

KNOWING THE JUDGMENT OF GOD

TEXT: ROMANS 1:18-32

INTRODUCTION:

1. This past Wednesday (June 26, 2013), the United States Supreme Court decided that the Defense of Marriage Act (marriage is one man married to one woman) is "unconstitutional."
2. In yesterday's newspaper there was a big article (with pictures) of Bert and Ernie, the "Sesame Street" puppets being sodomites.
3. Recently, Kevin Clash, the longtime voice of "Sesame Street's" Elmo character, left the show after he was exposed as a pervert.
4. In response to Wednesday's Supreme Court decision, the National Cathedral and other liberal churches in Washington DC pealed their church bells to celebrate.
5. The cathedral scheduled a "prayer service" for homosexual, lesbian, bisexual and transgender "families" Wednesday evening to celebrate the ruling. I have no idea who they prayed to.
6. This reminds us the biggest problem in America today is not the politicians, or the Supreme Court, or the liberal news media, or Hollywood, etc. -- it is the apostate churches.
7. Liberal churches talk much about love. Love is one of God's attributes. First John 4:8 and 4:16 says, "God is love."
8. Spurgeon once saw a weathervane that said, "God is love." He thought the sign was inappropriate and said to the farmer, "Do you mean to say that the love of God is as unpredictable as the wind?"
9. The farmer said, "It is not inappropriate, sir. For no matter which way the wind blows, God is love."
10. God is love, and furthermore God is holy. And because God is holy, He hates sin. Proverbs 16:6 says, "By the fear of the LORD men depart from evil."
11. But there is very little fear of God in America today (cf. Rom. 3:18).
12. The punitive justice of God is an essential attribute of His nature. Referring to God's justice, Charles Hodge said, "This attribute renders the punishment of sin necessary, and is the foundation of the need of a vicarious atonement in order to pardon sinners" (*Romans*).
13. The word "judgment" appears all throughout Scripture (cf. Rom. 1:32).
14. God judged Sodom and Gomorrah. God judged the whole world in the days of Noah. God judged Israel, and God judged Judah, and God judged all the Gentile nations.

15. Psalm 9:17 says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."
16. The Bible repeatedly teaches that the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was a warning, but sadly this warning is being ignored today by most people (cf. II Peter 2:6-8; Jude 7).
17. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is referred to over and over again in Scripture (Genesis 19:24, 25).
18. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is referred to in Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Amos, Zephaniah, Romans, II Peter, Jude, and the book of Revelation.
19. The Lord Jesus referred to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah six times. Furthermore, in the Bible there are many warnings about the sin of homosexuality. The Bible says it is an "abomination" (Lev. 18:22; 20:13).
20. But across America, people are celebrating what God calls an abomination.
21. In Romans 1, we see that when men reject the Word of God they must face the wrath of God. There is no question that today America is provoking the fierce wrath of God.

I. DIVINE DISCIPLINE

1. Three times we see the phrase, "God gave them up" in Romans 1.
2. Psalm 81:12 says Israel refused to listen to God so He "gave them up unto their own hearts' lust."
3. The apostle Paul said to the heathen at Lystra, God "in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness" (Acts 14:16, 17).
4. God has not left Himself without a witness. He has given men sufficient light, "so that they are without excuse" (1:20). Their wickedness and their unbelief is inexcusable.
5. Note that Acts 14:16 says that God suffered (allowed) sinners "to walk in their own ways" (Acts 14:16), but then they must suffer the consequences of their sin.
6. The Bible teaches that God consigns sinners to the consequences of their sins. This has been described as "judicial abandonment" by God.
7. God gives men up to the power of sin (1:24, 26, 28).
8. "God withdraws from the wicked the restraints of His providence and grace, and gives them over to the dominion of sin" (Charles Hodge).
9. I believe "receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet" (Rom. 1:27) refers to AIDS and other STD's.

10. When the AIDS virus was first discovered, doctors and scientists called it "GRIDS" (Gay Related Immune Deficiency Syndrome). But because of pressure from the homosexuals, they had to change the name to "AIDS."
11. Romans 1 teaches not only that God withdraws from the wicked the restraining force of His providential care and grace, but that He positively gives men over to the appropriate judgment of their sins.
12. This thought is carried over into Romans chapter 2, where verse 5 says sinners treasure up for themselves "wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God."
13. William Newell, in his commentary on the book of Romans, refers to this principle of treasuring up wrath as "the cumulative character of continued impenitence." Think about that!
14. "The Cumulative Character of Continued Impenitence."
15. Someone once asked an elderly Christian lady if she believed in a literal lake of fire and brimstone. She said she did (cf. Rev. 21:8). She was teased about this and someone said to her, "No such an amount of brimstone could be found in one place." She replied, "Everyone takes his own brimstone with him."
16. That old woman understood the Bible better than most preachers (cf. Rom. 2:2-6).
17. Sinner friend: do you think God is pleased with your "hardness and impenitent heart" (2:5). Doctors warn people about the hardening of the arteries, but hardening of the heart is far more dangerous!
18. This is how it happens: sinners give themselves over to sin, and then God gives them over to a reprobate mind (Eph. 4:19; Rom. 1:28).
19. Sinners give themselves over to adultery, and fornication, and even perversion, and then God gives them over to the consequences of their wickedness.
20. We often preach that moral depravity results in the judgment of God, but Romans 1 teaches that moral depravity is the judgment of God.
21. I remember the first time I heard a preacher say that my jaw dropped. But I studied my Bible and soon discovered he was right.
22. One preacher wrote this over 40 years ago, "Sexual rebellion, license, and anarchy is the retributive judgment of God. The civilization of the western world, including the particular civilization of the United States of America, is not a civilization in danger of contracting a fatal disease. That civilization has already contracted a malignant and fatal cancer through its unbelief of the message of God in Christ. It is now hurrying on with increasing speed to final climactic destruction.

- Civilizations do not die because of violence, crime, immorality, and anarchy. These things are evidences that death already is at work, a death brought on by disobedience to the revelation of God” (S. Lewis Johnson, “God Gave Them Up,” *Bibliotheca Sacra*, April-June 1972).
23. Pitirim Sorokin was a sociologist from Harvard University. In fact, he founded the Department of Sociology at Harvard. In an article in *Time* magazine, Dr. Sorokin wrote, “At their fullest flowering, the Persian, Greek, Roman, and Muslim civilizations permitted a measure of homosexuality; as they decayed it became prevalent.”
 24. Sounding more like a preacher than a sociologist, Dr. Sorokin pointed out that sexual permissiveness and sexual perversion always lead to mental breakdowns and decreasing creativity and productivity in the intellectual, artistic, and economic spheres of life.
 25. Up until 1975, all health professionals considered homosexuality a mental illness. Then, under pressure from the growing homosexual movement, the American Psychological Association changed their position.
 26. Sin leads to mental breakdown and physical breakdown, and sin leads to death – both physical death, and what the Bible calls the second death (Rom. 1:32).
 27. Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
 28. Revelation 20:14, 15 says, "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."
 29. Charles Hodge wrote, “Those who abandon God, He abandons...God does not impel or entice to evil. He ceases to restrain. He says of the sinner, Let him alone (1:24-28)."
 30. Hosea 4:17 says, "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone."

II. DISGUSTING DEPRAVITY

1. Divine discipline always follows disgusting depravity.
2. Romans 1 teaches us that when men get away from the Word of God they sink into idolatry and gross sin.
3. According to the Bible, and according to history, idolatry is invariably associated with sensuality (Rom. 1:19-25).
4. Referring to Romans 1:26, Charles Hodge said, "Paul first refers to the degradation of females among the heathen, because they are

- always the last to be affected in the decay of morals, and their corruption is therefore proof that all virtue is lost" (*Romans*).
5. My heart was heavy the other day as I saw in the newspaper a photograph of Christine Quinn, the lesbian head of the New York City Council being endorsed by "the most famous gay woman in America, Edie Windsor."
 6. I do not know of one politician in New York State who has the courage to speak out against this sin. These days even most preachers are afraid to speak out.
 7. People today are not only ignorant of Scripture, they are ignorant of history. Hodge says, "Commentators have collected a fearful array of passages from the ancient writers, which more than sustain the account given by the apostle."
 8. I read where missionaries have frequently been accused by the natives of having forged the latter part of Romans 1, as these natives could not believe that so accurate a description of themselves could have been written nearly 2,000 years ago.
 9. Man has a conscience, and the judgment of God can never be wholly extinguished in the breast of men. There is still a small voice in the worst of sinners that whispers, "that they which commit such things are worthy of death" (1:32).
 10. Hodge said, "The most reprobate sinner carries about with him a knowledge of his just exposure to the wrath of God. Conscience can never be entirely extirpated (1:32)."

III. DESERVED DESTRUCTION

1. Deserved destruction always follows disgusting depravity. "The wrath of God" (1:18) refers to God's punitive justice. It is God's determination to punish sin.
2. Romans 1:18 says, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men..."
3. "Revealed" means God is making it known. God wants men to know that He judges sin. He has "revealed" this in many ways. First and foremost, He has revealed it to us in the Bible (1:29-32).
4. Furthermore, God has "revealed" it to us by the voice of conscience.
5. God reveals it to us every day when we see the terrible consequences of sin -- the inherent tendency of moral evil to produce misery.
6. Sinners are "without excuse" (1:20).

7. God has revealed Himself to man. "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them" (1:19).
8. God has manifested Himself to man -- His eternal power, His Godhead, His creative works, His providence...and His divine judgments (1:19, 20, 32).
9. But sinful men "glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (1:21).
10. This means their minds are wicked and corrupt; and their hearts are darkened by sin.
11. Writing for the majority striking down the Defense of Marriage Act, Justice Anthony Kennedy declared that the DOMA's "purpose and effect [is] to disparage and to injure" those in same-sex marriages, subjecting them to "a stigma."
12. Think about his choice of words! "Disparage" means, "to speak of or treat slightly; to belittle."
22. Genesis 13:13 says, "But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly."
23. Genesis 18:20 says the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah is "very grievous."
13. Was God disparaging or belittling the men of Sodom?
24. Justice Kennedy also used the word "injure." Genesis 13:10 says "the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah."
14. They were not only injured, they were destroyed!
15. Romans 1:24 says homosexuals are unclean, and they "dishonour their own bodies between themselves."
16. Romans 1:26 says their behaviour is "vile" and unnatural.
17. Romans 1:27 says their behaviour is "unseemly."
18. Romans 1:28 says they have a reprobate mind, and they "do those things which are not convenient."
19. These words could be described as "disparaging."
20. Justice Kennedy also used the word "stigma." "Stigma" means, "a mark of shame or discredit."
21. Well, their behaviour is shameful!

CONCLUSION:

1. The other night, Bro. Gillmore told the old story about the king looking for a driver. The road to his castle was a dangerous, winding road. On one side was a mountain, and on the other a big valley.

2. Some drivers boasted how they could drive the carriage right up to the edge of the road without going off the cliff.
3. But the man who was hired assured the king he would keep the carriage as close to the mountain as possible.
4. This world is getting more and more wicked, but many Christians are getting more and more like the world.