

(24) Therefore, God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, 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; 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. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice.

(29b) They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. 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!

### Think on These Things

- 1) Using an NIV Bible version, what are the three things “God gave them over to?” (vs. 24, 26, 28). What verb is used to describe what they are doing to themselves with their bodies? Can you think of some synonyms for this word?

V. 24 says God gave the over to ‘sexual impurity’. V. 26 says God gave them over to ‘shameful lusts’ (ESV – dishonorable passions). V. 28 says God gave them over to ‘depraved minds’ (ESV – debased minds). The NIV says they are degrading their bodies (v. 24).

There are some synonyms at the end of this lesson, which include lowering one’s dignity, cheapening one’s life, and perverting God’s intent for sexual expression.

- 2) When it says they “exchanged the truth for a lie”, what does Paul say they actually did (v. 25)?

They began ‘worshipping’ the creatures that God created in our world, while refusing to worship God Himself! These ‘creatures’ are no greater than we human beings that God created, and they are unable to shape or respond to our personal human life events....

- 3) Thus the “lusts of the heart” (v. 24) refers to what?

Human sexual relations, specifically, the ‘unnatural’ expression of homosexual behaviors.

- 4) Summarize the “disgraceful passions” presented in vs. 26-27. What is being violated by this?

The unnatural sexual expressions explicitly cited speak to women having sex with women, and men having sex with men. It likely also includes prostitution (random sex for money) and fornication (unmarried sex with acquaintances). This violates God’s Law that ‘natural sex relations’ belong to a family comprised of a husband and wife (married to each other), for both procreation and pleasure (Genesis 2:24; Mark 10:2-9; 1 Timothy 5:14, and Hebrews 13:40).

- 5) What is “inevitable” for the perversity of such actions (v. 27b)? See also 1 Corinthians 6:13b-20.

There is a ‘penalty’ from God for sexual perversion beyond ultimately facing His wrath. God says the penalty is received ‘in themselves.’ Something within them changes or breaks, something with negative consequence (a penalty...). This could be something that affects their personality or thinking process (e.g., men becoming effeminate; women embracing masculinity). It could also refer to the host of venereal diseases that result from sexual promiscuity (instead of a monogamous relationship between a husband and wife).

- 6) From v. 28a, do you believe that God is allowing people to accept or reject Him? **Yes**
- 7) From v. 28b, when people reject God --- and He gives them over to debased minds --- what is the outcome for how they end up living?

**They begin doing things they “ought not” to be doing, that is, ungodly and unrighteous living.**

- 8) Vs. 29-31 describe many “abominable or detestable” human behaviors, and include more than the sexually deviant sins above. Many of these are internal to one’s heart and mind...and not obvious to others...until acted out! Nonetheless, they are abominable to God, expressions of a darkened heart (v. 21). Which behaviors commonly plague a church community? (See also Galatians 5:19-21 and our warning in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

**It's certainly possible to find covetousness and envy in a church, plus strife and gossiping to name just a few matters. Sadly, we will also find (from Galatians) sexual immorality, jealousy, fits of anger, and divisions. These Galatians traits are examples of ‘fleshly’ behavior, and those behaving like this will NOT inherit the Kingdom of God. 1 Corinthians adds that the sexually immoral, adulterers, and those practicing homosexuality, along with (religious?) ‘swindlers,’ will NOT inherit the Kingdom.**

- 9) There is a “kicker” to this account from Paul, an unbelievable observation in v. 32. What’s going on with the people rejecting God, who are to be judged and punished?

**These people are not content to just live perversely, brazenly rejecting God and His sexual standards. V. 30 states that they also ‘invent’ ways to behave evilly. But the kicker in v. 32 is that not only do they behave this way, they actually encourage and recruit other people to join them in their ‘unnatural’ perversions and otherwise wicked behaviors.**

NOTE: Maybe we don’t grasp how completely God hates sin. This chapter uses the word “**abominable**.” Dictionary.com provides these definitions and synonyms: repugnantly hateful; detestable; loathsome; abhorrent; wretched; atrocious; vile; repulsive; despicable; horrible; revolting; disgusting; heinous. This is how God describes His view of the sins exposed in Romans 1. **Do you have the same view as God on the sins cited in Romans 1?** Our countries laws and culture may not align with God’s Biblical standard...!

**Degrade** means to lower in dignity or bring into contempt, to reduce in rank or deprive. Synonyms are downgrade, cheapen, deteriorate and pervert.

People and situations I want to pray for this week: