

Romans Part 7 – Chapters 1 and 2

Sunday, March 13, 2022

With input from gotquestions.org, Bill Crowder, Warren Wiersbe, NY Times, John MacArthur

Important points to review:

1. There are many Christian educators who believe that since Paul is likely quoting someone in Romans 1, verses 21-28, that Paul himself was not arguing the morality of what he wrote, he was merely answering a harsh argument by someone else who would have held this view. The problem is that Paul still addresses the stated immoral behavior as “those who practice such things deserve to die.”

These academic leaders also conclude that Paul **only** says these things in Romans 1 to make the point in Romans 2 that we are not to be judgmental toward those who practice immoral behavior. Yet this view would nullify other discussions of sin which Paul makes:

1 Timothy 1:6-15

*But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, ⁹ realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous person but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and worldly, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰ for the sexually immoral, homosexuals, slave traders, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, ¹¹ according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.
Paul's Testimony*

¹² I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, ¹³ even though I was previously a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; ¹⁴ and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost.

2. When Paul quotes the Old Testament, it will be shown as quotation. It is possible that Paul is quoting someone outside of scripture. It does not prove the canonization of “The Wisdom of Solomon” which was not written by Solomon. And likely, Paul would not quote it. Also, Paul quotes the Old Testament more than any other Apostle – second is the Apostle John in Revelation.

Don Jentes found this information in “Our Daily Bread” this week:

Isaiah 52:7-10 The Insight Bill Crowder

In the book of Isaiah, the prophet brings two distinct messages to the people of God. In chapters 1-39, he brings warnings of certain judgment because of their continued idolatry and rejection of God. In chapter 40-66, however, the prophet's message becomes one of hope and rescue—continuing to offer many references to the promised Messiah. Bible Teacher Warren W. Wiersbe wrote that this significant messianic component to Isaiah's prophecy accounts for how frequently the New Testament cites this important book. The apostle Paul, a trained Jewish scholar, quoted from or alluded to Isaiah's prophecies at least eighty times, and the Servant Song (52:13-53:12) is cited almost forty times by New Testament writers. As such, Wiersbe contends, “Isaiah is much more than a prophet: He is an evangelist who presents Jesus Christ and the Good News of the Gospel.”

Definitions:

Abomination – An abomination is something that causes hate or disgust. In biblical usage, an *abomination* is something that God loathes or hates because it is offensive to Him and His character.

Leviticus 18:22 *You shall not sleep with a male as one sleeps with a female; it is an abomination.*

Proverbs 6:16-19

There are six things that the LORD hates,

Seven that are an abomination to Him:

¹⁷ Haughty eyes, a lying tongue,

And hands that shed innocent blood,

¹⁸ A heart that devises wicked plans,

Feet that run rapidly to evil,

¹⁹ A false witness who declares lies,

And one who spreads strife among brothers.

Tolerance- the ability or willingness to tolerate something, in particular the existence of opinions or behavior that one does not necessarily agree with.

Does Paul tell us to tolerate?



Paul, tells us to love because we can still love others, not tolerate their behavior, and speak against sin.

Proverbs 27:6 *Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.*

Unrighteousness:

The meaning of **UNRIGHTEOUS** is not righteous : sinful, wicked. (Merriam-Webster.com)

not righteous : sinful, wicked. 2: unjust, unmerited intolerable and unrighteous interference in their lives— W. W. Wagar.

Paul describes that those who practice sin start with embracing some sin, then adding sin to sin until they are beyond hope – and God gives them up.

Notice **Romans 1:29-31**

They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, ³¹ foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

New York Police Chief Bratton understood this principle and applied it to law enforcement:

Bratton took over the city's transit police in 1990, at a time when the transit system was at a low point. Crime was rampant on the subways; the cars were covered with graffiti; riders were sneaking through turnstiles. Bratton implemented a strategy of "quality of life" policing, derived in large part from the "broken windows" theory advanced by the social scientists George Kelling and James Q. Wilson:

Social psychologists and police officers tend to agree that if a window in a building is broken and is left unrepaired, all the rest of the windows will soon be broken.

Controlling minor offenses, they argued, restored a sense of security, and identified petty criminals likely to graduate to more serious crimes. The strategy seemed to work better than even Bratton could have predicted. In less than two years, robberies on the transit network were down 40 percent and crime as a whole was down 22 percent. It was such a striking — and unexpected — success that when the job of New York police commissioner opened up in 1994, when Bratton was back in Boston, there really was no other logical choice for it.

Philip Zimbardo, a Stanford psychologist, reported in 1969 on some experiments testing the broken-window theory. He arranged to have an automobile without license plates parked with its hood up on a street in the Bronx and a comparable automobile on a street in Palo Alto, California. The car in the Bronx was attacked by "vandals" within ten minutes of its "abandonment." The first to arrive were a family—father, mother, and young son—who removed the radiator and battery. Within twenty-four hours, virtually everything of value had been removed. Then random destruction began—windows were smashed, parts torn off, upholstery ripped. Children began to use the car as a playground. Most of the adult "vandals" were well-dressed, apparently clean-cut whites. The car in Palo Alto sat untouched for more than a week. Then Zimbardo smashed part of it with a sledgehammer. Soon, passersby were joining in. Within a few hours, the car had been turned upside down and utterly destroyed. Again, the "vandals" appeared to be primarily respectable whites.

Untended property becomes fair game for people out for fun or plunder and even for people who ordinarily would not dream of doing such things and who probably consider themselves law-abiding. Because of the nature of community life in the Bronx—its anonymity, the frequency with which cars are abandoned and things are stolen or broken, the past experience of "no one caring"—vandalism begins much more quickly than it does in staid Palo Alto, where people have come to believe that private possessions are cared for, and that mischievous behavior is costly. But vandalism can occur anywhere once communal barriers—the sense of mutual regard and the obligations of civility—are lowered by actions that seem to signal that "no one cares."

3. Some will argue that the passage **Leviticus 18:22** “*You shall not sleep with a male as one sleeps with a female; it is an abomination*” is an Old Testament law that does not apply anymore since Leviticus also told people what they could wear, how men should trim their beards, etc..

Remember **The Threefold Division of the Law**

This was listed in the Presbyterian 1646 Westminster Confessional

1. **The Moral Law**

The same law that was first written in the heart of man continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness after the fall, and was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai, in ten commandments, and written in two tables, the four first containing our duty towards God, and the other six, our duty to man.

2. **The Ceremonial Law**

God was pleased to give to the people of Israel ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits; and partly holding forth diverse instructions of moral duties all which ceremonial laws being appointed only to the time of reformation, are, by Jesus Christ the true Messiah and only law-giver, who was furnished with power from the Father for that end abrogated and taken away.

3. **The Civil (judicial) Law**

To them also he gave sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the state of that people, not obliging any now by virtue of that institution; their general equity only being of moral use.

4. Remember that Paul starts his discussion on sin with the fact he is not ashamed of the gospel:

Romans 1:16-31

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. – Suppressing the truth is a natural outcome of sinful wicked deeds. Notice Paul isn’t saying it the other way around: First they say they don’t believe in God, then as a result, they become sinners. No, they suppress the truth in order to disobey God.

John MacArthur: “How can people understand anything about love if they don’t understand God’s hate? How can they understand anything about His grace if they don’t know about His law? How can they understand forgiveness if they don’t understand the penalty of sin? Men cannot understand. They cannot seek grace and salvation unless they are affected with the dread of the wrath of God that is upon them. Unless men sense they are in grave danger, there’s no pressure applied to them to change.”

C.S. Lewis “Mere Christianity: “This is the fix we are in. If the universe is not governed by an absolute goodness, then all our efforts are in the long run hopeless. But if it is, then we are making ourselves enemies to that goodness every day, and are not in the least likely to do any better tomorrow, and so our case is hopeless again. We cannot do without it, and we cannot do with it. God is the only comfort, He is also the supreme terror: the thing we most need and the thing we most want to hide from. He is our only possible ally, and we have made ourselves His enemies. Some people talk as if meeting the gaze of absolute goodness would be fun. They need to think again. They are still only playing with religion.”

¹⁹ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

If they are without excuse, and they know but suppress the truth, then there will be a vengeful response to what they perceive as binding cords that keep them feeling guilty:

Psalm 2:1: “*Why do the nations rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.*”

This is why Christianity is hated more than other religions – because it’s not only true, but people know it.

²¹ For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools,

Followers of Christ are often bewildered at the thinking of unbelieving neighbors, leaders, and “wise” people because the foundation of all their thinking is flawed. Lost people are lost.

²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

Paul addresses this in Acts 17:

²⁴ The God who made the world and everything that is in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made by hands; ²⁵ nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things;

²⁶ and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, ²⁷ that they would seek God, if perhaps they might feel around for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

²⁸ for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are His descendants.’ ²⁹ Therefore, since we are the descendants of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by human skill and thought. ³⁰ So having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now proclaiming to mankind that all people everywhere are to repent, ³¹ because He has set a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all people by raising Him from the dead.”

Romans 1:24

Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ because they exchanged the truth about God for a 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 dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; ²⁷ and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

²⁸ And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. ²⁹ They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, ³¹ foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. ³² Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

Romans 2:1-11

Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. ² We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. ³ Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? ⁴ Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? ⁵ But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

⁶ He will render to each one according to his works: ⁷ to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; ⁸ but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. ⁹ There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, ¹⁰ but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. ¹¹ For God shows no partiality.