

Trampled Truth!

I. Intro: Slide#1

- A. Ps.8:1,3 O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens...When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, What is **man** that You are mindful of him? (Prayer)
- B. You & I like to think **sin** is only the *really really bad stuff*...but God sees it as anything that violates Gods Law, His standard for perfect living.
1. So not just our *really really bad actions*, but also thoughts & motives.
 2. **Sin** is a **congenital condition** of the soul that permeates our whole life.¹
 3. We also try to limit sin's definition to those things that *hurt other people*.
 - a) **No actually**, sin is any offense *to our holy God*, even if no one knows about it or no one else is hurt by it.
 4. So, Brian why do we have to talk about sin, wrath, perversion, etc?
 - a) Well, I think Paul's mindset here is...before you can thoroughly examine the **Good News** of Jesus, you really need to know your **need** for him.
 - b) Paul takes the time to paint a clear picture of the *universal depravity of humanity*.
 - c) **Universal?** Yep...
 - (1) He condemns **the Gentiles** (1:18-32); **the Jews** (2:1-3:8); **all people**(3:9-20).
 - (a) **The Gentiles** (idolatry & sexual perversion); **The Jews** (holier than though attitude; Law);
All people (We all stand equally condemned before God).
- C. Last week we left off w/Paul's main theme, *the Righteousness of God is revealed from* (17) & now presents it against the dark background of *the Wrath of God is reveal from* (18)!
1. **Slide#2 Bertrand Russell**(The Free thinker) wrote in His 1927 essay *Why I am not a Christian* "There is one very serious defect to my mind in Christ's moral character, & that is that He believes in hell. I do not myself feel that any person who is really profoundly humane can believe in everlasting punishment. Christ certainly as depicted in the gospels did believe in everlasting punishment, & one does find repeatedly a vindictive fury against those people who would not listen to His preaching...You do not, for instance, find that attitude in Socrates. You will find him quite bland & urbane toward the people who would not listen to him, & it is, to my mind, far more worthy of a sage to take that line than to take the line of indignation."²
 2. The idea of **God's wrath** is offensive to modern man's sensibilities!
- D. **Outline:** Truth Suppressed; Truth Substituted; Truth Soiled.

¹ Charles Swindoll, Coming to Terms with Sin, pg.16

² Kent Hughes, Romans, pg.32

II. Slide#3 TRUTH SUPPRESSED! (18-20) [suppressed = to hold down]

- A. (18) This *isn't* talking about the day when God will pour out His full strength of his wrath on sinful humanity!
1. Here both His **Righteousness** & His **Wrath** are being revealed *at ALL times*.
They are parallel & continuous!
 - a) His **Righteousness** – is revealed every time the gospel is shared.
 - b) His **Wrath** – is revealed when God abandons man to the consequences of his sinful choices.
- B. **Wrath** – Anger *isn't* something God *chooses to feel*. It is not excessively emotional nor surging out of control.
1. His **disapproval of sin** is not arbitrary; for His very nature is one of holiness; it automatically rejects sin!
 2. He is...**allergic to sin**, as it were!
 - a) It is like what your nostrils(& whole head) does when it experiences a **foul odor**. (Green Beans)
 - b) It is like being in a small room w/a **skunk**...there's no getting used to it.
- C. **Ungodliness** – Impiety towards God. - **Unrighteousness** – Injustice towards men.
- D. 1:19-3:20 now gives commentary on vs.18!
- E. (19,20) GOD'S REVELATION THROUGH NATURE!
1. What about the Pigmy's in Papua New Guinea?
 2. The pagan world had/has an opportunity to know God through His **Revelation in nature**. [The Gospel isn't spelled out in it; but we can see His power, wisdom, & order]
 3. Slide#4-6 We call this **General Revelation** (via Nature & Invisible attribute)
Then there's **Specific Revelation** (via Jesus & His Word)
 - a) **Special revelation** shows God as Redeemer; **General revelation** shows God as Creator!
Special revelation is the norm for the church; **General revelation** is the norm for society!
Special revelation is the means for salvation; **General revelation** is the means of condemnation!
 - (1) **General Revelation** helps us to know about God;
Specific Revelation, to know God!
 4. This **General Revelation** then placed man under the responsibility of acknowledging Him & rendering thanks to Him.
 5. So, what do we have here? [1] God reveals Himself to mankind [2] Nature is the medium of His revelation [3] This does not guarantee a positive response [4] This revealing of Himself established the minimal ground of every person's responsibility before him. [5] Thus, all people are w/o excuse for their rebellion against Him.

6. Jan David Hettinga said, “It is not that we don’t know about God. The evidence of His existence is everywhere in this wonderful biosphere we call home. The billboards of creation splash the advertisements of intelligent design all around us.”

7. Mark Ritter said, *Scientist are stuck with a Creation Event!*

a) The idea that the universe had a beginning was introduced by **Edwin Hubble** and **Albert Einstein** when they both (Hubble by observation, Einstein by theory) came to the conclusion that the universe is expanding. Thus, if you run the clock back, it had a beginning. Thus, there was a Beginner. This idea was absolutely repulsive to most mainstream nontheistic scientists, and they searched desperately for any other past to the universe which could exclude God. None has arisen. We are stuck with a Creation Event and scientists are stuck with the logical conclusion that we have a Creator.

F. Look at God’s creation from Macro to Micro! – “Powers of Ten” [Video moves fast]

1. We are going to View **the Milky Way** at 10 million light years from the Earth. Then, into the microscopic world of a **leaf**. Plunging all the way into the subatomic universe of electrons and protons. Slide#7

a) <http://micro.magnet.fsu.edu/primer/java/scienceopticsu/powersof10/>

2. Slide#8 So pick our **solar system**; or our **biosphere, atmosphere, hydrosphere**, or our **Lithosphere**; down to our little **ecosystems**...When God made this place, he didn’t where gloves!!!...His **fingerprints** are all over this place!!!

a) Ps.19:1,2 **The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.**

3. Kepler, founder of modern astronomy said, “The undevout astronomer is mad”.

G. Without excuse - So basically God says, **They know. I know they know, & they know they know.**³

1. Bertrand Russell who dismisses “*The argument from Design*” in 3 paragraphs...is without excuse!!!⁴

III. Slide#9 **TRUTH SUBSTITUTED! (21-27)**

A. (21) Men know God from **creation & conscience** but refuse to honor Him as God.

1. 2 ways for individuals to respond:

a) **No. Rejection.** That’s rebellion. Result the **Wrath of God**.

b) **Yes. Accepting.** That’s faith. It is the response of trust & commitment. Result, **Rt. of God**

2. Serious problems surface when **secular education** removes the hand of God. It attempts to understand the whole world w/o acknowledging its **source**.

a) The consequences...**Columbine** type situations. Or,

³ Pastor Jan David Hettinga, Follow Me, pg.81

⁴ Kent Hughes, pg.33

(1) How is it we find dismembered remains of a man's hands & feet, & his head stuck in a plastic bag near the Hollywood sign? Or, the a 23 yr old women last Sunday that shot her 2 toddlers & a cousin & her husband, then turned gun on herself up in Fresno(Meth). Tuesday a mother in Bakersfield stabbed her newborn in a rage. In Oklahoma a women drowned her baby in a washing machine in November. Or, last month when a new Mexico woman claiming to be God stabbed her son w/a screwdriver.

b) Brian isn't that a leap? – Well, if there is **no God**. W/o Him there is **no accountability**. **No absolutes. No morals. No ethics. No ultimate purpose in life.** And, **No limits!**
Result – Do what feels good to you!

(1) Thus, the question isn't "why did Columbine happen" but "why isn't it happening everyday?"

B. Note: Changed(24); exchanged(25)

1. Thus, their sin is not a **mistake** or an **accident**. They didn't drift into this **ignorantly**. It is a result of intentional choices.⁵

C. (23) Notice the downward spiral/the slippery slope:

1. Slide#10 **Rebellion** (an improper attitude toward **God**); leads to...**Arrogance** (an improper attitude toward **Self**); leads to...**Idolatry** (an improper attitude toward **Creation**).
2. An idol doesn't have to be a figure on your mantle that you pray & burn incense to. It can be a mental distortion of God, an unbiblical concept of God.
3. **Whatever your heart clings to & relies on is your god.** (Martin Luther)
4. **Is there anything luring your devotion & worship away from the true God?**

D. (24) Ok so the wrath is hell, fire, & damnation right? (No, not yet) – The wrath of God amounts to **God giving them up** by letting them go their own way! :(

1. People are free to **receive** or **reject** God's revelation. **However**, they are **not free** to do so **w/o consequences**.
2. So **God gave them up!** & let them suffer the consequences. (vs.26 & 28)
3. **The greatest judgment God can inflict on us is to let us have our own way!** (www)
a) *It's Emancipation from God!*
4. Remember, "The biggest fool is he who fools himself!"

E. (26,27) **What happens then?** - Well, you start losing control, of being in control!

⁵ Kent Hughes, pg.82

1. How many parents have heard a son or daughter say, *“Mom, Dad, I’m gay! But its OK. I believe this is how God made me. I’ve accepted it. I’ve embraced my homosexuality. And, so should you!”*
2. So many families thrown into turmoil when a family member comes out of the proverbial closet!
3. **Let’s be Clear**, Homosexuality is a biblical sin;
Let’s be Kind, Jesus died for homosexuals.

F. Homosexuality:

G. 3-fold Application:

1. **Orientation** (when they have sexual desires for the same sex)
2. **Behavior** (when they decide to act on homosexual activity)
3. **Identity** (when they their identify themselves as gay, lesbian, homosexual).
4. **It is not:** an alternative lifestyle, somehow excepted by God.
5. **It is not:** hereditary (passed genetically).
6. **It is:** an abandonment to **vile passions** or “shameful lusts”. (26)
7. **It is:** “unnatural” (26)
8. **It involves:** indecent acts (i.e. “shameful”) (27)
9. **What’s best is that...it is SIN!** – **Why is that “best”?** – Because if it were a **sickness** there might be **no cure**...but there is a cure for **sin!**
10. **Pro Gay Theology** interprets this verse this way: “This is someone born a **heterosexual** who **becomes** a **homosexual**, thus it is a sin because it is “unnatural”! **It doesn’t relate to one born homosexual**”.
 - a) So, **on the one hand** they say they are born this way & can’t change...**on the other**, they say you can change?
11. **But church**....why do we place this as a more serious crime against God, then adultery or any other heterosexual crime?
 - a) What happened to hating the sin yes, but loving the sinner?

IV. Slide#11 **TRUTH SOILED! (28-32)**

- A. (28) **Gave them over to a debased mind** – or depraved mind.
 1. **Debased** also means “*not approved*” (often applied to metals).
 2. **It doesn’t stand the test.** A depraved mind is one that *God cannot approve*, & it must be rejected by Him.
 3. **So when promiscuity, bisexuality, or homosexuality are normalized, then what can we look forward to in society?** (vs.29-32)
 4. Believe it or not *sexual perversion* is **not the bottom** of the barrel.

- a) **Slide#12** It is a depraved mind! – A mind that has everything *turned upside-down*.
- b) **Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness;** (Is.5:20)
5. **Slide#13 Aaron Burr**, the third Vice President of the United States, was reared in a godly home and admonished to accept Christ by his grandfather **Jonathan Edwards**. But he refused to listen. Instead, he declared that he wanted nothing to do with God and said he wished the Lord would leave him alone. He did achieve a measure of political success in spite of repeated disappointments. But he was also involved in continuous strife, and when he was 48 years old, he killed **Alexander Hamilton in a duel**. He lived for 32 more years, but through all this time he was unhappy and unproductive. It was during this sad chapter in his life that he declared to a group of friends; “Sixty years ago I told God that if He would let me alone, I would let Him alone, and God has not bothered about me since.” Aaron Burr got what he wanted. Daily Bread
- B. (29-32) **21 negative qualities** are listed of those abandoned to their own sinful natures.
- A somber parade of human depravity!** (Swindoll)
- C. (32) **Approving** – Who was more guilty in the days of the Roman Coliseum...those committing the mayhem, or those watching & applauding?
- Slide#14,15** When Ted Bundy was being executed in the electric chair(called “Old Sparky”) Jan.24, 1989 **Whom was God more grieved w/that early morning? Ted**, w/ over 30 mutilation & torture-style murders; **or the people outside the prison**, w/10 acres of cars, RV’s, & broadcast vehicles, who waved sparklers & sang, “**On top of old Sparky**” (to the tune of Old Smokey) “*He bludgeoned the pooooor girls, all over the heeaad. Now we’re ecstatic, Ted Bundy is dead.*”
 - They wandered through the field, many with coffee and doughnuts, and more than a few with beer in their coffee cups. They carried signs and banners: “Fry, Ted, Fry!” and “Tuesday is Fry Day.” [Orlando Sentinel, Jan 25, 1989]By Roger Roy & Craig Dezern of The Sentinel]
 - One radio station in Jacksonville also urged listeners to turn off all appliances between 6:45-7:05am, to ensure there would be enough “juice” for the execution.**
 - And what about the millions sitting in their living room each night watching on TV debauchery, violence, deceit & many other vices...& applauding what they see?**
 - He says this is a sign that life is reaching its lowest dimension!
- D. **Man was made a little lower than the angels** (Ps.8:5)
- This places man somewhere between **angels above & beasts below**.
 - Angels** are spirits w/o bodies; **& animals** are bodies w/o spirits. **Man** is in-between, because he is body & spirit.
 - It has always been man’s prerogative to **move upward** toward the spiritual, **or downward** toward the animal.

4. This is why **man can't sin a little bit!** No one is able to say, **this far & no further!**

Paul gives 6 Indictments: **inexcusable ignorance** (20) **ingratitude/thankless** (21) **insolence/disrespectful** (22) **idolatry** (23) **immorality/homosexuality** (24-27) **incorrigibility** (28-32).