth about salvation

So – I pray that we might walk out here this morning with a greater understanding as to why God is so angry with sin

Because it takes us away from what we need the most – a right relationship with Him

Amen

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,



SANTA CRUZ  
SANTA CRUZ

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

As a believer, one of the things we should never ever ever underestimate is the goodness of God, the grace of God, the mercy of God, the love of God – and after our study this morning - we shouldn't underestimate God's hatred of sin or His anger toward sin.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'