

The Book of Romans

The Gospel of God

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, ¹⁹ because that which is known about God is evident to them; for God made it evident to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

²¹ For even though they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. ²² Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.

²⁵ These who exchanged the truth of 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 over to degrading passions; for even their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, ²⁷ and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

²⁸ And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to an unfit mind, to do those things which are not proper, 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.

(Romans 1:18-32)

Romans 1:18-32

- Paul's indictment of humanity in general
 - *Structure:* (1) Why God's wrath is revealed (v18-23) (2) How God's wrath is revealed (v24-32)
 - threefold repetition of the cycle: exchanged, handed-over, and a dishonoring outcome

The Great Exchange

1. Man's Neglect of God

- the knowledge of God necessarily calls for the worship of God, which mankind refuses to do
- this neglect of God has led to man's incapacity to reason accurately about God or perceive Him from the heart

¹⁸ Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, he must become foolish, so that he may become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God. For it is written, "*He is THE ONE WHO CATCHES THE WISE IN THEIR CRAFTINESS*"; ²⁰ and again, "THE LORD KNOWS THE REASONINGS of the wise, THAT THEY ARE USELESS."

(1 Corinthians 3:18-20)

The Great Exchange

2. Man's Exchange of God

- absurd exchange – the glory of the immortal God for an image of mortal creatures
- man corrupts the knowledge of God by making gods of his own

The Great Exchange

3. God's Judgment of Man

- "gave them over" – He transferred and subjected man to the cycle of ever-increasing sin
- it is a giving over to sinful (sexual) conduct in the context of sinful desires

The Great Exchange

➤ Implications:

1. The fundamental problem of man is idolatry – all sins flow out of this sin
2. Mankind's manifold sins and immoralities are the expression of God's judgment
3. Man is utterly helpless and hopeless apart from the saving righteousness of God