Romans 1:18-25

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Chapter 1

Simple Outline:

1:1-7 Salutation – Paul identified himself and his audience of faithful believers in the city of Rome.

1:8-15 Introduction – Paul explained his prayers to soon visit them for apostolic fruit among them.

1:16-17 Summary – Paul exalted the gospel of Jesus Christ as the glorious revelation of salvation it is.

1:18-32 Argument – God has blinded and will destroy the Gentiles in wrath for rejecting their Creator.

Introduction:

1. There is so much in this chapter that a series of sermons for months could easily be generated from it.
2. While there is a great desire to get to 1:17 and what follows of the glory of God and damnation of men, there is profit to be obtained from Paul's salutation, introduction, and summary by the Spirit.
3. Though this epistle was not written first, it is first in depth, breadth, length, and height of the gospel.
4. Our pace considers babes of all kinds, every word of God, all that every word can teach, the fulness of the gospel, ruling your impatience, maximum learning, our minority position on the book, etc.
5. Our method is that taught in the scriptures, read distinctly and give the sense (Neh 8:8; II Tim 2:15).
6. Let us pray with the humble spirit that David and Solomon taught us (Ps 131:1; 119:18; I Kings 3:7).
7. We cannot pass the first verse of this systematic theology and polemic treatise without condemning Charismatic and Mormon heresy (Paul was the last apostle), and the verses following weed out other heretics e.g. 1:2 condemns Jewish legalists, 1:3 condemns Origen and eternal generation, 1:4 condemns expositors confusing Psalm 2:7 and Hebrews 1:5, 1:5 condemns identity movement, 1:8 teaches the gospel going worldwide, 1:9 approves oaths against JW's, Mennonites, and Quakers, etc.
8. This first chapter will gloriously defend God for presenting clear truth of Himself to all by creation.
9. This first chapter will identify the origin of sodomy, God's criticism of it, and His use of it to judge.
10. Man continues to implode morally by rejection of a Creator, so there is a world of transgender sins.

1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

A. Paul
   1. The first epistle after Acts of the Apostles opens by naming the greatest of the apostles.
   2. It would be easy to do a study of Paul, for the Holy Spirit gives plenty of information about this man's character, faith, family, doctrine, ministry, enemies, persecutions, travels, experiences, resume, testimonies, trials, fruit, and more in Acts and the epistles.

3. Some Bible books indicate the writer, and some do not. God's inspired choice is our key.
4. Writing Gentiles, Paul was not cautious to identify himself, as in the epistle of Hebrews.
5. While the Jews resented Paul, the Gentiles loved him for bringing the gospel to them.
6. His reputation had circulated far and wide as a Jew that opposed Jews for the Gentiles!
7. The imperial and capital city of Rome was used to the best, and they got the best apostle.
8. In the annals of Biblical or human history, there are very few men like our brother Paul.
9. He was the apostle of the Gentiles, and he magnified himself as such (11:13; 15:16-19).
10. He was most fit to write for Gentiles against the Jewish legalists (Acts 15:1-2; Gal 2:1-5).
11. See the *Introduction* for much more regarding Paul's qualifications to write this epistle.
12. The first word is a good introduction to God's grace, the epistle's theme (I Tim 1:12-17).
13. Paul's name was changed in Acts 13:9, likely his Roman name for Gentile acceptance.
14. Probably named after Saul, the first king of Israel, since Paul was from the same tribe, Benjamin (11:1), we must marvel about Paul as did Israel at the change God wrought in Saul by their proverb, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" (I Sam 10:9-12; 19:24).
15. There is much cause to glorify God through His great grace in Paul's life (Gal 1:20-24).
16. Paul did not squander God's grace, but exploited it wonderfully (I Cor 15:10; Dan 11:32).
17. His love of Christ and appreciation for His love drove him to great zeal (II Cor 5:14-15).
18. The Romans, after this epistle, loved Paul, as their reception of him shows (Ac 28:11-16).

B. *A servant of Jesus Christ.*
1. A servant of Christ is the highest office on earth … by His authority, glory, and power!
2. The Lord chose and charged servants to keep His house in His absence (Mark 13:34).
3. The apostles often introduced their epistles this way (James 1:1; II Peter 1:1; Jude 1:1).
4. This title showed their service to Christ and their representative authority as ambassadors.
5. Paul had Messianic authority from Jesus Christ for His kingdom (I Cor 14:37; Gal 1:11).
6. The devils knew the authority of Jesus Christ and that of Paul (Acts 16:17-18; 19:15).
7. Why did Paul use these words? To bolster his authority from Christ for his doctrine.
8. He was not coming as Paul, but rather as an ambassador of the high King of heaven.
9. It is a glorious title and work, but every saint is Christ's servant on the job (Col 3:24).

C. *Called to be an apostle.*
1. Paul was called to be an apostle … appointed and ordained (I Timothy 2:7; II Tim 1:11).
2. Paul was called to be an apostle … chosen to this special work (Acts 9:15; John 15:16).
3. He was commanded by God to be an apostle, according to His will (I Tim 1:1; I Cor 1:1).
4. The call of a man to the ministry as used here is his ordination to ministry (Heb 5:1,4).
5. God also *called* the elect to salvation … meaning He *chose*, *appointed*, and *ordained* them to eternal life and its blessings (I Cor 1:24-29; Acts 13:48; I Thess 5:9).
6. A man's work is his calling, though not the direct sense of the word here (I Cor 7:20).

7. The apostles had the highest office and greatest gifts of Christ (I Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11).
8. They were witnesses of Jesus Christ and His resurrection (Acts 1:21-22; I Cor 15:8).
9. Apostles must be eyewitnesses of the risen Lord; Paul was (Act 9:17,27; I Cor 9:1; 15:8).
10. Paul had apostolic gifts, even handkerchiefs (Act 19:11-12; Rom 15:18-19; II Cor 12:12).
11. Why did Paul use these words? To bolster his authority from Christ for his doctrine.
12. He was not coming as just any officer in the kingdom of Christ, but as His apostle.

D. *Separated unto the gospel of God*.
1. God separated Paul from among men and other professions to the ministry (Gal 1:15-16).
2. Compare God's choice and charge of Jeremiah to office of prophet (Jer 1:4-5; Is 49:1,5).
3. Compare the Holy Spirit's explanation about Paul to the teachers at Antioch (Acts 13:2).
4. Why is this mentioned? God chose for Paul to have a dedicated life for great expertise.
5. Paul fulfilled Solomon's proverb about separation more than any (Pr 18:1; I Cor 15:10).
6. Moses' law ordained separation from things and to God for people, offices, and worship (Lev 20:24-26; Num 6:1-8; 8:14; 16:9-10; Deut 10:8; I Chron 23:13; Ezra 6:21; 10:11).
7. You are to be separated as well (II Cor 6:14-18; James 4:4; I Peter 2:9; Rev 18:4).

2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)

A. *(Which he had promised afore.*
1. This parenthetical note was important to remind his readers, Jews and Gentile proselytes, that the gospel of Jesus Christ was in full harmony with the Old Testament scriptures.
2. Paul never mocked the Old Testament, though he full well knew it had been replaced.
3. In fact, due to their loyalty to the Old Testament, it was his manner to use it (Act 17:1-3).
4. In that *God* had promised it, therefore the matter of Paul's epistle was of divine origin.
5. In that God had *promised* it, therefore it was certain and not by the invention of men.
6. In that He had promised it *afore*, therefore it was not a new or novel thing Paul preached.
7. Known unto God are all His works, including the gospel, from the beginning (Act 15:18).
8. God's plan for the gospel to go to Gentiles was of ancient origin (Eph 3:1-12; I Pet 1:20).
9. Paul confirmed this fact again as he closed out the epistle with his conclusion (16:25-27).

B. *By his prophets in the holy scriptures,).*
1. The gospel promises of Jesus Christ run abundantly from Genesis 3:15 to Malachi 4:1-6.
2. The greatest men of God in the Old Testament were the prophets, who wrote of Christ.
3. Key prophecies are Gen 3:15; 49:8-10; Deut 18:18; Psalm 2; 16:10; 22:1-31; 95; 110:1-4; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; 52:13-15; 53:1-12; 61:1-3; Dan 9:24-27; Mic 5:2; Zech 9:9; Mal 3:1.
4. All sincere Bible readers understood that the scriptures spoke of Jesus Christ (Luke 1:70).
5. Jesus confronted the religious leaders of His day about the scriptures' object (John 5:39).
6. See the author's sermon outlines entitled, "The Prophecies of Jesus," detailing many.

7. The gospels and epistles often confirm Jesus and the gospel by the words, “As it written.”
8. Paul’s gospel was not contrary to the O.T. prophets, but rather fulfilled their prophecies!
9. Paul’s gospel was not contrary to the O.T. scriptures, but rather fulfilled its prophecies!
10. hese Jews or Gentiles converts to the Jewish faith did not have to reject the O.T. and its divine promises, for the gospel was the substance and object of the O.T. prophecies.

3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

A. *Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*

1. Ignoring the parentheses to gather the sense, we return to the antecedent of the gospel.
    a. Therefore, the gospel of God is the good news concerning His Son Jesus Christ.
    b. The gospel has one main lesson – Jesus Christ crucified (I Cor 2:5; Galatians 6:14).
    c. Paul’s great theme is the glorious Person of Jesus Christ and the salvation He won.
    d. We must be careful that we not add wood, hay, or stubble to Christ (I Cor 3:11-15).
    e. The warning is clear that we not let things slip spoken by and about Christ (He 2:1-4).
    f. The gospel of God (1:1) and gospel of Christ (1:16) are the one and only same gospel.
    g. The gospel is God’s, for He is the author of it; it is Christ’s, for He is the Object of it.
    h. We must not be deceived in any direction to compromise His identity (Col 2:6-9).
    i. This is not playing with words or nitpicking foolishly – sound doctrine is at stake.
2. Jesus Christ is God’s Son by virtue of God fathering Him in Mary’s womb (Lu 1:31-35).
    a. There are four words we can understand of our Savior – Son, Jesus, Christ, and Lord.
    b. Jesus is the personal name of the Man born to Mary (Matt 1:21; Luke 1:31).
    c. Jesus (Hebrew Joshua) was his personal name, limited by Nazareth to his hometown.
    d. Christ is the Greek form of His title, the Messiah (Dan 9:24,26; John 1:41; 4:25).
    e. Lord is His position as God and ruler, even over David His Father (Ps 110:1).
    f. Consider how Peter announced God had given Jesus both other titles (Acts 2:36)!
    g. He is God’s Son by His incarnation; our doctrine is this simple – <u>Jesus is the Son of God</u>; before Mary there was no Jesus, just as there was no Christ (Dan 9:24,26).
    h. Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God (Jn 9:35-38; 20:31; Acts 8:37; I John 5:4-5; etc.).
    i. The Word of God is God. He was never a Son, and He was never made or begotten in any way, for He is Jehovah, identical to the Father and Spirit (John 1:1; I John 5:7).
    j. We categorically reject any notion of eternal generation of the Godhead of the Son, for His deity is fully Jehovah and the Father, unbegotten in any way (Col 2:9; Is 9:6).
    k. Hebrews 1:1-8 describes the Son as both the Man Christ Jesus Christ and as God.
    l. We categorically reject the N.A.S.V.’s rendering of “begotten God” in John 1:18.
    m. Why is this important? The devil has sought to discredit His full deity by many ways.

n. See the author's document entitled, "Jesus Christ Is the Son of God," for more details.

o. Let us also rejoice in the fact that Jesus Christ is *our* Lord, benevolent ruler and God.

p. Other sons are Adam (Luke 3:38), the angels (Job 1:6; 2:1), the elect (I John 3:2), and rulers (Ps 82:6; John 10:35) … but He is the only begotten Son of God.

q. Isaac was Abraham's only begotten son, though Ishmael was also Abraham's son and older (Heb 11:17; Gen 22:2,12,16)! But only Isaac was by promise and the right wife!

B. *Which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh*.

1. Jesus the Son of God was *made* of a woman, Mary, of David (Gal 4:4: Luke 1:31-35).
   a. He was *made* of a woman; altering this fact is to blaspheme God (Gal 4:4; John 1:14).
   b. He was *made* of flesh and blood like His brethren to be a perfect priest (Heb 2:14-17).
   c. The Word of God, Who is unbegotten God, was *made* flesh in Jesus Christ (Jn 1:14).
   d. Consider the other uses of made as well in reference to Jesus Christ (Heb 1:4; 2:7,9).
   e. It was this flesh Son of Mary that is God with us, Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14; Matt 1:23).
   f. The Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, had a *flesh* component to His being. To deny this or confuse this is to blaspheme God by degrading His deity or to blaspheme God by denying the record and witness God has given of His Son, the Man Christ Jesus!
   g. Jesus Christ was and is the Godman, the only Mediator for men with God (I Tim 2:5).
2. Jesus Christ is David's Son by virtue of both parents (Luke 3:23-38; Matthew 1:1-16).
   a. Jesus Christ of Nazareth was David's son biologically (Mary) and legally (Joseph).
   b. The scriptures are full of prophecies of Christ coming from David's lineage, so much so that He is even called David in prophecy (Hos 3:5; Amos 9:11; Matt 1:1; etc.).
   c. Jesus the Son of David.
3. Our opponents accuse us of degrading Christ's deity, but our Son is unbegotten God!
   a. Our opponents accuse us of confusing the Trinity, but we have an equal three-in-one!
   b. The Sonship of Jesus Christ.
   c. The Christ Wars (doctrinal conflicts).

4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

A. *And declared.*

1. In the previous verse, He was *made* or came into being through Mary's *flesh*
2. *Jesus is the Son of God* by virtue of His incarnation (Is 7:14; 9:6; Lu 1:35; Jn 1:1,14,18; Gal 4:4; Col 2:9; I Tim 2:5; Heb 2:14-18; etc.).
3. Luke 1:35 states that Jesus is called the Son of God by virtue of His birth by *therefore*.
4. But He was *declared* to be so, or proven to be so, by His resurrection from the dead.
5. Remember Psalm 2:7, "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me; Thou art my Son; this

day have I begotten thee." This describes Christ's resurrection (Acts 13:33)!

B. *To be the Son of God*.
   1. Though God declared Him His Son at His baptism, and though the Spirit enabled Him to do miracles that no man could do, there was a further and greater promotion coming.
   2. When the profane Jews asked for a sign, He promised the sign of Jonah (Matt 12:38-40).
   3. What man has ever said, "Kill me, and I will rise from the dead in seventy-two hours"?
   4. When they questioned His authority, He spoke of destroying the temple (John 2:18-22).
   5. Jesus inherited a new phase of His regal authority after His ascension, which included the name that far exceeded any angelic name, the Son of God (Hebrews 1:4-8).

C. *With power*.
   1. By power, we understand the authority and strength of His glorified body and office, which there is more to consider later in this text concerning His resurrection.
   2. He said He had *power* to lay His life down and to take it up again (John 10:17-18).
   3. After His resurrection, Jesus declared to His apostles that He had all *power* (Matt 28:18).
   4. When He appeared to John after His resurrection, He clearly had all *power* (Re 1:17-18).
   5. Our Lord's ascension into heaven and casting out of the devil showed *power* (Rev 12:10).
   6. He shall be very high, is what Isaiah prophesied Him after His humiliation (Isaiah 52:13).
   7. Was the declaration powerful, or the Son of God now powerful? Compare Eph 1:19-21.
   8. How about inspired ambiguity, lest we limit the text more than it should be limited? As in cases like Ps 68:18 and Eph 4:8,11 … or I Cor 9:8-10 and Deut 25:4.
   9. Paul desired to have the power of our Lord's resurrection in his own life (Phil 3:10).
   10. He was made higher than the angels … there was a great change in visible authority, position, and office (Heb 1:1-4; 2:7-9; I Pet 3:22; John 5:25-29).
   11. God exalted Jesus of Nazareth to sit at His right hand in heaven (Ps 110:1 cp Heb 1:13).

D. *According to the spirit of holiness*.
   1. The great mystery of godliness includes Jesus being justified in the Spirit (I Tim 3:16).
   2. In contrast to His fleshly body and nature in the previous verse, this speaks of His Spirit or divine nature, which is the Spirit of God (Gal 4:5; I Pet 3:18).
   3. The Spirit's role in declaring, or justifying, or proving, Jesus to be God's Son is a component of the great mystery of the gospel (I Tim 3:16).
   4. The Spirit of God and Christ is very involved in the work of the Lord Jesus (Heb 9:14).
   5. Notice the very interesting contrast of the *flesh* (1:3) and *Spirit* (1:4) here and elsewhere (I Tim 3:16; I Pet 3:18), and remember that Jesus is that Spirit in one nature (II Cor 3:17).
   6. The full Godhead was involved in bearing witness of Jesus the Son of God (I John 5:6-9).
   7. He is called the Holy Spirit for good reason: He is the Spirit of holiness, as God is holy.
   8. The Holy Spirit was closely involved in His conception and in His resurrection (Lu 1:35).
   9. God told John to see the One on whom the Spirit would come and remain (Jn 1:32-35).

E. *By the resurrection from the dead*.

1. Here is a great mystery of our faith. The Head of our church rose from the dead. It is not a mystery in that we cannot understand it, but the world does not know or appreciate it.
2. Rome's mysteries are very different – things unexplained by revelation or rationalization.
3. The resurrection is intended by the second item in the mystery of godliness (I Tim 3:16).
4. The apostles were witnesses of the resurrected Jesus Christ (Acts 1:21-22; I Cor 15:8).
5. They performed miracles to confirm their testimony that Jesus of Nazareth was alive!
6. The resurrection is incredibly important in prophecy and in fulfillment, for it proved Jesus of Nazareth to be the Son of God and led to His coronation at God's right hand.
7. Look at Peter's powerful conclusion from David's prophecy in Psalm 16 (Acts 2:22-36).
8. Look at Paul's excitement in Antioch of Pisidia about the resurrection (Acts 13:27-39).
9. What do these words mean, "This day have I begotten thee," in Psalm 2:7 and Heb 1:5?
10. Paul declared them to mean that God had raised Jesus from the dead (Acts 13:33)!
11. The resurrection was proof that Jesus was the Son of God (Matt 12:38-40; John 2:18-22).
12. Jesus is the firstborn and firstbegotten from the dead (Col 1:18; Rev 1:5; I Cor 15:20).
13. Scripture closely connects resurrection, ascension, coronation, and exaltation (E 1:19-22).
14. Many dead saints were raised by the residual power of His resurrection (Matt 27:52-53).
15. The Great Mystery of Godliness.

5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:

A. *By whom we have received grace and apostleship*.

1. By His resurrection and ascension, Jesus received and gave gifts (Ps 68:18; Eph 4:8-12).
2. For His great accomplishments in life and death, God gave Him a position comparable to mighty monarchs but higher than all the kings of the earth (Ps 89:27: Is 53:12).
3. The gift of being an apostle was by the grace of God through Christ to Paul (Gal 1:15).
4. Paul considered his apostolic office to be a dispensation of God's grace (I Cor 15:10).
5. It was the Lord Jesus Christ Who specifically made Paul an apostle (Gal 1:1; Titus 1:1-3).
6. Paul wrote Timothy of God's purpose and grace in their ministries (II Timothy 1:8-11).
7. Paul knew God was gracious in salvation and in apostleship (15:15-16; I Tim 1:12-16).
8. The plural pronoun *we* refers to other apostles, not Roman saints that were not apostles.

B. *For obedience to the faith among all nations*.

1. *The faith* here is the gospel, or doctrine, or religion, of Jesus Christ. Note this use of *faith*.
2. Paul labored for this *obedience* of others (15:18-19; 16:19,26; Acts 6:7; II Cor 10:4-6).
3. Paul was sent to all nations, as the apostle to the Gentiles, as were other apostles sent as well (10:18; 16:26; Acts 1:8; 26:15-18; Matt 24:14; 28:18-20; Mark 16:20; Luke 24:47).

4. God once winked at the ignorance of the nations and left them in it (Acts 14:16; 17:30).
5. God's promise to bless all nations through Abraham's seed was in Jesus Christ (Gal 3:8).
6. We are bound to give thanks always for God's choice we would believe (II Thess 2:13).
7. Since the Spirit wrote *among* all nations, we take it to be Paul's hearers; if He had said to all nations, then we would understand Paul's ministerial obedience to the faith (1:6).
8. A prophecy in Revelation describes the everlasting gospel going to all nations (Rev 14:6).
9. God has not saved all nations, but those *among* and out of all nations (Rev 5:9; 7:9).
10. Paul's evangelist labors were for the elects' sake among all the nations (II Timothy 2:10).
11. This also is part of the great mystery of godliness (I Tim 3:16) … preached unto the Gentiles and believed on in the world.
12. The Identity movement or British-Israelism is a heresy without any proper Bible support

C. *For his name*.
1. Paul's goal in preaching was to glorify Christ to others and by others (II Thess 1:12).
2. Paul practiced what he preached, doing all in the name of the Lord Jesus (Col 3:17).
3. Paul always sought glory for Jesus Christ, not himself (John 3:30; I Cor 2:1-5; Ps 115:1).

6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

A. *Among whom are ye also*.
1. Among all nations of the world were the Romans, some of which had believed on Christ.
2. Paul had seen conversions in many places, and he had heard of Rome's conversions also.
3. While others in other nations were obedient to the faith, so were the Romans (16:19).
4. If not for calling by Jesus Christ, neither Jew nor Gentile would believe (I Cor 1:22-24).
5. God has not saved all nations, but those *among* and out of all nations (Rev 5:9; 7:9).
6. Paul's evangelist labors were for the elects' sake among all the nations (II Timothy 2:10).
7. Though the capital and center of a pagan empire, God had His elect there also (Ac 18:10).

B. *The called of Jesus Christ*.
1. Those who believe and obey the gospel are the called of Jesus Christ, for without His calling there is no man that could or would believe and obey that gospel.
2. What is this calling? It is synonymous with appointing and ordaining, as we identified in 1:1 above, where Paul was called – appointed or ordained – to be an apostle.
3. What is this calling? It is God's choice to salvation, making faith and obedience possible.
4. Paul explained it as being the chosen elect of God to the Corinthians (I Cor 1:24-29).
5. Luke wrote an inspired commentary that ordination to eternal life fits the bill (Act 13:48).
6. It leads to and includes regeneration that makes the profound change necessary to obey.
7. I do confess that the soteriological terms, *general call and effectual call,* are more confusing than

helpful, and they are used to promote the heresy of gospel regeneration.

8. While there is a call of the gospel, a lesser number is chosen (Matt 22:14; II Thess 2:14).
9. The gospel cannot call a natural man to obedience, even by the Holy Spirit (I Cor 2:14).
10. There must be a prior creation of a new spiritual man, which is called regeneration, and before that there must have been the predestination of God (John 8:47; Rom 8:29-30).
11. The call is not as we might think today, an audible request, a phone conversation, an invitation, a visit, etc. It is the sovereign choice of God to appoint some to salvation

7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

A. *To all that be in Rome*.
   1. Paul did not write to all the citizens of Rome. He addressed the called in Rome (1:6).
   2. Paul did not write to all the citizens of Rome. He addressed those beloved and called.

B. *Beloved of God*.
   1. Here is our benefit – God loved us and saved us to believe and obey the gospel of Christ.
   2. If you believe and obey the gospel, it is proof of God's love. Give thanks (II Thess 2:13).
   3. God's love is the foundation and fountain of all spiritual blessings (Jer 31:3; John 3:16).
   4. These words are worthless and offensive, if all those in hell are also beloved of God.
   5. God is love, but God is not bound by His nature or necessity to love sinful men or devils.
   6. God is holy, and therefore God cannot love a sinful object (Ex 34:7; Nah 1:3; Hab 1:13).
   7. If He chooses to love any man, it is a matter of His pure discretionary will (Rom 9:15).
   8. Christ loved the church; God chastens those He loves, but not all (Eph 5:25; Heb 12:6).
   9. We were chosen in Christ in love, for God set His love on us in Christ (Ephesians 1:3-4).
   10. God hates all and any sinner without exception, unless in Christ Jesus (Psalm 5:5; 11:5).
   11. The wicked will hear in the Day of Judgment that God never knew them (Matthew 7:23).
   12. The elect (8:28-33) will never be separated from God's love for them in Christ (8:34-39).
   13. The nature of the love and effects of the love are indescribable (I John 3:1-3; 4:10-11).
   14. The Distinguishing Love of God.

C. *Called to be saints*.
   1. Here is our duty – God loved us and saved us to believe and obey the gospel of Christ.
   2. The elect of God are appointed, charged, and bound to be saints in obedience to God.
   3. What is a saint? A sanctified person. What is sanctification? Separated and holy living.
   4. Therefore, a saint is a person living a holy and separated life, though never perfectly.
   5. We have been called to holy living, away from sin and the world, with compromise no less a sin than spiritual adultery or whoredom (12:1-2; I Thess 4:3-7; I Pet 1:15-16; I Cor 6:19-20; II Cor 6:14-18; 7:1; James 4:4; I John 2:15-17).

6. God's grace should change a man's life (Eph 2:10; Titus 2:11-14; II Cor 6:2; Heb 12:15).
7. The Holiness of God (blue ribbon).
8. Perfecting Holiness (II Cor 7:1).

D. *Grace to you and peace from God our Father.*
1. These are not empty words. God is the source of grace, and we need it for His favor and mercy in our lives. We received it once, but we need it as a daily supply from heaven.
2. There is a practical phase of grace in which we live; Paul will get to it (Romans 5:1-5).
3. God is able to give peace that passes all understanding, and we should desire it for others.
4. God our Father, the One Who adopted us, is able and willing to give abundant supplies.
5. The Lord be gracious unto you (Num 6:25); The Lord give you peace (Num 6:26).

E. *And the Lord Jesus Christ.*
1. The Lord Jesus Christ, Who loved us and died for us, is able to speak peace to any soul.
2. All grace is wrapped up in the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the gift of grace beyond all gifts.
3. The Lord Jesus Christ is a perfect high priest to intercede with God for our blessings.

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

A. *First, I thank my God.*
1. Paul knew the Source of spiritual blessings and actions – God (6:17; II Thess 1:3; 2:13; Acts 16:14; I Cor 15:57; II Cor 2:14; 8:16; Col 1:12; I Thess 1:2-4; etc., etc.).
2. We are bound to give thanks to God always for any reception of the truth (II Thess 2:13).
3. God must draw sinners to Christ and grant them repentance (John 6:44; II Timothy 2:25).
4. If the Romans were as he described (1:6-7), it was by God's grace (Rom 9:16; Phil 2:13).
5. If the Romans were as he would describe (1:8b), it was by God's grace (I Thess 1:2-4).
6. David also knew God's blessings and asking for them to be perpetuated (I Chron 29:18).
7. He often opened his epistles by declaring his thanksgiving for churches and saints (I Cor 1:4; Eph 1:16; Phil 1:3; Col 1:3; I Thess 1:2; 3:9; II Thess 1:3; Philemon 1:4; etc., etc.).
8. Paul claimed Jehovah as his own God by *my God* (Phil 4:19; Ps 18:2,6,21,28,29; 118:28).
9. Reader, do you know the living and true God of heaven, Jehovah, as your own God?

B. *Through Jesus Christ.*
1. There is one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, by Whom we approach the Father (I Tim 2:5; Eph 2:18; Heb 4:14-16; 10:19-22; 13:15).
2. The Lord Jesus taught His apostles to pray to the Father in His name (John 16:23-24).
3. We pray, "In Jesus name," for very good reason, for He is our High Priest in heaven.
4. How can God save sinners? Only through Jesus Christ (Rom 3:26; Titus 3:4-7; Eph 2:7).

C. *For you all.*

1. These all are the called of Jesus Christ (1:6), beloved of God (1:7), and faithful (1:8).
2. He was not writing to all Romans, but to all Roman believers with these characteristics.
3. This must be a generalization, for every church has carnal members and even reprobates.

D. *That your faith.*
1. The first active thing he wrote about them was their faith, for which he was thankful.
2. The Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11 is for O.T. saints, but this verse for N.T. ones in Rome.
3. Our lives are like running a race before a great crowd of faithful spectators (Heb 12:1-4).
4. Faith is a very commendable matter, as Paul showed with Eunice and Lois (II Tim 1:5).
5. It is likely that the saints in Rome were enduring persecution at this time (8:18,35-37).
6. Faith is put to the test with opposition and difficulty (Hebrews 11:32-38; I Peter 1:6-9).
7. You can show your faith on the job … only with a bad boss (I Peter 2:18-23; Eph 6:5-8).

E. *Is spoken of.*
1. A life rightly lived will cause others to observe, consider, communicate it to others, and respond spiritually (Matthew 5:16; Galatians 1:23-24; Titus 2:9-10; I Peter 2:12; 3:15).
2. Spreading commendatory news about others is good, right, and scriptural (III John 1:12).
3. Paul described the church at Corinth as a living epistle read of all men (II Cor 3:2-3).
4. The Thessalonians were well known everywhere by word of mouth (I Thess 1:6-10).
5. How far and wide has your conversion and godly lifestyle spread by testimony of others?
6. Living Epistles of Christ.
7. God-Glorifying Lives.

F. *Throughout the whole world.*
1. Paul repeated this prepositional phrase about the Romans in other words again (16:19).
2. Here is evidence, though indirect, that the gospel had gone to the whole world, just as the apostles were charged, and just as they had performed (Matt 28:19-20; Mark 16:19-20).
3. Jesus prophesied the gospel would be preached worldwide before 70 A.D. (Matt 24:14).
4. It was preached that widely according to Paul's testimony (1:8; 10:18; 16:19,26; Acts 17:6; 21:28; 24:5; Col 1:5-6,23; I Tim 3:16).
5. We are not waiting for His prophecy to be fulfilled … by both context and its fulfillment.
6. The Great Commission was clearly apostolic by audience, power, timing, and fulfillment.
7. The Great Commission Fulfilled.

9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

A. *For God is my witness.*
1. He showed his tender regard for these saints by appealing to his many prayers for them.
2. To add to his credibility in the personal testimony he then gave, Paul swore by God.

3. O that all saints could thus swear about praying … praying *without ceasing* and *always*.
4. Swearing is using God's person or name to confirm your character or testimony, and Paul does it often, including again in this epistle (9:1; II Cor 1:23; 11:31; Gal 1:20; etc.).
5. Paul's frequent use of "God forbid" borders on swearing, if it is not so (3:4,6,31; etc.).
6. Swearing is an act of worship, if done in God's name, for a just and important cause, that you fully perform (Deut 10:20; Eccl 5:5; Jer 4:2; 5:2; Is 65:16; Heb 6:13-17; etc.).
7. In other words, swearing frivolously for small matters, or in any name or object other than God, or without the intent or activity to keep it is swearing condemned by the Bible.
8. Jesus and James condemned the swearing of the Pharisees. Compare Matthew 5:33-37 and James 5:12 with Matthew 23:16-22, which is a great lesson in Bible interpretation.
9. We deny Mennonites, Quakers, and Jehovah's Witnesses for rejecting any and all oaths.
10. When God is witness to your righteousness, there are benefits to follow (Ps 18:20-27).
11. But you better be righteous before you call on Him to witness it (Ps 139:23-24; 26:1-5).
12. Swearing and Oaths (a defense).

B. *Whom I serve with my spirit.*
   1. What a description of Paul's life … serving God by his own spirit in God's Son's gospel!
   2. Whom are you serving? Paul was committed to serve the God Who saved him by grace.
   3. He was not merely going through motions or giving lip service; His spirit was involved!
   4. One of the great sins described in the Bible is heartless religion (Isaiah 29:13; Mark 7:6).
   5. We speak of those high-spirited and intense-spirited, but let us have committed spirits.
   6. What good is our spirit, no matter how energetic, unless it is Spirit-led and serving

C. *In the gospel of his Son.*
   1. Paul basically stated, I am so committed to God and His Son's gospel that I pray like this.
   2. Paul basically stated, I am so committed in service to God I can call on Him as witness.
   3. Rather than arrogance, this is the confidence of consistent righteousness by faithful men.
   4. Service to God in the N.T. is commitment to the gospel, or good news, of Jesus Christ, which centers on God's Son, but includes church, word, Spirit, saints, ordinances, etc.

D. *That without ceasing.*
   1. The apostle that commanded prayer *without ceasing* fulfilled that very duty (I Thes 5:17).
   2. As in the commandment, *without ceasing* only means that he did not forget or give up.
   3. Importunate praying is one of the great rules for effective praying (Luke 11:5-8; 18:1-6).
   4. Not only should you persevere in prayer for your needs, but do it intensely (Rom 12:12).

E. *I make mention of you*
   1. Do not be overwhelmed by Paul's prayer habits, for he wisely stated he *made mention*.
   2. God knows what our needs are before prayer, so we only need make mention (Matt 6:8).
   3. You can do this! Do not be overwhelmed by Bible prayer standards. You can do this!

4. When Paul prayed, he made mention of the Romans saints, including thanksgiving (1:8).
5. It is part of prayer to include thanksgiving, just as we are carefully instructed (Phil 4:6-7).

F. *Always in my prayers*.
1. The apostle that commanded prayer *always* fulfilled that very duty (Ephesians 6:18).
2. As in the commandment, *always* only means that he did not forget or give up or quit.

10 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.

A. *Making request*.
1. Praying involves requests, and Paul's request was to be able to visit these Roman saints.
2. Paul's requests were preceded by thanksgiving (1:8), as he taught elsewhere (Phil 4:6-7).
3. Paul's prayers included thanksgiving (1:8), general request (1:9), and a visit (1:10).

B. *If by any means.*
1. He may not have known how he was going to get to Rome given his hard circumstances.
2. How did God get Paul to Rome? Caesar paid for his trip with guards (Acts 25:11-12)!

C. *Now at length*.
1. It had been a longstanding desire to visit them, as indicated by the words, *now at length.*
2. He had tried to visit them before, but had been hindered by circumstances (1:13; 15:23).
3. Luke recorded that Paul had expressed this desire while at Ephesus earlier (Acts 19:21).

D. *I might have a prosperous journey.*
1. Not all of Paul's journeys were prosperous, as his resume indicates (II Cor 11:25-27).
2. His journey to Rome would not be very prosperous either, as Luke wrote (Acts 27:20).
3. If you prosper, or even survive, in a trip or other endeavor, it is by God's gracious will.

E. *By the will of God.*
1. He will mention his dependence on God's will in this matter of travel again (15:32).
2. You will only prosper, in a journey or any other endeavor, by *God's will* (Jas 4:13-15).
3. Please note in James' description that God's will extends to life and doing "this, or that."
4. Paul had learned that *God's will* in his ministerial travels was exquisite (Acts 16:6-10).
5. God's will is able to locate a Lydia by a river or a eunuch without a river (Acts 8:26).
6. God has promised that those who seek Him with all their heart will find Him (Jer 29:13).
7. Therefore, it is a lifesaving matter to reach contentment with God's will (Psalm 127:1-2).
8. Do not measure God's will merely by "results," since He also sends the prosperity of fools to destroy men (Pr 1:32). Consider Sennacherib's "successes" (Is 10:5-19).

F. *To come unto you*.
1. He will describe his circumstances and desire to see them again in this epistle (15:22-25).

2. Paul had desired to visit the Roman saints at Ephesus, as Luke wrote (1:13; Acts 19:21).

11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;

A. *For I long to see you*.
   1. Here we may detect Paul's compassion and passion for souls, in this case, Roman saints.
   2. He longed to see them out of compassion and due to hindrances thus far (1:10,13; 15:23).
   3. There are other expressions in Paul's epistles of his compassion (Phil 1:7-8; 4:1; etc.).
   4. This is love … to impart spiritual help and establish others in the faith, far above feelings.
   5. To serve and perfect others in Christ is love's goal, even with saved strangers, as here.
   6. Paul was willing to spend and be spent, even for Corinth (II Cor 12:14-15). What love!

B. *That I may impart unto you some spiritual gift*.
   1. How would he impart some spiritual gift? By laying on hands to give the gift of miracles?
   2. Or that he would use some spiritual gift God had given him to minister to these saints?
   3. It is the latter and not the former explanation, for Paul as their apostle had many gifts.
   4. God's gifts are not to all men (I Cor 12:28-31), so Paul was not speaking of gifts to them.
   5. Paul's ministerial gifts would establish them in the faith, not in miracles (next clause).
   6. Though it was an apostolic privilege and power to dispense spiritual gifts (Acts 8:14-19; 19:6), Paul wrote to Rome as already having spiritual gifts before his arrival (12:3-8).
   7. By the context here, we understand Paul using his gifts to preach to them (1:12,15).
   8. By the context later, we understand Paul using his gifts to preach to them (15:24,29,32).
   9. This was Paul's explanation for the purpose of ministerial gifts (Ephesians 4:11-15).
   10. The clause is simple metonymy, where the cause is put for the effect to exalt the cause.
   11. Paul was not claiming to be able to help them in his flesh or strength or by his means.
   12. Reader, is it your first desire to see others so that you may impart to them a spiritual gift?
   13. God chose by spiritual gifts to build and beautify His saints and churches (Eph 4:8-15).
   14. Saints on their own, without an extra measure of grace, will be deformed and stunted.

C. *To the end ye may be established*.
   1. To be established is to be put on solid ground without danger or fear of being moved.
   2. In matters of the gospel, it is to have your faith confirmed in the true doctrine of Christ.
   3. **Establish**. To render stable or firm. **a**. To strengthen by material support (*obs.*). **b**. To ratify, confirm, validate (*obs.*). **c**. To confirm, settle (what is weak or wavering); to restore (health) permanently; to give calmness or steadiness to (the mind). [OED.]
   4. Notice that there is nothing here about being born again by Paul's evangelistic work.
   5. Saints established in the gospel and holiness is the goal (I Thes 3:11-13; II Thes 2:15-17).
   6. Stablished in the faith was Paul's great apostolic goal for the Romans and others (16:25; Col 2:6-8; I

Pet 5:10; II Pet 3:17-18).

7. Saints, not just pastors, should try to establish others in the faith (Heb 3:12-13; 10:23-25).

12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

A. *That is, that I may be comforted together with you*.

1. When the Holy Spirit provides, "That is," we are thankful for the help (7:18; 9:8; 10:6-8).
2. To avoid any perceived condescension by him, Paul explained his goals in mutual terms.
3. Having established his lofty position and practice in the gospel (1:1,9,11), he humbly admitted at this point how these saints in turn would be able to encourage him as well.
4. Paul looked forward to personal fellowship with them around the gospel (1:15; 15:24,32).
5. True fellowship is around the God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (I John 1:3-4).
6. Paul was very thankful for the fellowship that he had with the Philippians (Phil 1:3-5).
7. The first Spirit-filled believers continued in fellowship with the apostles (Acts 2:42-47).
8. Luke's history reveals that these Roman saints did encourage Paul in Italy (Acts 28:15).
9. Even ministers need the encouragement and refreshment of faithful saints (I Thess 3:6-8).
10. Notice that there is nothing here about being born again by Paul's evangelistic work.

B. *By the mutual faith both of you and me*.

1. Since both Paul and they believed the same thing, they could comfort one another in it.
2. How can two walk together unless they are agreed (Amos 3:3)? Paul and they did agree.
3. Paul graciously put their faith on a level with his by describing it as, "mutual faith."
4. Though Paul's personal faith was greater than most or any there, they held the same faith.
5. It is this *one another* duty in the truth that builds up the saints in the truth (Heb 10:23-25).
6. Remember this descriptive clause for what follows of Paul's desire to preach the gospel to them and its property of revealing God's righteousness from faith to faith (1:17).
7. Notice that there is nothing here about being born again by Paul's evangelistic work.
8. If the Arminian scheme is true, then Paul's choice cost lost men their eternal souls in hell

13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

A. *Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren*.

1. Paul reassured them again of his desire to visit by recalling many efforts to do so (1:11).
2. Though they had little way of knowing such a thing, he tells them so by this verse.
3. Hearing reports of his preaching elsewhere, they might have wondered about his interest.

B. *That oftentimes I purposed to come unto you*.
   1. The capital and center of the empire was a great place to build and establish the gospel.
   2. Paul was conscious of this church with many Gentiles and had sought often to visit them.
   3. Your purposes do not always fit God's plans, especially relative to timing, though He will direct your steps to the most prosperous use of your hearts' desires (Pr 16:9; Ruth 2:1-3).

C. *But was let hitherto*.
   1. The word *let* means to hinder, prevent, obstruct, restrain, or withhold, which is the opposite of our current usage (II Thess 2:6-7), which makes the KJV a trap for scorners.
   2. Paul was hindered by circumstances, for he was a busy man elsewhere (15:19-24).
   3. Paul was hindered by God's providence, which directed his travels (1:10; Acts 16:6-12).
   4. Paul was hindered by Satan's efforts to hinder his gospel ministry (I Thess 2:18; Dan 10:13; Zech 3:1).
   5. Paul was hindered by devilish men (Acts 13:6-12; II Cor 11:13-15; II Tim 3:8; 4:15).

D. *hat I might have some fruit among you also*.
   1. What fruit? The fruit of a minister's labors is to see believers grow in grace and works.
   2. He had fruit in other places (Col 1:6; I Thess 2:13), so he sought fruit in Rome also.
   3. Jesus ordained His apostles to bring forth fruit by their ministries (John 4:36; 15:16).
   4. He had every intention to accomplish with the Romans what he had done elsewhere.

E. *Even as among other Gentiles*.
   1. He had every intention to accomplish with the Romans what he had done elsewhere.
   2. He had fruit among the Colossians and at Thessalonica (Colossians 1:6; I Thess 2:13).
   3. He had built up churches in others places to be mighty in obedience and gospel fruit.
   4. If the Arminian scheme is true, then Paul's choice cost lost men their eternal souls in hell.

14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.

A. *I am debtor.*
   1. What put Paul in debt? Persecuting Christians (Acts 9:16; I Cor 15:9-10; I Tim 1:12-16).
   2. What put Paul in debt? God's choice of him to ministry (I Cor 9:15-17; II Tim 1:8-12).
   3. What put Paul in debt? Jesus Christ's great love and death for him (II Cor 5:13-15).
   4. What put Paul in debt? The message he carried was incontrovertibly great (I Tim 3:16).
   5. What put Paul in debt? His desire to bring this salvation news to the elect (II Tim 2:8-10).

B. *Both to the Greeks*.
   1. Greeks in the Bible may be inhabitants or citizens of Greece or descendents from them.
   2. Sometimes Paul used it for those of that nationality, for he was in Greece (I Cor 1:22-24).
   3. When in Athens around Greeks, Paul was stirred in his spirit to testify (Acts 17:16-31).
   4. Greeks may be a synecdoche (a part used for the whole) for Gentiles (Acts 19:10,17).

5. Sometimes Paul used “Greeks” for Gentiles in distinction to the Jews (1:16; Gal 3:28).
6. Greeks were civilized, educated, enlightened, polished, and refined compared to others.
7. There is no Jew-Gentile distinction here in this verse. It will come very shortly (1:16).
8. Contrasted to Barbarians, we understand Paul meant civilized, educated, and refined men.

C. *And to the Barbarians*.
1. This word Barbarian was to designate all those nations not as enlightened as the Greeks.
2. We use *Third World* to describe severely handicapped nations that are behind the rest.
3. This term is also used for those not familiar with languages, as in tongues (I Cor 14:11).
4. A segment of the human race, less educated and cultured compared to Greeks (Col 3:11).

D. *Both to the wise*.
1. The wise are not the wise in Christ, for they would have little need of Paul’s assistance.
2. The wise are not the worldly wise, for Paul had no interest in them (I Cor 1:19-21; 2:1-5).

E. *And to the unwise*.
1. The unwise are not ignorant babes in Christ, for how could he help them (I Cor 14:20)?
2. The unwise are not worldly fools, but rather uneducated like Barbarians (Matt 11:25-27).

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

A. This verse and the next are glorious, and they are ours, not Arminians, who daily abuse them.
1. We agree with Paul that the gospel has content that makes it the greatest news ever told.
2. They do not know how the gospel is God’s power nor how faith relates to righteousness.
3. They see the gospel an offer of synergistic salvation for jails, not Roman believers (1:15).
4. They never reconcile reprobate minds with all men coming to the knowledge of the truth.

B. This verse and the next are the basis and summary of Paul’s doctrine for the next 11 chapters.
1. These two verses provide the germ of Paul’s argument for his instruction to the Romans.
2. Consider the *gospel … power of God … salvation … every one that believeth … Jews and Greeks … righteousness of God … revealed … faith …* and the *just*.
3. Here is where we make several important distinctions to rightly guide our whole study.
4. How we interpret and apply these verses determine how we interpret and apply the rest.
5. These verses do not solve Romans, but the interpretation must be consistent with them.
6. Here is where our minority position on the epistle is seen, as we reject interpretations to fit Arminianism or Calvinism – http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/calvinism-arminianism.pdf.
7. It is sickening, and it is difficult, to undo the abuse and corruption of this verse by those who have turned its words into a mantra by caring only for the sound of the words.
8. Some will say, “But you have to work so hard on these two verses, and we just take them in their

plain meaning" (using them as sound bites). We say in response that it is indeed hard work to rightly divide the word of truth (II Tim 2:15), and we wonder why they utterly pervert Hebrews 4:12 and Revelation 3:20 and cannot interpret Hebrews 10:25-31.

9. Let us summarize the verse this way in different words that present the sense (Neh 8:8): *I cannot wait to preach the gospel to you Roman believers, for the good news it reveals is glorious indeed, as it describes God's wonderful power in saving us by Jesus Christ, whether we are Jews or Gentiles*.
10. Our minority position was held by Samuel Richardson, a Baptist signer of the First London Confession (1644) – Justification By Christ Alone.

C. *For I am not ashamed.*

1. As the coordinating conjunction *for* indicates, this verse is connected to the previous one.
2. Paul was not ashamed to preach the gospel to these believers in Rome also (1:11-15).
3. Paul preached to kings, by a river, to philosophers, to honorable women, in a hired house with his own soldier, to a jailor, to barbarians, in tongues, in synagogues, to Roman soldiers, to the Jewish leadership, in Hebrew, to Caesar's household, in Illyricum, etc.
4. The gospel was thought inferior to the philosophical enlightenment of educated Greeks, which he had just mentioned in the immediate context, which might shame some (1:14).
5. The gospel was seen as inferior to the glory of the Jew's system and hopes. See Hebrews.
6. The gospel was a stumblingblock to the Jews and foolishness to Greeks (I Cor 1:21-24).
7. Rome was the center of the world at this time, yet the gospel has no shame in such places.
8. Paul exhorted against shame in the gospel (Rom 9:33; 10:11; II Tim 1:8,12; I Pet 4:16).
9. David knew that God's word contained glorious things fit for princes (Psalm 119:46).
10. Yet the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is even more glorious (I Timothy 3:16; 6:13-16).
11. It includes a faithful saying, mysteries, and future events far beyond man's experience or imagination (I Tim 1:15; 3:16; I Cor 2:7-10; 4:1; 15:51; II Cor 8:9; 9:15; Col 1:25-27)!
12. Are you ashamed at all of Jesus' name or His gospel? Prayer? Holiness? Righteousness?
13. The Bible and its revelation are a textbook and information infinitely superior to others.
14. For further detail of a saying – /sermons/2002/jesus-came-for-sinners/.
15. For further detail of mysteries – /sermons/2013/great-mystery-of-godliness/.
16. For further detail of mysteries – /sermons/series/mysteries-of-hidden-wisdom/.For further detail about the Bible – /sermons/2009/textbook-of-textbooks/.

D. *Of the gospel of Christ.*

1. The gospel of Christ should be properly understood to avoid confusion about its nature.
2. **Gospel**. The Old English *godspel* = good tidings: god (good) + spel (to announce).
3. Our English scriptures are sufficient to provide the same definition (Rom 10:15; Is 52:7).
4. The word *gospel* as a simple noun means good news, glad tidings, joyful information, etc.
5. The gospel *reveals* news (1:17), *brings it to light* (II Tim 1:10), and *publishes* (Is 52:7).
6. The longer version of these words began the chapter – *the gospel of God* … (Rom 1:1-4).

7. (which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; But let it always be and only be the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, for no other message no matter how sweet will do (I Cor 1:22-24; 2:2; 3:11-15; Gal 6:14; Phil 3:8; Heb 13:9).
8. In perilous times when fables replace sound doctrine and truth for most so-called Christians (II Tim 4:3-4), we must reject all forms of a prosperity or social gospel … humanistic or natural lessons for success and prosperity … emphasis on healing and miracles … political agendas to change the world or introduce the millennium … etc.
9. It describes God's love of damned sinners and His wise and powerful provision of a Saviour for them according to the good pleasure of His own discriminating will to save them from every evil thing in themselves, in the world, and from His own perfect justice.
10. It describes the Lord Jesus Christ from the Seed of the Woman (Gen 3:15) to the King of kings (Rev 19:11-16) and soon appearing Groom of believers (Rev 19:5-10; 22:20)!
11. Avoid giving the word a sacramental sense like Catholics as a virtuous thing itself, as if the four Gospels or the sound of Gospel reading or the sound of words has intrinsic value, or we will carry the gospel around in the same manner as they carry the host or chrism!

E. *For it is the power of God.*
1. The sense in which the gospel is God's power is a very crucial and critical distinction.
2. Many hold the gospel as having sacramental power itself or as the potent means that can bring about the eternal salvation of those that were previously dead and damned in sin.
3. Many believe election is fully conditional on man's reception of the gospel. We deny.
4. Many believe the merits of Christ's death depend on his belief of the gospel. We deny.
5. Many believe reception of the gospel is the powerful means of regeneration. We deny.
6. Rather than the gospel itself being God's power, we understand it to reveal God's power.
7. Rather than the gospel itself being God's power, believers are informed of God's power.
8. Rather than the gospel itself being God's power, it is received by some as telling of it.
9. Rather than the gospel itself being God's power, it is perceived as disclosing it by some.
10. The immediate context says the gospel *reveals* salvation, but is not salvation itself (1:17).
11. The gospel is the good news or glad tidings or joyful information about God's power.
12. The sense of the phrase is simple – for the good news is the power of God unto salvation!
13. The wording here should be compared to the fuller, plainer passage in I Cor 1:18,22-24.
14. To those perishing the gospel is foolishness, but those saved perceive it as God's power.
15. Is the gospel intrinsically, literally, or actually foolishness? No, it is only heard as such!
16. Jewish minds stumbled due to Jewish fables; Greek minds considered it beneath them.
17. But those chosen to salvation considered it a revelation of God's power and wisdom.
18. For more detail of I Cor 1:17-31 – /sermons/series/2004/1-corinthians-1/.
19. Some accuse us of limiting the gospel's power, but their gospel is an impotent joke in the lives of

most that believe it or make a decision for Jesus, for the lives of the vast majority show that nothing changed. Our powerful God saves, and the gospel says so.

20. Some say, What about Hebrews 4:12 and power? We say, It is the living Word (4:13-14)!
21. Some say, What of I Cor 4:15 and power? We say, Why did Paul do it again (Gal 4:19)!
22. Some say, What of I Pet 1:23 and power? We say, Christ the living Word (cp I Pet 1:25)!
23. Some say, What of James 1:18 and power? We say, God's will by living Word Creator!
24. But Jesus denied the gospel had power of its own to save men, no matter what methods were used to enhance it to an unregenerate audience (Luke 16:27-31; John 5:39-40).
25. God must work His great power in us before we can or will believe the gospel – the same power that raised Jesus from the dead (Eph 1:19-20; 2:1-7).
26. The gospel brings forth into activity what God has previously worked in us, including the gift and grace of faith (Phil 2:12-13; Gal 5:23; II Pet 1:1-5).
27. Paul did not carry the gospel to powerfully regenerate at Rome's malls, prisons, hospitals, orphanages, Coliseum, or brothels – he wanted to preach it to the Roman saints (1:8-15)!
28. The gospel does not bring life and immortality – it only brings it *to light* (II Tim 1:9-10).
29. The gospel does not bring reconciliation – it is only the good *word* of it (II Cor 5:18-21).
30. What power does the gospel describe? A virgin birth (Luke 1:35), forgiving sins (Matt 9:6), laying down a life and taking it again (John 10:18), to give eternal life to those given (John 17:2; II Tim 1:8-9), all power in heaven and earth (Matt 28:18), for giving life to men (John 5:25-29), for an endless life of intercession (Heb 7:16), for the power of His resurrection and ascension (II Cor 13:4; Eph 1:19-20), to raise us from the dead spiritually (Eph 1:19-20; 2:1-3), to raise our bodies (I Cor 6:14), for His work in saints (Rom 15:13; 16:25; II Cor 12:9; Eph 3:20; 6:10; Col 1:11; I Pet 1:5; II Pet 1:3), etc., etc.

F. *Unto salvation.*

1. The gospel, or good news, or glad tidings, brings the information of how God saves men.
2. God has powerfully saved His elect, and the gospel of Christ tells believing elect about it!
3. The only salvation coming by way of the gospel is one of assurance, comfort, and understanding, not one of eternal life from hell to heaven, which requires rightly dividing the phases of salvation (I Cor 15:2; Phil 2:12; I Tim 4:16; James 2:14-26; 5:19-20; etc.).
4. The gospel cannot give life, for those perishing consider it foolishness (I Cor 1:18,22-23).
5. The gospel cannot give life, for the natural man cannot and will not believe (I Cor 2:14).
6. The gospel cannot give life, for it is a savor of death unto death, not life (II Cor 2:14-16).
7. The gospel cannot give life, for those under Satan's spell will not believe it (II Cor 4:3-4).
8. The gospel cannot give life, for believers already have life (I Cor 1:18,24; II Co 2:14-16)!
9. The nature of man prior to regeneration precludes any help from the gospel, for he does not need help or news of help – he needs life, and only God can give eternal life!
10. Man is dead in hearing, so preaching long or loud will not change him (John 8:43,47).
11. Man is dead in seeing, so he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3; Matthew 13:14).

12. Man is dead in understanding: he cannot comprehend the gospel (John 1:5; Rom 3:11).
13. Man is dead in his affection, so he has no desire to believe or obey (Ps 14:2-3; Ro 8:7-8).
14. For more detail of salvation – Seven Proofs of Unconditional Salvation.
15. For more of salvation's phases – Five Phases of Salvation: When Were You Saved?
16. For why we preach the gospel – /sermons/series/why-preach-the-gospel/.
17. For why no invitations – /sermons/2002/why-no-invitation/.

G. *To every one that believeth.*
   1. Get these points down solidly – only the elect can or ever will believe, only those justified by Christ can or will believe, and only the regenerate can or will believe.
   2. There is nothing in this text about offering eternal life to anyone or carrying it to them.
   3. No one but chosen and ordained sheep believe (I Cor 1:24-31; Acts 13:48; John 10:26)!
   4. Only believers get excited about the gospel (Acts 13:48; Romans 1:12; I Peter 2:6-8).
   5. Therefore, you are bound to give thanks to God, not the gospel preacher (II Thess 2:13).
   6. Rather than this text teaching that all those saved must or will believe, it is rather teaching that belief of the gospel establishes a person in the proper basis of their salvation – the power of God in Christ Jesus to save His elect in all phases of salvation.
   7. If you believe the gospel, you were powerfully drawn to it (John 6:44,65; Acts 16:14).
   8. If you believe the gospel, you were regenerated before believing (Jn 5:24; I Jn 4:15; 5:1).
   9. The N.T. was written to assure believers of eternal life on the ground of faith (I Jn 5:13).
   10. Therefore, we clearly grasp Paul's desire to teach faithful saints at Rome, for they were beloved of God, called to be saints, and full of faith to benefit from the gospel (1:6-15)!
   11. Paul did not preach for the salvation of men without faith, but those with it (II Thess 3:2).
   12. Therefore, his chosen method of operation was to find men with faith in synagogues or where prayer was wont to be made (Acts 16:13; 17:2-3), seeking the elect (II Tim 2:10).
   13. This epistle, containing the gospel of God, was for a church of faithful saints in need of further establishment in the grace and power of God against vain confidence in the law.

H. *To the Jew first.*
   1. Both elect Jews and elect Greeks (Gentiles) could benefit, though God did have an order.
   2. Jesus was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel – the Jews (Matt 15:24; Rom 15:8).
   3. He charged His apostles with a very specific order of gospel preaching (Acts 1:8; 13:46).

I. *And also to the Greek.*
   1. Both elect Jews and elect Greeks (Gentiles) could benefit, though God did have an order.
   2. Rather than the limited nature of the Old Testament to the house of Israel (Ps 147:19-20), the gospel is for all men of every nation that will believe (1:5; 16:25-27).

J. Reader, what will you do with the right understanding of this summary text of the gospel?
   1. Never be *ashamed* of Jesus Christ, His gospel, or the necessity of free salvation by Him.

2. Never allow the *gospel of Jesus Christ* to be corrupted with anything else that is so common and popular today – keep Jesus Christ and Him crucified the preeminent focus.
3. Seek, learn, rejoice, and give thanks for God's *power* exercised on your behalf (Ep 1:19).
4. Remember that you are bound to give thanks always to God for *salvation,* where belief of the truth follows God's choice and sanctification of the Spirit (II Thess 2:13).
5. *Believe* on Jesus Christ to lay hold on eternal life, and then believe some more (I Jn 5:13).
6. Valid *belief* of the truth will have works (I Thess 1:2-4; James 2:14-26; II Peter 1:5-11).
7. As a *Greek* (Gentile), you must give thanks to God for salvation and the good news of it.

15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

A. *So, as much as in me is*.
   1. Because his spirit was committed (1:9) and he was a debtor for various reasons (1:14), Paul was fully sold out to Jesus Christ and His gospel (I Cor 9:15-27; II Cor 5:12-15).
   2. He had tried to visit them many times before but had been hindered in doing so (1:10,13).
   3. He had a very good and powerful reason to visit them – to help them spiritually (1:11,13).
   4. Because he was a debtor to all kinds of men (1:14), Paul was eager to meet the Romans.
   5. Paul gave everything he could give for gospel salvation for the elects' sake (II Tim 2:10).
   6. He fought a good fight and kept the faith until he had finished his course (II Tim 4:7).
   7. He worked hard, stayed focused, never looked back (Lu 9:62; I Cor 15:10; II Tim 2:4).
   8. He had no reservations or hindrances that would keep him from preaching to the Romans.
   9. He had no fear or shame of the gospel he taught, as the next verse will declare, even in the capital city of the pagan Roman Empire (1:16).

B. *I am ready to preach the gospel*.
   1. Paul was a preacher of the gospel out of necessity by God's call of him (I Cor 9:15-27).
   2. Paul did not baptize as much as he preached, for that was his great calling (I Cor 1:17).
   3. Paul was always ready to preach Jesus Christ from the beginning (Acts 9:20; 17:16-18).
   4. What did he preach? Only Jesus Christ crucified (I Cor 1:22-23; 2:2; 3:10-11; Gal 6:14).
   5. How did he preach? Without human art or wisdom (I Cor 1:17; 2:1,4-5,13; II Cor 10:10).

C. *To you that are at Rome also*.
   1. As he will tell them, he had preached all around from Jerusalem to Illyricum (15:19).
   2. Now he was committed and desirous of getting to Rome to preach to these saints as well.
   3. His desire was not to preach to all Romans, but to faithful saints in Rome (1:6-8,11-12).
   4. Think! Paul identified his audience's faith as known worldwide. Why waste time there?
   5. Think! Preaching to Paul was not traveling to orphanages and prisons to the unregenerate.
   6. Think! Paul, in a very popular gospel-preaching context, wanted to preach to believers.

7. Think! Paul found some elect, and He wanted to establish them (II Tim 2:10; Rom 1:11).
8. If the Arminian scheme is true, then Paul's choice cost lost men their eternal souls in hell.
9. It is a heretical travesty that most assume preaching is merely to elicit a decision and then go on to the next audience, though Paul proves here a different motive and audience.
10. The gospel can and does only benefit believers (I Cor 1:18,24; 15:2,19; II Cor 2:14-17).
11. The gospel cannot help the natural man (I Cor 2:14; John 3:3; 8:43,47; 10:26; Ro 8:7-8).
12. A man must be sanctified by the Holy Spirit before he can or will believe (II Thess 2:13).
13. Paul's method to find the elect is seen at Thessalonica and Athens (Acts 17:1-4,16-18).
14. For further detail about the gospel – /sermons/series/why-preach-the-gospel/.
15. For further detail about the gospel – /sermons/2002/why-no-invitation/.

17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

A. This and verse sixteen are the basis and summary for Paul's argument for 11 chapters.
   1. These two verses provide the germ of Paul's argument for his instruction to the Romans.
   2. Consider the *gospel … power of God … salvation … every one that believeth … Jews and Greeks … righteousness of God … revealed … faith …* and the *just*.
   3. Here is where we make several important distinctions to rightly guide our whole study.
   4. How we interpret and apply these verses determine how we interpret and apply the rest.
   5. These verses do not solve Romans, but the interpretation must be consistent with them.
   6. Here is where our minority position on the epistle is seen, as we reject interpretations to fit Arminianism or Calvinism – http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/calvinism-arminianism.pdf.
   7. It is sickening, and it is difficult, to undo the abuse and corruption of this verse by those who have turned its words into a mantra by caring only for the sound of the words.
   8. Some will say, "But you have to work so hard on these two verses, and we just take them in their plain meaning" (using them as sound bites). We say in response that it is indeed hard work to rightly divide the word of truth (II Tim 2:15), and we wonder why they utterly pervert Hebrews 4:12 and Revelation 3:20 and cannot interpret Hebrews 10:25-31.
   9. Let us summarize the verse this way in different words that present the sense (Neh 8:8): *The gospel shows the glorious way in which God has made damned sinners righteous in His sight, which causes believers to rejoice, for even the O.T. taught the Jews that God's elect were to live lives of faith.*
   10. Our minority position was held by Samuel Richardson, a Baptist signer of the First London Confession (1644) – Justification By Christ Alone.

B. *For therein.*
   1. As the coordinating conjunction *for* indicates, this verse is connected to the previous one.
   2. What is in the context that this verse relates back to? The gospel just described (1:16).
   3. It is in the gospel we learn of justification, or being made righteous in the sight of God.

C. *Is the righteousness of God.*
    1. God is righteous, and the words, *righteousness of God*, can refer to it (3:5; James 1:20).
    2. However, the words also describe that righteousness we must have in order to stand before Him without blame or guilt (3:21-22; 10:3; II Cor 5:21).
    3. The righteousness of God here is that legal standing of justification before God with the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ to our account.
    4. This is a most important concept … how shall man be just with God (Job 9:2; 15:14; 25:4; Ps 130:3)? Justification and righteousness before God is the theme of this epistle.

D. Revealed
    1. The gospel *reveals* how sinners are righteous before God, but it does not make them so.
    2. The gospel brings life and immortality *to light*, but it does not bring them (II Tim 1:9-10).
    3. The gospel is *the word* of reconciliation with God, but not reconciliation (II Cor 5:18-21).
    4. The gospel *publishes* peace and salvation, but it does not bring either of them (Is 52:7).
    5. The gospel, or good news, tells us how God made us righteous through Christ, but it does not help anyone become literally or legally righteous before God, which is Christ's work.
    6. The means of righteousness are not described here but by reference to God's power in Christ Jesus that the previous verse described (1:16).

E. *From faith to faith.*
    1. What did Paul mean by the gospel revealing righteousness before God *from faith to faith?*
    2. The confusion on these words is great and the various opinions are legion. Can we know?
    3. The gospel is only profitable to reveal God's justifying righteousness to believers (1:16).
    4. Believing preachers without any shame are the ones that rightly preach the gospel (1:16).
    5. Paul stated his desire and intentions to preach the gospel to the faithful in Rome (1:15).
    6. Paul has described the potential benefit of their mutual faith working together (1:12).
    7. He will return to this very same line of simple reasoning later in the epistle (10:6-8).
    8. God's gospel reveals justification from faithful preachers to faithful hearers (10:14-15).
    9. Sometimes such a repetition means a progression or growth in a trait, as in II Cor 3:18, but the language here does not easily lend itself to that interpretation.

F. *As it is written.*
    1. The quotation is from Habakkuk 2:4, where God explains coming judgment by Babylon.
    2. For more detail about Habakkuk – http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/habakkuk.pdf.

G. *The just shall live by faith.*
    1. In the face of dilemmas, danger, or fear, God's elect and just are always to live by faith.
    2. From Abel on, including Abraham, the foundation, lifestyle, and perspective for pleasing God is to live by faith in Him and His promises, providence, rewards, etc. (Heb 11:1-6).
    3. Abraham (Gen 15:6; 22:12) and Phinehas (Ps 106:30-31) lived by faith and works, but this did not legally justify them before God, though it justified them in their consciences, showed to others that

they were just, and gave Paul arguments against Jewish legalists!

4. The text in Habakkuk or here does not say anything about getting eternal life by faith.
5. The Hall of Faith (Heb 11) is a list of elect and justified men who obtained a good report by faith; it does not teach they obtained election, justification, or regeneration by faith.
6. Paul stated an axiom for Christians – we walk by faith, not by sight (II Corinthians 5:7).
7. The quoted expression supported in germ form Paul's argument for faith over works to counter the Jewish legalists who emphasized the works of Moses' law over faith.
8. The basis or foundation of New Testament religion is faith, which was necessary for the right revelation of justification between Paul and his hearers, but introduced in the O.T.
9. Since a character trait of justified men is faith, and since Paul had already identified the faith of the Romans, he made the connection here to support preaching to them (1:15-17).
10. Not all men have faith, for it is a gift from God (II Thess 3:2; II Pet 1:1-5; Gal 5:22), thus anyone living by faith and rejoicing in the gospel by faith is proving himself elect.
11. While we are to live by faith, we must add to our faith to prove salvation (II Pet 1:5-11).
12. While we live by faith, faith without works is quite worthless (I Thes 1:2-4; Jas 2:14-26).
13. For more about faith and works – /sermons/series/salvation-by-works/.
14. For more about faith and works – /sermons/series/james-2/.
15. For more about faith and works – /sermons/2006/once-saved-always-saved/.
16. For Abram's justification – When Was Abraham Justified?

H. Reader, do you grasp the precious interlude, the great salvation, before the storm of 1:18-32?
   1. The coordinating conjunction *for* that follows indicates the connection of Paul's thought.
   2. By nature and practice you are guilty of all that follows in principle or fact. Fear God!
   3. But His redemption of your soul is precious, and the evidence and claim is first by faith.
   4. You should appreciate deliverance from wrath to come (5:9; I Thess 1:10; 5:9; Eph 2:3).
   5. Have you believed the gospel of God's Son – the Gentiles did not even believe Creation?

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

A. This verse begins Paul's argument to condemn all men, Jews or Gentiles, under God's wrath.
   1. His argument, made up of several subordinate arguments, runs from verse 1:18 to 3:20.
   2. He will show the Gentiles condemned before God first, which will run from 1:18 to 2:16.
   3. He will then show the Jews condemned before God, which will run from 2:17 to 3:20.
   4. Remember creation (1:20), providence (1:21), nature (1:26-27,31), conscience (1:32; 2:12-16), and scripture (3:1-4) as five teachers of truth: each of which consider in its turn.
   5. If these two chapters do not condemn you to hopelessness, you are willfully ignorant.
   6. We may be thankful the Spirit introduced salvation (1:16) and justification (1:17) first, neither of

which can be rightly appreciated without considering God's wrath against sin.

7. In the light of human rebellion and condemnation that Paul will describe (1:18 – 3:20), the salvation of 1:16 and the justification of 1:17 take on their glorious beauty and value.

B. For

1. This simple coordinating conjunction, the third in a row, ties this verse to those before it.
2. The value of knowing salvation (1:16) and justification (1:17) is because of God's wrath.
3. In other words … the need of salvation (1:16) and justification (1:17) is due to His wrath!
4. The faith of the just, the last idea of the previous verse, is needed to survive the lesson!

C. *The wrath of God.*

1. The wrath of God is not a popular subject, yet it is a major theme of the Bible, and it opens the Bible (Gen 2:17; 3:14-19; 6:13) and closes the Bible (Rev 21:8,27; 22:11-19).
2. Because God operates in His ways at His timing, some think He is not angry (Ps 50:21).
3. Most reject or ignore the wrath of God, to hype His love of all men, such as *The Four Spiritual Laws*, which begins, "God loves you, and has a wonderful plan for your life."
4. Most preaching today neglects this subject in order to attract and multiply carnal and unregenerate hearers and seduce them into a deep sleep.
5. God is angry against the wicked every day (Ps 5:5; 7:11-12; 9:16-17; Is 48:22; 57:21).
6. God takes vengeance upon His enemies (Deut 32:35-43; Nah 1:1-6; Revelation 11:18).
7. God is willing to show His wrath and power – He is not ashamed of it (Romans 9:23).
8. The ignorance and rebellion against 70 A.D. is an example of willful ignorance, for the destruction was horrific and the prophecies clear and detailed (Mal 4:5; Matt 3:7; 21:41; 24:21; Luke 19:43-44; 23:28-31; I Thess 2:16; Heb 10:25-31).
9. Before you get to die (a judgment) and face His great white throne (the Final Judgment), you can be judged every which way by the wrath of God, Who can tear you to pieces!
10. One example of His fury is turning Israel over to sacrifice their children (Ezek 20:21-26).
11. The wrath of One Who is omnipotent (Ps 2:12; 76:7; 90:11), omniscient (Jer 17:10; Heb 4:12-14), holy (Ps 5:5; I Pet 1:15-16), and righteous (Nah 1:3) should cause us to fear.
12. Jesus warned His disciples to fear no one in comparison to fearing God (Luke 12:4-5).
13. God's justice grinds slow, but it grinds small: ask Noah's enemies (I Pet 3:20; Gen 6:3).
14. God's anger against His people is different from that against the wicked (I Cor 11:29-32).
    a. Against His people is short in duration (Ps 30:5; 85:1-10; 89:30-34; 103:9; Mic 7:18).
    b. Against His people ends in comfort and mercy (Isaiah 12:1; Mic 7:18-21; Job 35:15).
15. Knowing about God's wrath should persuade us to obedience (Psalm 4:4; II Cor 5:11).
16. Knowing about God's wrath should move us to joyful singing of praise to our dreadful and terrible God (Ps 9:11-20; 47:1-9; 48:1-11; 66:1-7; 83:1-18; 145:1-9).
17. Knowing about our salvation from His wrath is glorious (Ex 11:7; Eph 2:3; I Thess 5:9)!
18. The wrath of the most terrible man on earth or devil in hell is nothing compared to God's.

D. *Is revealed.*

1. Our religion is revealed religion. It is not by rationalization, research, or human means.
2. Remember creation (1:20), providence (1:21), nature (1:26-27,31), conscience (1:32; 2:12-16), and scripture (3:1-4) as five teachers of truth: each of which consider in its turn.
3. The Law, the Old Testament message, included news about God's wrath against sinners.
    a. Just the giving of the Law was so terrible that it made Moses fear (Heb 12:18-21).
    b. How many psalms declare the glory of God's terror against sinners (Psalm 76:1-12)?
    c. The terms of the Law were unbelievably harsh to "minor" offences (Deut 25:11-12).
    d. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity (Ps 5:5).
    e. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God (Psalm 9:17).
    f. Solomon concluded his inspired philosophy with a warning of judgment (Eccl 12:14).
4. The gospel, the New Testament message, includes news of God's wrath against sinners.
    a. In Romans, Paul taught a day of wrath and judgment (2:5,16; 5:9), His righteousness in it (3:4-6), His sovereign choice in it (9:21-24), and a repetition of it (14:9-12).
    b. Peter explained his office to Cornelius as including Jesus Christ as Judge (Ac 10:42).
    c. Paul did not spare his famous audience in Athens, though unsolicited (Acts 17:29-31).
    d. Paul did not spare Felix the governor from Rome, though his captor (Acts 24:24-25).
    e. Paul said he persuaded men based on knowing the terror of the Lord (II Cor 5:9-11).
    f. A fundamental aspect of the gospel of Jesus Christ is eternal judgment (Heb 6:1-2).
    g. This chapter and verse here are part of the revelation of God's wrath against men.
5. Large events against the world, nations, and men show God's wrath against enemies.
    a. When men ignore or downplay the Flood, they are willingly ignorant (II Pet 3:5-7), which most or every ancient nation on earth has some tradition concerning this event.
    b. But consider also Babel (Gen 11:1-9), burning of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:24-25; Jude 1:7), plagues of Egypt (Ex 9:16; 18:10-11; I Sam 4:8; 6:6), annihilation of Canaanites (De 2:25; 28:10; Joshua 2:9-11), hemorrhoids in Philistia (I Sam 6:1-12), destruction of Sennacherib's army (Is 37:36-38), Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 2:46-49; 3:28-30; 4:1-3,34-37), Darius (Dan 6:25-28), Cyrus (Ezra 1:1-4), birth of Christ (Matt 2:1-3; Luke 2:15-20); darkened sun and earthquake at Christ's death (Matt 26:45-54), Christ's resurrection (Matt 28:11-15), destruction of Jerusalem (Matt 24:14), destruction of Rome (Rev 18:1-8), and other events (Jer 32:20)!
    c. Natural calamities destroy many, like the 2004 tsunami in Muslim and Hindu countries, which killed over 227,000.
    d. The only reason these events are ignored is a rebellious choice to not retain (1:28)!
6. Providence is God's government of the world and resulting favor or punishment of men.
    a. Good providence is a witness of God's goodness to men, for which they should be thankful (1:21), and for which they should love and serve Him (1:21; Acts 14:15-18).
    b. The blessed and terrible God even loves enemies this merciful way (Matt 5:43-48).

c. But even pagans and Barbarians understand evil providence as God's judgment, and they know chance events are in His control (Jonah 1:4-5,7,14,16; Acts 28:4).
d. Children are born deformed, born retarded, die before birth, die after birth, etc.
e. He appointed boundaries of nations to force men to consider Him (Acts 17:22-28).
f. God's goodness should bring repentance (2:4), but it does not (Psalm 17:14; 73:12).
g. Even pagans will say, "He must be living right," when they observe unusual blessing.

7. Though its timing may confuse the best of saints, there is certain wrath and judgment coming from God for all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men (Ps 73:15-20; 49:12-20; 37:1-13; 50:16-22; 58:1-11; Prov 3:31-35; 24:1; Rev 6:9-11).

E. *From heaven.*
1. It does not say *by the heavens*, for more is intended than thunderstorms or twinkling stars, though they and other similar things can reveal His wrath (I Sam 7:10; Judges 5:20; etc.).
2. It does not say *by heaven*, for heavens declaring God's glory is next (1:20 cp Ps 19:1-6).
3. The living and true God dwells in heaven, so His wrath comes from there, contrary to any idol or man on earth, which is why Daniel called Him the God *of heaven* (Dan 2:18-19,37) and watchers came *from heaven* against Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 4:13,23,31-37).
4. Consider how the psalmist described God's wrath and judgment *from heaven* (Ps 76:7-9).
5. The expression *from heaven* implies and indicates the divine nature and decree of the coming wrath, for it is by God's certain appointment (Acts 17:31; I Thess 5:9; Heb 9:27).
6. The revelation of the wrath is not the same as the revelation of the truth that brings wrath, for the greatest wrath by far is yet to come, which Paul includes in context (2:5-6,16).
7. God is in heaven, and so the wrath of God comes down from heaven on men, just as the Lord Jesus Christ shall descend from heaven to judge the earth very soon (II Thess 1:7).
8. Why should our words be few? Because God is in heaven, and we are on earth (Eccl 5:2).
9. Heaven, the place of God's throne, is where His works of wrath are decreed (Acts 15:18).
10. Heaven is a holy place, but God is holy and justly righteous in wrath against man's sins.
11. Yet, we will not deny that God's wrath is revealed, or known, by the judgments that He executes upon men, for the Bible declares it, and there are many examples above, under the phrase, *is revealed* (Ps 9:16; 58:10-11; 83:17-18; Ex 7:5; 14:4; Deut 29:24,27-28).
12. Why does God have wrath and is angry? Because He is holy (hating sin), righteous (hating wrong), just (hating inequity), and jealous (hating competitors)!
13. God's wrath is holy and righteous, and He will win in any controversy about it (3:4-6)!
14. God's judgment on sinners does not and will not come from mere human conspiracy, from secondary causes alone, nor by chance … but by decree of the God of heaven.

F. *Against all ungodliness.*
1. If we make a distinction in these two nouns, we take this one to be sins against God Himself, such as idolatry, which the apostle will condemn from here to 1:25.

2. If we make a distinction here, *ungodliness* is impiety, or the lack of properly glorifying and worshipping God, and *unrighteousness* is immorality, or rebelling against His laws.
3. God is Jealous, and His wrath will smoke against those who even flirt with competing gods from the vain and wicked imagination of rebellious men (Deut 29:18-20).
4. God compares idolatry to adultery and whoredom over and over, for the comparison is powerful to properly depict the nature of the crime, and it deserves jealous judgment.

G. *And unrighteousness.*
1. If we make a distinction in these two nouns, we take this one to be sins against God's laws of righteousness, such as sodomy, which the apostle condemns from 1:24 to 1:32.
2. If we make a distinction here, *ungodliness* is impiety, or the lack of properly glorifying and worshipping God, and *unrighteousness* is immorality, or rebelling against His laws.
3. God is righteous, and He hates and will judge every act of unrighteousness, from disobeying parents (Pr 30:17) … to oppressing widows (Ex 22:22-24) … to Lot's wife (Gen 19:26) … to losing virginity (Deut 22:20-21) … to resisting government (Pr 24:21-22) … to religious modifications (I Sam 6:19-21) … to mocking a prophet (II Kgs 2:23-24) … to hypocrisy (Acts 5:1-11) … to frivolous use of His ordinances (I Cor 11:26-31)!

H. *Of men.*
1. Angels received their just due for sinning (Jude 1:6), but this passage is about sinful men.
2. Our race is damned and doomed, so you are damned and doomed as a member of it, if God did not forth His wisdom and power in Christ on your behalf (Ep 2:3 cp I Cor 1:24)!

I. *Who hold the truth.*
1. How can it be said that blind, ignorant Gentiles of the world hold the truth? What truth?
2. How do they hold it? They have seen it and understood it sufficiently to know it is truth.
3. What truth do they hold? By context, they hold the truth of God's existence, glory, and power by His creation (1:19-20) and His goodness by His merciful providence (1:21).
4. How can they hold truth, in light of the doctrine of total depravity? Total depravity does not deny man's visual or mental faculties to discern divine actions – it denies man's affection and willingness to submit to that divine knowledge, repent, and obey (John 5:39-40). Total depravity is a matter of the heart and its affections, not mental faculties.
5. Consider the devil, who knows God and fears His judgment, but he will not give God glory, repent of his pride and rebellion, or obey Him (Matt 8:29; Jas 2:19; Rev 12:12).
6. Consider how Adam, well acquainted with God, would not consider repentance, but rather made fig leaves, hid as long as he could from God, and blamed Eve (Gen 3:7-12).
7. Consider how Israel, with a knowledge of God above all other nations, repeatedly turned from His religion to worship all sorts of idols (Ps 106:19-22; Acts 7:40-43; etc.).
8. Consider how even evil and profane men will call on God for help when in terror or trouble. There are sayings about soldiers and prisoners finding religion when they get scared, so why do their minds run this way? Because they hold the truth of His existence!

9. Consider what is coming in this chapter … they change their knowledge of God's glory by transferring it to images of very inferiority objects (1:23)… they change the truth they know about God into a lie by worshipping the creature more than the Creator (1:25). The point being made by these explanatory verses is that men do indeed know God's glory.
10. Consider that idolatry proves the point here, for men seek to worship a god, though they reject the God of creation and replace Him with images more to their liking (1:23,25), as Paul explained to the superstitious Athenians about their idolatry (Acts 17:23).
11. The fire of God's great wrath should cause us to worship acceptably, though we are in the New Testament, for He has not changed in the slightest whit (Hebrews 12:28-29; 13:8).
12. Truth is not a right. Truth is a privilege, a blessing, a favor (Gen 32:10) … and it demands corresponding devotion, obedience, thanksgiving, and worship (II Thess 2:13).
13. Do you hate sin and have anger against sin like you should (Ps 4:4; 101:3; Amos 5:15)?
14. When men minimize, euphemize, or compromise, the truth of God's wrath against sin, it leads to men holding the truth in unrighteousness, which ought to be opposed with all our might by constant repetition in public and private of God's anger against sin and sinners.
15. When preachers modify the message to please the audience, two terrible things happen, and one of those things is that those knowing truth will live unrighteously (Ezek 13:22).
16. It is truly perilous times when pleasure-mad Christians have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof, as Paul warned prophetically of a great spiritual decline (II Tim 3:5).
17. Because they will not endure sound doctrine, they gather so-called Christian teachers to scratch their itching lusts with fables, rather than condemn them with truth (II Tim 4:3-4).
18. Your response to the truth God offers is crucial to God's dealings with you (Luke 8:18).
19. Modern Bible versions change the verb *hold* to *suppress* in this verse, thus inventing another sin they can preach against while preserving the sin God intended in the verse.

J. *In unrighteousness.*
1. The truth reproves and warns – disobedience against it will be severely judged (Pr 29:1).
2. For every bit of truth you have, you must have corresponding righteousness because of it!
3. God required a blue fringe in Israel for a reminder of presumptuous sins (Num 15:30-41)
4. Sinning against the knowledge of the truth justly brings horrific judgment, as Paul warned believing Hebrews against apostatizing back to the Jews' religion (He 10:26-31).
5. The degree of knowledge determines the degree of punishment, for to whom much is given shall much be required, as in the illustration of two servants (Luke 12:47-48).
6. What is the *unrighteousness* intended here? All that follows in this chapter (1:21-32).
7. God is righteous, for He justly judges men who are without excuse for their rebellion.
8. What practical effect should this text have on you? Stand in awe, and sin not (Psalm 4:4)!
9. David prayed to be saved from presumptuous sins, which he called a great transgression, and which could have dominion over him (Ps 19:13).
10. For more detail about sins in God's sight – /sermons/series/forgotten-sins/.

19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

1.
2. Why is God's wrath revealed (1:18)? *Because* man rejected the truth God showed him.
3. How did man obtain the truth (1:18)? *Because* God showed it to them clearly and plainly.
4. How does he hold it in unrighteousness (1:18)? Because God showed them Himself, but they chose to live for themselves and their lusts without regard to His glory and power.

1. *That which may be known of God.*
2. The knowledge of God here is the basics that every natural man can comprehend (1:20).
3. God exists by the infinitely creative, beautiful, and overwhelming nature of the universe.
4. God has a nature, or Godhead, consistent with the absolute sovereign of the universe.
5. God has almighty and unlimited power, which He has possessed from eternity to eternity.
6. God is good and should be appreciated by man for the kindness He shows to all (1:21).
7. Of course this does not include the matters of strict revelation, which cannot be known merely by the natural creation, God's providence, nature, or conscience.

1. *Is manifest in them.*

1. If something is *manifest*, then it is evident, plain, and obvious; it is clearly seen (1:20) and known (1:19,21), for the word is most easily understood by a ship's *manifest*, which discloses and reveals in detail all that is hidden or stowed in a ship's hold.
2. It is not merely presented to them, but grasped by them, so that it is described as *in them*.
3. Compare to *clearly seen* of the following verse, for man has had truth manifest in them.
4. These are general propositions of truth, which vary by individual man, nation, and generation; yet the general rule stands – God has made His existence plain to mankind.
5. Where is the handicap or limitation that keeps man from obeying this revelation of God?

1. It is not his visual ability or that of other senses, for they work exquisitely well.
2. It is not his mental acuity (as a universal rule), for he is able to reason very logically.
3. It is his affections … his choices … his rebellion against a First Cause and authority.

1. The fool's opinion that there is no God does not contradict this passage (Ps 14:1), for many fools will admit voluntarily there is a God, but they will not worship or obey God; and the best comparative texts for Psalm 14:1 are likely Psalm 36:1 and Titus 1:16.

1. *For God hath shewed it unto them*.

1. God has not left man ignorant of His existence or of His expectations for their conduct.
2. They have seen fantastic displays of creative power that prove things about the true God.
3. Compare to the *clearly seen* of the following verse, for man has had God shown to Him!

20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

1. *For the invisible things of him.*

1. Some invisible attributes of God can be known; the attributes make His divine Godhead.
2. A key aspect of this revelation is the glory of God, which they did not give Him (1:21).
3. God is an *invisible Spirit* (John 1:18; Colossians 1:15; I Timothy 1:17; 6:16; Heb 11:27).
4. How can He be *seen* by man to know Him and fear Him? By creation only God could do.
5. His glory – honor and majesty and beautiful brightness of His perfection – is a prominent thought here and in Psalm 19.

1. *From the creation of the world.*

1. This prepositional phrase does not describe an issue of timing, but a source of knowledge.
2. The creation of the world and the universe containing it are manifest evidence for God.
3. To thinking persons, the universe can only exist by infinite intelligence and power – God.

1. *Are clearly seen.*

1. David very clearly taught the same doctrine – God has revealed Himself (Psalm 19:1-6).

1. Consider the words there related to conveying information and knowledge: *declare* (1), *sheweth* (1), *uttereth speech* (2), *sheweth knowledge* (2), *no language barrier* (3), *their voice is heard* (3), *line is gone out* (4), and *their words* (4).
2. Consider the words related to what is conveyed: *glory of God* (1), *handiwork* (1), and *knowledge* (2).
3. Consider the words related to what aspects of creation are prominent: *heavens* (1), *firmament* (1), *day sights* (2), *night sights* (2), *sky for sun* (4), and *sun* (4-6).

1. Paul is quite specific here, the *invisible* things of God are clearly, not obscurely, *seen*.

1. *Being understood by the things that are made.*

1. The immensity of some … heavens, heavenly bodies, mountains, oceans, elephants, etc.
2. The detail of others … flowers, birds, insects, fish, cells, DNA, reproduction, etc.
3. The beauty of all … sunrise, sunset … the coordination of all … the reproduction of kind.
4. The more man learns of the universe and world, the more we should recognize God.
5. How did God reason with Job? He went right after the natural creation in great detail.

1. *Even his eternal power.*

1. Almighty, unlimited, omnipotent power is one of the clear attributes of God to grasp.
2. But it is not temporary power in either direction, but from everlasting to everlasting.
3. Such power as used to create the universe must be eternal, it could not have been created.
4. It includes His incorruptibility, for such power precludes decay or loss, as seen in 1:23.

1. *And Godhead.*

1. The character, attributes, or traits of God are His Godhead, a divine nature (Acts 17:29).
2. What men understand a divine being to be includes power, justice, sovereignty, spirit, etc.

1. *So that they are without excuse.*

1. Gentiles cannot excuse themselves or blame God when judged, for they knew better.
2. The sermon of the creation has been universal in every language for all time (Ps 19:1-6).
3. Though you wonder how much each man's conscience and/or convictions direct his soul to consider God's existence, we are settled on this point – he is guilty before God (3:9).
4. Many oppose election for not giving man a chance, but this says man had a clear chance.
5. Mankind is without excuse for not worshipping the divine Intelligence that designed all.

21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

1. *Because that.*

1. Here is the explanation for how and why God's wrath will come on Gentiles (Rom 1:18).
2. Here is the explanation how and why they are without excuse before Him (Romans 1:20).
3. The issues are not giving divine worship He deserved and not thanking Him (Acts 14:17).
4. Therefore, reader, be very careful how you worship Him (John 4:20-24; Heb 12:28-29).

1. *When they knew God.*

1. Remember creation, providence, conscience, and revelation, all of which declare God.
2. God had clearly showed Himself to man (Rom 1:19-20), but they refused to glorify Him.
3. We must glorify God according to our knowledge of Him, or expect His judgment on us, for He is jealous of His glory; He will not allow it to be diluted or transferred to others.

1. *They glorified him not as God.*

1. They did not give Him the glory due to His nature and their basic knowledge of Him.
2. They did not obey Him, adore Him, exalt Him, worship Him, etc. as their Creator God.
3. Make sure you worship Him acceptably with reverence and godly fear (Heb 12:28-29).
4. It is impossible to emphasize too highly the importance of glorifying God (I Cor 10:31).

1. *Neither were thankful.*

1. They did not give thanks for His merciful, kind providence in their lives (Acts 14:15-18), which Paul will raise again as a further motivation for men to repent (Rom 2:4).
2. It is at this point that we see His providence in addition to His creation as their teachers.
3. God, as the just giver of every good gift, expects recipients to give thanks (De 28:47-48).

4. We cannot ever thank Him too much (Col 3:17; I Thess 5:18; II Thess 2:13; Heb 13:15).
5. It is a symptom of perilous times when Christians are also unthankful (II Timothy 3:1-5).
6. Earlier Thanksgiving proclamations put modern ones to shame … the 1777 First National Thanksgiving Proclamation (PDF, pilgrimhall.org) and Continental Congress Thanksgiving proclamations (PDF, pilgrimhall.org).

1. *But became vain in their imaginations.*

1. As they rebelled against His knowledge, they stooped to profane vanity to invent gods.
2. The word *vain* describes the worthless, profitless, pointless effort to imagine new gods.
3. The Gentiles, those under condemnation here, are very vain in their minds (Eph 4:17-19).
4. Gospel preaching is to destroy all imaginations or thoughts against truth (II Cor 10:4-6).
5. Men are constantly imagining new doctrines and new ways of doing things, and we must rule our spirits and minds to look for the old paths and stay in them (Jer 6:16; Jude 1:3).
6. The glory of God is so important – let us fear even putting too much glory in His good and holy blessings, such as marriage, family, children, job, lands, etc., for Jesus Christ warned strictly against such competitors to Him (Luke 14:25-27).

1. *And their foolish heart was darkened.*

1. Knowledge and reasoning depend on foundational presuppositions of God's existence.
2. But there is more here … God darkened their hearts, for the passive voice demands it.
3. Consider God's description of His great work in blinding idolatrous men (Is 44:9-20).
4. Consider God's description of His great work in blinding Catholics (II Thess 2:9-12).
5. If you reject the knowledge God offers, He will blind you to take from you knowledge you had or knowledge you thought you had (Ezek 20:21-26; Matt 13:10-15; Jn 12:37-41).
6. Consider Pharaoh, who made a choice against God, who then hardened his heart further.
7. This is a horrible judgment, for you do not know when it happens or that it has happened.
8. For much more of God blinding men as the Author of Confusion … Is God the Author of Confusion? (4 sermons) and Dominion of God.

22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

1. *Professing themselves.*

1. It is the conceit of man to *profess* he and his race are wise that is so dangerous with God.
2. The helpful rule is to consider yourself a fool to avoid such arrogance (I Cor 3:18-20).
3. Remember, anything you are or have is by God's gift to you (I Cor 4:7). Stop glorying!
4. Solomon confessed his ignorance, though David's son, so God unblinded him (I Kgs 3).

1. *To be wise.*

1. Here are the intellectuals, the educated, and the educators arrogantly declaring wisdom.

2. Here are Socrates, Plato, Seneca, and other Greek philosophers professing wisdom.
3. This is a rebuke and condemnation of Greeks and other "wise" men in world history.
4. The Greek Parthenon, Roman Pantheon, and all their gods prove the loss of their minds.
5. The God of heaven has committed Himself against the wise of this world (I Cor 1:19-20).
6. Our enlightened generation is not wise enough to even have gods of any sort, as they claim by their scientific imaginations to ascribe the world's existence to mere chance!

1. *They became fools.*

1. The wisest of men, or the most educated and intelligent, became fools in their arrogance.
2. The more men take confidence in their education and learning, the greater their folly.
3. It is our wisdom to profess ourselves to be fools that we might be wise (I Cor 3:18-20).
4. The so-called wise of our generation believe that monkeys and baboons are our ancestors.
5. Our generation is more blind and ignorant than pagan idolaters, for they do not even want to acknowledge the existence and power of any god.

23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

1. *And changed.*

1. Compare *changing the truth into a lie*, when they exalt creatures over the Creator (1:25).
2. Rather than submit to the truth they hold of God's existence (1:18), they change their conscience or convictions in the matter and look for a replacement religion against God.
3. Rather than direct their worship heavenward toward the God they know exists, they direct their worship earthward toward images of various creatures, including man himself.
4. Rather than accept God as the creation clearly shows – He has eternal power and Godhead – they alter the interpretation and application of their knowledge to images.
5. Consider how God evaluates, measures, and compares this change (Jeremiah 2:9-13).
6. They could not change God's inherent glory, but they could praise things without glory.
7. They changed the object of worship from the God of glory to inglorious, base creatures.

1. *The glory of the uncorruptible God.*

1. A key issue in what has gone before (1:18-22) has been the glory of God as the Creator.
2. Though knowing His eternal power and Godhead from what the creation displays and implies, they instead choose to worship corruptible objects that have no similar glory.
3. His *incorruptibility* is His *eternal* power (1:20). He is not a creature to die and corrupt.
4. The God of heaven is Jehovah – I AM THAT I AM – which is as incorruptible in intent and meaning as can be fathomed (Ex 3:14; 6:3).
5. God delights in His eternal nature and incorruptibility (Deu 32:40; I Tim 6:16; Rev 1:18)!
6. He declares that there is nothing that can compare to Him, so images fail (Is 40:18-26).

1. *Into an image.*

1. Here is the invention of idolatry … rejecting God and replacing Him with mere images.
2. Idolatry proves man's knowledge of God, for the image is chosen to represent God.
3. God gave no image of Himself to Israel to keep them from idolatry, from which Paul appears to have drawn his language here (Deut 4:15-19).
4. We hate images, even animated images like Mel Gibson's, "The Passion of the Christ."
5. We hold to the Ten Commandments of God, not Rome's version that justifies images.
6. The men who make images and those who worship them are as impotent and stupid as their images (Ps 115:1-8; 135:15-18; Isaiah 44:9-20).
7. Paul condemned image worship in Athens to its leading philosophers, though the city was wholly given to idolatry (Acts 17:29).
8. He told the Corinthians that they had been idolaters, serving dumb idols (I Cor 12:2).
9. God is a Spirit, and any worship of images or pictures, directly or indirectly, is profane.
10. Image worship is devil worship, more than worship of God, contrary to what Roman Catholic apologists say to avoid the obvious (I Cor 10:20).

1. *Made like to corruptible man.*

1. Paul directly attacks deified human gods of Greek and Roman mythology and religion.
2. Pantheon, meaning 'many gods,' is a building in Rome built 2000 years ago (27 BC).
3. At best, man lives 80 years and dies! What kind of a representative of God does he make?
4. All four of the example images used for idolatry are corruptible objects, or objects that are subject to death, decay, and destruction.
5. It is foolish enough to worship a mere man, but to worship an image of man is far worse.

1. *And to birds.*

1. Consider the eagles of some nations and religions on their ensigns and on their temples.
2. The Egyptians worshipped the sacred ibis as the god Thoth with traits owned by Jehovah.

1. *And fourfooted beasts.*

1. Consider the oxen of some nations – including the golden calf of Israel's wicked idolatry.
2. David specifically condemned this very practice of Israel in similar language (Ps 106:20).
3. Consider the Egyptian sphinx that combined features of a lion and of a man as their god.

1. *And creeping things.*

1. Consider the creeping things, or insects, of Israel's idolatry (Ezek 8:7-12). Incredible!
2. Here man finds his wisdom manifest for all to see – he will worship bugs, but not God.

24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their

own bodies between themselves:

1.

1. We ask, what is a therefore there for? We must also ask, what is the *wherefore* there for?
2. To distinguish, a therefore may draw conclusions, and a *wherefore* may consequences.
3. The terrible and dreadful God repeated His judgment of blinding, hardening, giving over, and rewiring men so you will not miss the sovereign horror of His judgment (1:24,26,28).
4. The just, holy, and righteous God repeated the sins of men against His gracious offer of truth and knowledge to show His perfect justice in so judging men (1:18-23,25,28).
5. The just and holy God of heaven never punishes men without great reasons for doing so, and they are stated and repeated here as thoroughly as they could be for His holiness.
6. Rejecting truth, not giving glory, unthankfulness, pride, and idolatry are sins (1:19-23).
7. They rejected Him, His revelation, and His goodness, so He justly rejects them for it.
8. The simple rule of Moses is true, Be sure your sin will find you out (Numbers 32:23).
9. He will turn all nations into hell that forget Him (Ps 9:17; Isaiah 3:11; 5:14; Ps 2:1-12).
10. For more about sure judgment for sin – http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/be-sure-your-sin2.pdf.

1. *God also gave them up.*

1. This God is the glorious and sovereign God of heaven known by judgments (Psalm 9:16).
2. What is the adverb *also* here for? It is because He had already darkened hearts (1:21).
3. God is in the heart and mind altering business, as with Pharaoh (Ex 4:21; 14:17; Rom 9:18), Sihon and Amorites (Deut 2:30), Canaanites (Josh 11:20), Israel and quail (Ps 106:13-15), Israel and child sacrifice (Ez 20:21-26), and Israel and Christ (Jn 12:37-41).
4. God is perfectly blameless, holy, just, and righteous in turning men over to their own depraved lusts for having rejected Him and the knowledge He graciously offered them.
5. Can a child of God with four phases of salvation in his or her life be tempted by sodomy?

1. God's judgment here, repeated thrice, is racial (Gentiles), generational, and societal, not individual or personal, seen in many straight idolaters, atheists, evolutionists, etc.
2. Revelation of creation and providence is not the same in each person, as stated earlier, neither is punishment by rewiring the same in each person, yet God can and does hold the whole race responsible and considers the judged segments adequately mocked.
3. The degree and proportion of rewiring is His choice, Sodom, Gibeah, America, etc.
4. God's rewiring affects all citizens to varying degrees by relaxed natural loathing, glamorized in entertainment, endorsed by public persons, more same-sex flirting, etc.
5. Paul used *gave them up to a reprobate mind* for sins of any child of God (Rom 1:28).
6. Paul used *not convenient* for straight sins, also true of sodomy (Ro 1:24-27; I Co 6:9).
7. Paul described compromising Christians *without natural affection* (II Timothy 3:1-5).

8. Christians are tempted *against nature* by hair length and parental care in other places.
9. Paul confessed the lust commandment wrought in him all *concupiscence* (Rom 7:8).
10. Sodomites were saved at Corinth (I Cor 6:9-11), which means they were practicing their vile deeds while they were at least eternally and legally saved, if not vitally.
11. Sodomites can be saved legally/vitally (I Cor 6:9-11), but this does not preclude temptation to sodomy, for the ordinary sins in the list do tempt those truly converted.
12. We have admitted in light of Bible revelation that any Christian is capable of any sin.
13. There is no Bible reason to think or say that Christians cannot be tempted by sodomy.
14. Compare David's role and sin killing 70k, though the fault was Israel's (II Sam 24:1).
15. Can a child of God commit suicide? The Bible confirms it so of Samson (Heb 11:32).
16. As with other sins, those tempted by sodomy thoughts must put them off and down.

1. For God confusing men – http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/is-god-the-author-of-confusion.pdf.

1. *To uncleanness.*

1. **Uncleanness**. The quality or state of being morally or spiritually unclean; moral impurity; sexual fornication or filthiness; an instance of this. [OED.] Compare Numbers 5:19 and Leviticus 20:21. It is a broad category of sexual sins that go beyond the restrictive terms of adultery or fornication. Compare the Bible *filthiness*.
2. Paul's chief aim here is to introduce the sexual depravity that God gives men over to, which He will explain in much greater detail as sodomy in following verses (1:26-27).
3. We included Rome's abominable idolatries in our interpretation and application of 1:18-25, so we should not be surprised to see her priests' proclivity for males, young and old.
4. Societies where God has been formally and religiously rejected often have eventually abounded in these sins, and now this divine judgment is obvious in America (2010).

1. The increase and defense of sodomy is very much among educated and wise fools.
2. The perversity is first defended, then protected, then exonerated, and finally glorified.
3. Man continues to implode morally by rejecting God, thus a world of transgender sins.

1. *Through the lusts of their own hearts.*

1. God need not infuse evil desires or ideas, for the flesh, devil, and world are more than enough to supply all the depraved ambitions, cravings, and inventions for perversity.
2. The lusts come not from God but from the unrestrained hearts of men (James 1:13-16).
3. The direct cause of sodomy is man's heart as stated, and the indirect is God (1:21,24).
4. Paul used similar language to describe Gentile depravity of heart lusts (Eph 4:17-19).
5. God gives them over to uncleanness (1:24), and they give themselves over (Eph 4:18-19).

6. Here we should consider God changes men to be strange to former practices (I Pet 4:3-4).
7. Fear God, Who might leave us as He did Hezekiah, to expose our hearts (II Chron 32:31).

1. *To dishonour their own bodies between themselves.*

1. God is glorified and honored by dishonoring men and women through sexual perversity.
2. God is honored by so-called wise men dishonoring themselves below fourfooted beasts!
3. Honor is man-woman and opposite-sex intimacy, not the same-sex intimacy of perverts.
4. Marriage is honorable in all and its bed undefiled, but this is only man-woman (He 13:4).
5. There is nothing *gay* about this abominable perversion that occupies followings verses.
6. God calls sodomy something different than gay – abuse of yourself with mankind (I Cor 6:9-11) and defiling yourself with mankind (I Tim 1:8-10).
7. This personal judgment contrary to nature is entirely appropriate, given their zeal to personally dishonor God (1:18-23,25).
8. The Bible and nature see little difference between sodomy and bestiality; God annihilated inhabitants of Sodom, Canaan, and Benjamin (Gen 19:24-25; Le 18:6-30; Judges 19-21).
9. Man continues to implode morally by rejecting God, so thus a world of transgender sins.
10. Sodomy Is Not Gay (Bible verses).
11. What purpose does the preposition *between* serve? God disgraces both gay participants.

25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

1. *Who changed the truth of God into a lie.*

1. The just, holy, and righteous God repeated the sins of men against His gracious offer of truth and knowledge to show His perfect justice in judging men (1:18-23,25,28).
2. The *truth* under consideration is still the truth of God's existence in creation (1:18-21), as is indicated more obscurely by the clause that follows in this verse.
3. Rather than give Him glory and thanksgiving, they chose idolatry or ridiculed religion.

1. Idolatry is an obvious lie, except to those religiously blinded by God (Is 44:19-20).
2. Human wisdom is an obvious lie, except to the blinded by pride (1:22; I Cor 3:18-20).
3. Human sufficiency is an obvious lie, for sun and rain are very crucial (Matthew 5:45).

1. Truth does not change. It is always the same, even if that unchangeable truth indicates changes such as a change in worship (John 4:20-24; Acts 6:14; Heb 7:12; 9:10).
2. In Paul's day, there were many so-called Christians corrupting gospel truth (II Cor 2:17).
3. Many so-called Christians today are turning the truth of God into fables (II Tim 4:3-4).

1. They turn God's grace into a ritual of works by Rome's invention of sacramentalism.
2. They turn God's grace into lasciviousness by *once saved, always saved*

3. They turn God's sovereign grace into will worship of Pelagianism and Arminianism.
4. They turn God's sovereign grace into the fatalistic, instrumental guise of Calvinism.
5. They turn God's election of some into conditional election or universalism of all.
6. They turn God's reverent worship into mere casual and contemporary entertainment.
7. They turn God's hatred of sodomites and sodomy into love of them and their acts, as shown by sodomite members and ministers, same-sex marriages, MCC churches, etc.
8. Modern Bible versions change the verb *change* to *exchange* in this verse, thus inventing another sin they can preach against while preserving the sin God intended by the verse.

1. For more of constant truth – /sermons/series/ancient-landmarks/.
2. For contemporary Christianity.
3. For perilous religious times – /sermons/2005/perilous-times/.

1. *And worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator.*
2. Remember from two verses ago the worship of various creatures but not Creator (1:23).
3. Whether worship of sun or moon … or human images … or bugs … it violates the truth.
4. The difference between Creator and creature is infinite. But they choose the against truth.

1. *Who is blessed for ever. Amen.*

1. When we think, speak, or write about God, we must be excited and quick to be reverent.
2. Let us always exalt our great Creator, Who is also Savior and Father without any peer.
3. It is common for Paul to interject short declarations of praise. God is blessed! And Amen!

26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

1. *For this cause.*

1. Again, the sovereign and terrible God repeats Himself (1:24,26,28) to show His perfect justice and holiness in judging men for specific sins described in context (1:18-23,25,28).
2. Wicked man has taken the truth of creation and altered it to worship the creature instead.
3. For more about sure judgment for sin – http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/be-sure-your-sin2.pdf.

1. *God gave them up unto vile affections.*
2. Sodomy originates with God, who gives men up to these vile and unnatural affections.
3. There is nothing *gay* about this abominable perversion that occupies followings verses.
4. **Vile**. Despicable on moral grounds; deserving to be regarded with abhorrence or disgust; characterized by baseness or depravity. [OED.]
5. Sodomy must be included in God's general description of *without natural affection* that He inspired

elsewhere, because there is nothing natural about it (Rom 1:31; II Tim 3:3).

6. See notes at verses 21 and 24 for examples and principles of a holy God giving men over.
7. Paul used similar language to describe the Gentile depravity of heart lusts (Eph 4:17-19).

1. God is perfectly blameless, holy, just, and righteous in turning men over to their own depraved lusts for having rejected Him and the knowledge He graciously offered them.
2. God calls sodomy something different than gay – abuse of yourself with mankind (I Cor 6:9-11) and defiling yourself with mankind (I Tim 1:8-10).
3. The Bible and nature see little difference between sodomy and bestiality, both of which caused God to annihilate inhabitants of Sodom and Canaan (Gen 19:24-25; Lev 18:6-30).
4. We included Rome's abominable idolatries in our interpretation and application of 1:18-25, so we should not be surprised to see her priests' proclivity for males, young and old.
5. Can a child of God with four phases of salvation in his or her life be tempted by sodomy?

1. God's judgment here, repeated thrice, is racial (Gentiles), generational, and societal, not individual or personal, seen in many straight idolaters, atheists, evolutionists, etc.
2. Revelation of creation and providence is not the same in each person, as stated earlier, neither is punishment by rewiring the same in each person, yet God can and does hold the whole race responsible and considers the judged segments adequately mocked.
3. The degree and proportion of rewiring is His choice, Sodom, Gibeah, America, etc.
4. God's rewiring affects all citizens to varying degrees by relaxed natural loathing, glamorized in entertainment, endorsed by public persons, more same-sex flirting, etc.
5. Paul used *gave them up to a reprobate mind* for sins of any child of God (Rom 1:28).
6. Paul used *not convenient* for straight sins, also true of sodomy (Ro 1:24-27; I Co 6:9).
7. Paul described compromising Christians *without natural affection* (II Timothy 3:1-5).
8. Christians are tempted *against nature* by hair length and parental care in other places.
9. Paul confessed the lust commandment wrought in him all *concupiscence* (Rom 7:8).
10. Sodomites were saved at Corinth (I Cor 6:9-11), which means they were practicing their vile deeds while they were at least eternally and legally saved, if not vitally.
11. Sodomites can be saved legally/vitally (I Cor 6:9-11), but this does not preclude temptation to sodomy, for the ordinary sins in the list do tempt those truly converted.
12. We have admitted in light of Bible revelation that any Christian is capable of any sin.
13. There is no Bible reason to think or say that Christians cannot be tempted by sodomy.
14. Compare David's role and sin killing 70k, though the fault was Israel's (II Sam 24:1).
15. Can a child of God commit suicide? The Bible confirms it so of Samson (Heb 11:32).
16. As with other sins, those tempted by lusts for sodomy must put them off and down.

1. For God confusing men – http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/is-god-the-author-of-confusion.pdf.

2. Sodomy Is Not Gay (Bible verses).

1. *For even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature.*

1. The adverb *even* indicates an extreme example of a general proposition to make the point as powerful as possible. Compare Proverbs 16:4; Philippians 2:8; Luke 12:7; etc.
2. God magnified the judgment He would bring on Israel by this method (Deut 28:56-57).
3. Women generally have greater inhibitions about deviant sexual experimentation than men, but when God rewires rebellious segments of mankind, He overrides this protection.
4. There are things nature teaches, such as this text proposes, and that is that female humans should desire male humans for sexual intimacy – only opposite sex attraction is natural.
5. God generally judges the men first and hardest, for they are most responsible (Is 3:1-5).
6. **Nature**. The inherent dominating power or impulse (in men or animals) by which action or character is determined, directed, or controlled. (Sometimes personified.) [OED.]
7. **Natural**. Of law or justice: Based upon the innate moral feeling of mankind; instinctively felt to be right and fair, though not prescribed by an enactment or formal compact. 2. Constituted by nature; having a basis in the normal constitution of things. [OED.]
8. Nature also teaches the appropriate length of hair for men and women (I Cor 11:14-15).
9. Opposite-sex intimacy between a man and a woman is natural, meaning that it is the accepted, normal, and obvious combination for lovemaking and sexual intimacy.
10. Since male sodomy is condemned the most in the Bible, here God condemned lesbians.
11. Nature is a teacher; sodomy by either sex violates it, thus it is without natural affection.

27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

1. And likewise also the men.

1. Following the extreme case of the women (1:26) from the general proposition of God's judgment on the race (1:24), the male sex of our race also chooses this abomination, which involves the most disgusting, repulsive dishonoring of bodies between themselves.
2. When men, made in God's image, humiliate themselves to serve as a woman to another man in sexual activity and/or desire another man for sexual activity, they are sick!
3. Societies where God has been rejected have abounded in this vile and unnatural activity.

1. Leaving the natural use of the woman.

1. There are things nature teaches, such as this text proposes, and that is that male humans should desire female humans for sexual intimacy on many levels for many reasons.
2. Natural. Of law or justice: Based upon the innate moral feeling of mankind; instinctively felt to be right and fair, though not prescribed by an enactment or formal compact. 2. Constituted by nature; having a basis in the normal constitution of things.

3. Nature also teaches the appropriate length of hair for men and women (I Cor 11:14-15).
4. Opposite-sex intimacy between a man and a woman is natural, meaning that it is the accepted, normal, and obvious combination for lovemaking and sexual intimacy.

1. Burned in their lust one toward another.

1. Male sodomites do not have a take-it-or-leave-it attitude toward sex, but burn in desire.
2. If you think otherwise, examine the history of Sodom (Gen 19) and Gibeah (Judges 19).
3. If you think otherwise, make a cursory exam of gay pride and other such demonstrations.
4. Their promiscuity is typically greater than ordinary male-female sexual promiscuity.

1. Men with men working that which is unseemly.

1. Unseemly. Unbecoming, unfitting; indecent. Seemly. Of conduct, speech, appearance: Conformable to propriety or good taste; becoming, decorous. [OED.]
2. There is nothing gay about this abominable perversion defined in this and earlier verses.
3. The Bible and nature see little difference between sodomy and bestiality, both of which caused God to annihilate inhabitants of Sodom and Canaan (Gen 19:24-25; Lev 18:6-30).
4. We included Rome's abominable idolatries in our interpretation and application of 1:18-25, so we should not be surprised to see her priests' proclivity for males, young and old.

1. Sodomy Is Not Gay (Bible verses).

1. And receiving in themselves.

1. Observe the passive voice, for receiving means that Jehovah gave them the recompense!
2. Observe the location, for in themselves means where the recompense was made and paid.
3. God's judgment was not external or outward judgment such as famine, pestilence, or war.
4. But rather was very internal and personal that would corrupt and defile their persons.

1. That recompense of their error.

1. Moses warned the church of Israel, "… be sure your sin will find you out" (Num 32:23).
2. Societies where God has been formally and religiously rejected often have eventually abounded in these sins, and now this divine judgment is obvious in America (2010).

1. God will pay men the consequential judgment for the sin of choosing against Him.
2. The increase and defense of sodomy is very much among educated and wise fools.
3. The perversity is first defended, then protected, then exonerated, and finally glorified.
4. Consider how this perversity grew as creation and prayer were taken from schools.
5. For more about sure judgment for sin – http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/be-sure-your-sin2.pdf.

1. Which was meet.

2. It was a fitting judgment for them to dishonor themselves for having dishonored God.
3. They denied God His glory, so God judged them to be inglorious to each other. Glory!
4. God will judge you in the most creative ways (He is the Creator!), if you do not repent and reform your life to match His holy, righteous, and clearly revealed standard for you.
5. The constant barrage of euphemistic and euphoric endorsement of sodomy by the political, educational, entertainment, and news combines in our country and the world has reduced the clearly despicable nature of this perversion, so that you do not fully appreciate this phrase as much as you could or should. Grasp it! Give God the glory!

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

1. *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge*.

1. The adverb *even* here describes fitting agreement between their sin and God's judgment.
2. Again, the righteous God repeats Himself (1:24,26) to show His perfect justice in judging men for specific sins of rebellion described in the context (1:18-23,25,28).
3. The knowledge of God was clearly shown and made manifest by the natural creation, but their vain imaginations rejected that knowledge to invent their own religion (1:18-25).
4. The general character of the wicked is that God is not in all their thoughts (Psalm 10:4), for both their words and their actions reveal their rejection of Him (Ps 14:1-3; 36:1-3).
5. They did not *like* to retain thoughts of God – their affections opposed the thoughts of God's eternal power and Godhead that the creation plainly revealed (II Thess 2:10).
6. Instead, we are to always have God in all thoughts and actions (I Cor 10:31; Col 3:17).
7. The practical danger to each reader is great – make sure you retain knowledge given by God, rather than ignore, neglect, or reject it (Deut 4:9; Prov 3:1; 4:4-5; 23:23; Ps 119:93).
8. The reward or judgment for your treatment of truth will be great (Prov 1:20-33; 8:32-36).
9. Satan and the world will throw every kind of distraction at you to take away thoughts of God e.g. making money, political news, family obsession, researching anything, etc., etc.
10. For more about sure judgment for sin – http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/be-sure-your-sin2.pdf.

1. *God gave them over to a reprobate mind*.

1. **Reprobate**. Rejected or condemned as worthless, inferior or impure. Depraved, degraded, morally corrupt. Rejected by God; lost or hardened in sin. Of abandoned character; lost to all sense of religious or moral obligation; unprincipled. [OED.]
2. Compare the Spirit's usage in other places (Jeremiah 6:30; II Timothy 3:8; Titus 1:16).
3. See notes at verses 21 and 24 for principles and examples of God giving men over to sin.
4. Paul used similar language to describe Gentile depravity from heart lusts (Eph 4:17-19).
5. Since they did not like to consider God – they resented Him – He is perfectly just to leave them to such a

depraved and wicked heart and mind to work out their perverse desires.

6. God is perfectly blameless, holy, just, and righteous in turning men over to their own depraved lusts for having rejected Him and the knowledge He graciously offered them.
7. The sins in the following list are part of and flow from our depraved natures from Adam and conception, but God has further taken away understanding from men so that they are full of these sins with less restraint than they might have had otherwise.
8. For God confusing men – http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/pdf/is-god-the-author-of-confusion.pdf.

1. *To do those things which are not convenient*.

1. **Convenient**. Agreeing with or consonant to the nature or character of; in accordance with; in keeping with; befitting, becoming (*to* or *for* a thing or person). Suitable, appropriate. [OED.]
2. Compare Bible usage in other places (Proverbs 30:8; Ephesians 5:4; and Philemon 1:8).
3. The *things* in context are those that follow rather than precede this verse, as the language of verse 29 indicates it fulfills and lists the reprobate things God judges men with for sin.
4. Here is an important connection, as the sodomy of 1:24-27 is closely tied to the inconvenient things that the Holy Spirit illustrates by a list of sample sins common to all.
5. Not everyone has committed every crime here? but every person has committed several of them, some have committed them all, and all have considered committing all of them.
6. You may be reviled by the thought of sodomy either socially or personally, but you can recognize universal condemnation and depravity of mankind by *natural* sins now listed.
7. You might criticize, judge, and revile perverts for sodomy, but God is going to condemn you right along with them as guilty of His judgment as much as they (Rom 1:32; 2:1).
8. Sin is never convenient, though your flesh, the devil, and the world cries loudly that it is, and not only that it is convenient, but also that it is pleasant, profitable, pleasurable, etc.
9. Think about each of the following 23 sins and the very clear and definite inconvenient effect they have on human joy, love, peace, productivity, relationships, security, etc.
10. While the following sins may appear quite ordinary given our natural depravity, God could restrain them (Ps 76:10), but He does not, since He rather gives men over to them.
11. God does not make any man sin, but God can turn a man over to his sins (James 1:13-16).
12. You know sodomy is inconvenient, but do you also know the following sins are as well?
13. From God's legal and righteous viewpoint, you must not think the sins in this list different from sodomy in consequences (Jas 2:10; Deut 27:26; Matt 5:18-19; Gal 3:10).
14. For more about sins forgotten today … /sermons/series/forgotten-sins/.

29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

1. Being filled with all.
2. The general condition of unregenerate Gentiles is not one of careful, moderate sinning.

3. If you consider the Gentiles, they are filled with all the sins Paul will list (Eph 4:17-19).
4. If you consider a single sinner himself, he is filled with the propensity or the acts of all.
5. The goodness of man? No way (3:9-18; Job 15:14-16; Ps 14:1-3; Ep 2:1-3; Tit 3:3; etc.)!
6. Among the above references, consider Paul's indictment of Titus, himself, and brethren.
7. Are there not righteous thoughts in a natural man? No, even plowing is sin (Pr 21:4,27).
8. There is overlap in some of these terms, but we shall look for any shade of difference.
9. Reading the Bible is a history of the world revealing the sins of both Jews and Gentiles.
10. The conclusion combines doing these things and taking pleasures in others doing them, so we must examine ourselves for the act, the secret desire, friends, entertainment (1:32).
11. By the grace of God, we should examine ourselves and labor to be void of these sins.
12. Two things restrain total human anarchy – God's sovereignty and influence of the gospel.
13. The gospel affects men and families in their own consciences and nations by its laws.

1. Unrighteousness
    1. Righteous. Of persons: Just, upright, virtuous; guiltless, sinless; conforming to the standard of the divine or the moral law; acting rightly or justly. [OED].
2. Unrighteous. Not righteous or upright; unjust, wicked. [OED.]
3. Since wickedness is also in this list, let us look for any shade of difference between them.
4. Righteousness is thinking, speaking, and acting in a way that is right by God's standards.
5. Unrighteousness is thinking, speaking, and acting that do not measure up to His standard.
6. Coming short of God's righteousness is sin, which all have done (I John 5:17; Rom 3:23).
7. Unrighteousness may be less willful, consciously evil, or less depraved than wickedness.
8. Unrighteousness may be passive offences of omission (Cp Heb 6:10; Deu 6:25; Jas 4:17).
9. The human race is condemned! For they daily or hourly fail to give Him glory, keep His commandments, and be virtuous and upright, as Paul will affirm shortly (Rom 3:23).
10. Have you ever failed to measure up to God's righteous standard in any duties of life?
11. Have you ever failed to do what you knew to please God, by omission or commission?
12. How righteous are you in your marriage, employment, finances, thoughts, church duties?

1.
2. What is the sin? Voluntary sexual intercourse between two people who are not married to each other; a large category of sexual sins including adultery, sodomy, and foreplay.
3. Compare Bible terms, filthiness, chambering, uncleanness, whoremonger, adulterers, etc.
4. Compare Bible usage in other places (I Corinthians 5:1; 6:12-20; 7:1-2; 10:8; Ezekiel 16:15; 23:3,21; Deut 22:28-29; Exodus 22:16-17; Jude 1:7; I Thess 4:1-8).
5. The word is hardly used any more, but casual sex is sin. Specifically, it means sexual intimacy between unmarried persons; but generally, it means any sexual sin no matter the marital state of the parties. Is moderate or heavy foreplay fornication? Yes, for it is sexual intimacy God has reserved for marriage. See

the Ezekiel passages for foreplay detail.

6. The human race is condemned! For if they do not commit this sin, they wish they were doing it or they watch others do it for entertainment or choose friends from those doing it.
7. No matter the pleasure, the popularity, or the protection … God would kill all fornicators.
8. If a girl was discovered later to not have been a virgin bride, she died (Deut 22:13-21).
9. Why so severe? Consider the sin in Eden and its consequences of death, if you doubt.
10. For all sins, God says the thought of foolishness is sin (Prov 24:9; Matt 5:28; Eccl 10:20).

1.

2. **Wicked**. Bad in moral character, disposition, or conduct; inclined or addicted to willful wrongdoing; practicing or disposed to practice evil; morally depraved. (A term of wide application, but always of strong reprobation, implying a high degree of evil quality.)
3. God defined wickedness rather well, and then He killed our race for it (Gen 6:5,11-12).
4. Notice how He identified the cause for His annihilation of the Canaanites (Deut 9:4-5).
5. Paul condemned Simon the Sorcerer for his profanity as wickedness (Acts 8:18-22).
6. The human race is condemned! Every evil act toward another person is wickedness.
7. We must not corrupt God's way in any part of life, especially in any bold, profane way.
8. The children of God should do good to all men, so that wickedness is far from them, but sin begins in the heart, so it must be kept with all diligence to avoid it (Mark 7:21-23).

1.

1. Covetousness. Inordinate and culpable desire of possessing that which belongs to another or to which one has no right. [OED.]
2. Covetousness must be one of the most universal sins of all, yet it must be considered in its nature and effects to fully expose its horrible evil in the sight of God and men.
3. Covetousness is discontentment, which is rebellion and resentment against God for not giving you what you think you deserve, though He gave you far more than you deserve!
4. Covetousness is idolatry, for making a god of a thing other than God (Col 3:5; Ep 5:5)!
5. Covetousness can be hatred, for resenting another having something you want instead.
6. For the protection of men, God made one of Ten Commandments against it (Ex 20:17).
7. Covetous is evil desire for what you do not have, the compromise of morality to get what you do not have, and discontent with what you do have – it is lose, lose, lose (Heb 13:5).
8. Children covet toys of siblings, and nations the territory or natural resources of others.
9. What did covetousness cause Ahab and Jezebel to do against righteous Nabal – kill him.
10. Contentment is learned behavior and crucial for success (Phil 4:11; I Tim 6:6; Heb 13:5).
11. The human race is condemned! They envy and resent others, crave what others have, are discontent with what they have, vulnerable to advertising based on pride, etc., etc.
12. There is good covetousness, but only the very righteous have it (I Cor 12:31; 14:39).

1.

1. Malice. The desire to injure another person; active ill-will or hatred. Malicious. Of persons, their dispositions, etc.; Given to malice; addicted to sentiments or acts of ill-will.
2. Compare to Bible terms malignity, hatred, envy, despiteful, grudge, bitterness, etc.
3. If you ever think about getting even with another for a wrong, then you were malicious.
4. Compare Bible usage in other places (I Corinthians 5:8; 14:20; Titus 3:3; James 3:14-16; I Peter 2:1,16; III John 1:10).
5. It is bitterness, holding a grudge, hatred, and the desire for revenge. Such a spirit is entirely contrary to the Christian religion. Harboring hatred or planning revenge in your heart is a violation of the Sixth Commandment, Thou shalt not kill.
6. The human race is condemned! They abort babies, lie and steal from parents, defraud virgins, slander or whisper against others, defraud spouses sexually, etc.
7. Christians are to be loving, merciful, and tenderhearted. Envy and strife in your heart is from the devil.

1. Full of.

1. Did Paul go too far repeating this after filled with? No (Rom 7:18; Ps 14:1-3; Is 1:2-9)!
2. Compare the expression elsewhere (II Pet 2:14; Jas 3:8; Rom 3:14; Ac 13:10; Mat 23:28).
3. Man does not volunteer the information, but his actions show that these sins do rule him.

1.

1. Envy. Malignant or hostile feeling; ill-will, malice, enmity. Active evil, harm, mischief. The feeling of mortification and ill-will occasioned by the contemplation of superior advantages possessed by another. [OED.]
2. Compare other Bible terms like malignity, bitterness, emulation, strife, etc.
3. Compare Bible usage in other places (Proverbs 27:4; Titus 3:3; Acts 7:9; 13:45; 17:5; Gen 30:1; Rom 12:15; I Cor 12:26).
4. Bitterness, jealousy, or grudges are often signs of this sin. Backbiting, talebearing, slandering, or whispering can also be indications of an underlying spirit of envy for the advantage or liberty of another. The antidote is to rejoice and be thankful for the superiority or blessings of another. Sincerely praise those you resent to mortify this sin.
5. The human race is condemned! They resent the advantages of others and begrudge them any good things in life that exceed their own.
6. The Bible exposes the envy of Cain, Joseph's brothers, Saul, and the Jews against Jesus and Paul, among many other

1.

1. Literally and specifically, it is taking the physical life of another for wrong reasons.
2. God told Noah right after the Flood that murder was to be punished by death (Gen 9:5-6).

3. Yet, we can read in scripture about murder from Cain and Abel to the apostles as martyrs.
4. The history of the world is full of murder … single cases, genocide, abortion, etc.
5. But even our courts recognize the importance of a motive for murder … anger, hate, etc.
6. Most nations for the greater part of human history have ruled murder a capital crime.
7. We know from our Lord that anger or related sins are the same as murder (Matt 5:21-26).

1.

1. Debate. Strife, contention, dissension, quarrelling, wrangling; a quarrel. [OED.]
2. Compare the Bible terms strife, variance, sedition, swelling, tumults, etc.
3. Compare the scriptures (II Cor 12:20; Isaiah 58:4; II Tim 2:23).
4. This is not reasoning from scriptures for good purposes, which Paul used (Ac 17:1-3,17).
5. This is not the educational program of rhetoric to teach reasoning on your feet to marshal the best arguments to establish a position on a subject and defend against attackers.
6. This is foolish arguing for the sake of pride or rebellion against authority of God or man.
7. This is fighting, quarreling, contending, wrangling, or striving without a just cause or against those in authority over you.
8. God condemns foolish and unlearned questions and striving about words to no profit.
9. Children should never argue with their parents. It is indeed a capital crime.
10. Wives should never argue with their husbands, unless a matter of sin is seriously at stake.
11. Employees should not answer again to masters, let alone debate with them (Titus 2:9-10).
12. Do you think Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, or Ahasuerus allowed debate?

1.

1. Lying, especially when a witness, is serious condemned by God in both testaments.
2. When it is done in court, it is called perjury, and the consequences used to be severe.
3. God's law punished perjurers with the same punishment that was at stake in the trial.
4. But God would kill for just a lie? Ask Ananias, Sapphira, or pallbearers (Acts 5:1-11)!
5. Lying is not that bad? Ask those outside heaven facing the lake of fire (Rev 21:8; 22:15)!

1.

1. Malignity. Wicked and deep-rooted ill-will or hatred; intense and persistent desire to cause suffering to another person; propensity to this feeling. Malign. To regard with hatred or bitter dislike. [OED.]
2. Compare the Bible terms maliciousness, hatred, grudge, envy, despiteful, etc.
3. Holding bitterness or grudges against another is malignity.
4. Saul had malignity toward David, the Jews toward Jesus, etc.

1.

1. **Whispering**. The action of saying or reporting something quietly or secretly; suggestion or insinuation (by whispered speech); faint mention or rumor; esp. (obs. or arch.) malicious insinuation, secret slander or detraction, backbiting. [OED.]
2. Compare the Bible terms *slander, talebearing, backbiting, etc*.
3. The world gets alarmed and angry about rape, which is the violation of another's body without their permission, but whispering is violation of another's character without their permission, which in the nature and consequences of the crime can often be far worse. If rape deserves the death penalty, then what of whispering, backbiting, talebearing, etc.?
4. It is each person's duty to drive away backbiting or whispering tongues (Proverbs 25:23).

1. For more about sins forgotten today … /sermons/series/forgotten-sins/.

30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

1.

1. In case you did not get the lesson from the previous word and verse, the Spirit repeats it.
2. **Backbiting**. The action of detracting, slandering, or speaking ill of one behind his back.
3. Compare the Bible terms *whispering, talebearing, slander, etc.*
4. Be a back-kisser. Anyone you can bite in the back, you can kiss instead for their good.

1. *Haters of God.*

1. You cannot imagine anyone hating God? Interview a person who loses a close relative!
2. You cannot imagine anyone hating God? Interview those who did not get a fair life!
3. **Hatred of God**. The condition or state of relations in which a person hates God; the emotion or feeling of hate; active dislike, detestation; enmity, ill-will, malevolence toward God.
4. Jesus taught that loving Him was obeying Him (John 14:21). What of disobeying Him?
5. What would a Nebuchadnezzar do to those who hated him? Should our God do less?
6. Friendship with the world is hating God, for you are flirting with His enemy (James 4:4).
7. What did our Father want to do to Israel when they accused Him of harming them?
8. The first and great commandment is total and exclusive love of God, which men reject.

1.

1. **Despiteful**. Contemptuous; insulting, opprobrious. Cruel, fierce; cherishing ill-will; malignant, malicious; spiteful. [OED.]
2. Compare Bible terms *malignant, malicious, strife, envy, froward, odious, implacable, etc*.
3. On the contrary, the children of God are to be gentle, tenderhearted, kind, loving, etc.
4. Observe how many of these 23 indictments involve a hateful attitude toward others, which is one of the reasons that charity is the bond of perfectness (Col 3:14).

1.

1. **Pride**. Having or cherishing a high or lofty opinion of oneself; valuing oneself highly on account of one's position, rank, attainments, possessions, etc.; Usually in a bad sense: Disposed to take an attitude of superiority to and contempt for others; arrogant, haughty, overweening, supercilious. [OED.]
2. This is the sin and crime of the devil that cost him his office and future (I Timothy 3:6).
3. How well do you take correction, in general from the pulpit or privately by reproof?
4. How well do you say you are sorry for any wrong you have done?
5. How willing are you to sacrifice your time, plans, schedule, or finances for another?
6. See the extensive sermon outlines for Pride and Pride Again.

1.

1. What did God do to Herod when he received accolades for his speech (Acts 12:21-23)?
2. You are nothing and have nothing beyond what God has given you, while you might have less by your foolishness, you will never have more than what He gives (I Cor 4:7)!

1. *Inventors of evil things.*

1. Individuals who contrive, create, produce, originate, or construct by original thought or ingenuity evil devices or actions.
2. Compare Bible references (Psalm 99:8; 106:39; Eccl 7:29).
3. Compare Bible examples of golden calf, child sacrifice, religious mutilation, etc.
4. Men corrupted marriage by inventing affinity (marrying outside the Lord) and polygamy (marrying more than one), divorce, fornication, bestiality, pornography, defrauding, fantasies, nightclubs, chatrooms, defrauding, incest, pedophilia, necromania, etc., etc.
5. Consider further … inflation, gas chambers, starvation, torture, child rights, self-love, national debt, no-fault divorce, idolatry, pagan religions, holy books, etc., etc.
6. And … same-sex marriage, opposite-sex marriage, same- and opposite-sex parenting, transgendering, sex-change surgeries, identifying as a cat, self-marriage, sologamy, etc.

1. *Disobedient to parents.*

1. Refusing or failing to obey parents; neglectful or not observant of authoritative command of parents; guilty of breach of prescribed duty established by parents.
2. Compare scriptures (Eph 6:1-3; Ex 21:17; Prov 23:22; 28:24; 30:17; Deut 21:18-21).
3. Most nations in the history of the world had severe laws about child respect until now.
4. God called for capital punishment for even setting light by your parents (Deut 27:16).
5. This is also a trait of carnal Christianity that we see everywhere today (II Tim 3:1-5).
6. If God did not have your conscience condemned before, He surely got you with this one.

1. For more about sins forgotten today … /sermons/series/forgotten-sins/.

31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

1. *Without understanding.*

1. It is the inability or unwillingness to comprehend; to apprehend the meaning or import of; to grasp the idea of.
2. God has given men sufficient understanding of Him, but they reject it (Ps 14:2; Ro 3:11).
3. Fools have no interest in understanding but to discover their own hearts (Proverbs 18:2).
4. Israel was guilty of sinning without knowledge or understanding, though given (Jer 4:22).
5. God and men expect decisions to be made based on knowledge (Prov 10:21; 13:16; 14:8,15,18; 15:5; 18:15; 19:2; 22:3).
6. Our God is a God of knowledge, and He expects His creatures in His image to use it!
7. Consider idolatry described earlier, sodomy, impulsiveness, haste, heady, and greed.
8. Men stifle their consciences, put off inquiry, ignore consequences, to satisfy their lusts.
9. Think investing in Ponzi schemes, believing testimonials, forwarding hoax emails, etc.
10. Foolish and unlearned questions are ignored by God's ministers (II Tim 2:23; Titus 3:9).

1. *Covenantbreakers*.

1. One who violates or fails to keep a mutual agreement between two or more persons to do or refrain from doing certain acts.
2. Here are covenants between nations, contracts between companies, agreements between persons, divorces, not paying debts, bankruptcy filings, departing church members, etc.
3. Why so many lawyers and trials regarding contract law? Men will not keep their word.
4. Why has mortgage paperwork grown from 2-3 pages to 100? A Legion of defaults!
5. Let every Christian always keep their commitments of any sort, but especially contracts.

1. *Without natural affection.*

1. Feeling, state of the mind, disposition, bent, inclination, love, or fondness toward a person or action that is contrary to what is constituted by nature.
2. Nature teaches the desire for the opposite sex, appropriate hair length, and parental care.
3. Sodomy would certainly fit here, but since it was in the previous context, look further.
4. Abortion fits the bill, neglecting parents, neglecting children, mistreating animals, butch or dike haircuts on women, long hair on men, etc.

1.

1. **Implacable**. That cannot be appeased; irreconcilable; inexorable; of persons, feelings, etc. [OED.]
2. Compare the Bible term *froward*, which occurs many times in Proverbs to describe them.
3. Does the modern term irreconcilable differences fit the charge here?
4. The southern expression is, "You're damned if you do, and damned if you don't."
5. This is a proud and stubborn person that will not be appeased or satisfied, no matter what.

6. Men by nature are not gracious, except for selfish ends, but God has called us to it.
7. They are worthy of death, for being so difficult and froward for anyone to work with.
8. This is the spouse that refuses to be happy in a marriage no matter what the other does.
9. This is the child that pouts and refuses to be content and happy with their lot in life.

1.

1. Mercy is showing forgiveness and kindness to those you could have under your power.
2. But natural man is unmerciful … to his parents, to siblings, to employees, to employers, to neighbors, to unborn children, to church members, to pastors, to drivers, etc.
3. Rather than forgive quickly, easily, and finally … they want a pound of flesh, require time to do so, and will bring up the offence in a time when they need it to punish another.
4. What does God require of men in order to please Him (Micah 6:6-8)? To love mercy!

1. For more about sins forgotten today … /sermons/series/forgotten-sins/.

32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

1. *Who knowing the judgment of God.*

1. How do Gentiles generally, without excusing many, know God's judgment against sin?
2. It must be the combination of knowing Him (1:19-21) and a conscience of sin (2:14-15).
3. Consider how God instructs us that *nature* teaches certain basic things – men should desire women sexually (1:27), length of hair (I Cor 11:13-15), parental care (I Tim 4:8), the last of which is described as a crime even infidels (those rejecting God) understand.
4. Men are condemned without excuse. They are damned by their rebellion against God.
5. All men here, the Gentiles of all nations and all generations, are rebel enemies of God.
6. They absolutely need a Savior outside themselves to pay for their depraved wickedness.
7. Two things restrain total human anarchy – God's sovereignty and influence of the gospel.
8. The gospel affects men and families in their own consciences and nations by its laws.
9. But Paul's summary conclusion about Gentile depravity appears to be mostly conscience.

1. *That they which commit such things.*

1. Each of these sins, from sodomy to unmerciful, is a choice, which sinners choose to do.
2. The Gentiles' consciousness of sin is sufficient to understand a simple rule – do and die.
3. All nations have criminal justice to greater or lesser degrees including crimes in this list.
4. If you cannot see or read about this consciousness of sin, it is because it is kept under.

1. *Are worthy of death.*

1. It is easy enough to establish from the Bible that God considers these capital offences.
2. Child disobedience is certainly a common sin in the list, but it led to death (Deut 27:16).
3. If you doubt this point, let Jesus teach you the true intent of Moses' law (Matt 5:21-48).
4. The more difficult issue is establishing how the Gentiles universally know this fact also.
5. The Romans understood and applied their laws, which reflected the very argument Paul is making here of innate consciousness of crime and punishment (Acts 23:27-29; 26:30-32).
6. Even Barbarians had a consciousness of divine capital punishment for sins (Acts 28:4).
7. Do not presume that the Romans and all others simply developed their law from scripture, for God's explanation tells a very different story (Deut 4:6-8; Ps 147:19-20).
8. A study of the history of capital punishment and for what crimes will confirm this verse.

1. *Not only do the same.*

1. Each and every Gentile has done one or more of these sins one or more times for sure.
2. This phrase is to identify their guilt – they know offenders should die, yet they offend.
3. Observe the inherent presumption of the sin described here – violating one's conscience.
4. If presumption, then rebellion. Here is men as sinners – you and me – magnified rightly.
5. Depravity is so deep and evil that sinners go beyond sinning to delight in others sinning.

1. *But have pleasure in them that do them.*

1. Friendship with sinners will corrupt good manners, but this is much more (I Cor 15:33).
2. When you befriend a sinner, you become an associate or accomplice to their crimes.
3. Friendship with the world makes you God's enemy (James 4:4; I John 2:15; Matt 6:24).
4. You cannot imagine how to be a hater of God … then simply befriend a hater of God.
5. David perfectly hated those who hated God and were his enemies (Psalm 139:21-22).
6. David was strong against sinners and for saints (Ps 16:3; 101:3-8; 119:63; I Sam 18:1).
7. Consider the required qualification of ministers to be lovers of good men (Titus 1:8).
8. Television and other forms of modern media make these sins the object of entertainment.
9. Celebrities, a name for public persons with little value, are adored in spite of these sins.
10. Wicked persons boast of their ambitious greed, and they bless the covetous (Psalm 10:3).

Conclusion:

1. Did you see the Lord Jesus Christ in this chapter, especially the last four verses where you were condemned?
2. You should have seen Him as standing in your place under the wrath of God to deliver you from all these sins.
3. You should have seen Him living for 33½ years on this earth and never sinning against God in any of these sins.

4. The purpose for the chapter is to condemn the Gentiles by total depravity and dependence on God for salvation.
5. The gospel is the glorious message of God's power and righteousness mercifully given to those who believe.
6. The practical consequence of this chapter should include hating sin, especially presumptuous sins, as described.
7. A further benefit of this chapter is to grasp the importance of creation and know all men are justly condemned.
8. A further benefit of this chapter is to grasp God's righteous wrath to confuse and rewire men for sex perversion.
9. The doctrine here to remember as you enter the next chapter is the just and complete condemnation of Gentiles.
10. Paul must reduce all Gentiles and Jews to certain and just condemnation before he reveals a Savior for the elect.