

"FROM 'BORN THAT WAY' TO BORN AGAIN"

I. Romans 1:16-32, Romans 3:9-24

A. Today I'll read two passages of Scripture from Romans. Mark shared a portion of Romans 1 last week and quite often we visit Romans 3. Romans 1 states that God *gave man over* to sinful desires but is that the end of the story? It's a very sad thing when a father gives up on one of his children, when he curses a child by saying, "You'll never amount to anything!" or "You're dead to me!" When Jesus tells the story of the prodigal son, it's clear that the father never gave up on his sons; neither the one who squandered his inheritance or his self righteous brother. Jesus truly came to save hedonists, moralists, and everyone in between...

B. Romans 1:16-32 God gave man over to the wickedness of sin...

1) Paul boldly lists mankind's sins against God in vividly ugly detail...

2) So who are these people whom God "gave over" to all this hideous sin? And what kind of God would level wrath against those He gave over to such evil? And hey--if I was "*born this way*" how can I be held accountable to this horribly twisted Creator? Just who is Romans 1 written about? Sadly, it's written about us!

3) We were those *given over*. We are the ones who clearly saw the attributes of God since birth and denied Him. We are the ones *given over* to idolatry and sexual immorality. We were the ones *given over* to depraved minds, wickedness, evil, greed, depravity, envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice, gossip, slander, hatred (*toward God and others*) insolence, arrogance, prideful boasting. We were the ones *given over*, who became foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless... We were the ones "*born that way!*" Romans 1 is ours to own! Romans 1 contains a lot of bad news!

C. Romans 3:9-24 delivers more bad news but then comes the Good News!

1) After quoting numerous OT Scriptures about how all men are evil and steeped in sin, V21-22 shifts to something better: "*But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.*"

2) V23-24 is the ultimate summation: "... *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*" Justified: declared *not guilty* and likewise declared *righteous*!

D. Bad News: We were among those *given over*. Bad News: We were *born that way*. Bad News: We were among ALL those who sinned and fell short of the glory of God. Bad News: Our righteousness is like filthy rags! Good News: Jesus came and lived in perfect righteousness. Good News: Jesus came to rescue and take back those *given over*. Good News: Jesus came to die for our "*born that way*" sinfulness... Glory to God!

1) 2 Corinthians 5:21 reminds us: "*God made Him, who had no sin, to be sin for us, that in Him, we might become the righteousness of God.*"

2) Quote by John MacArthur...

II. Communion

A. Is there anyone here then that doesn't understand how the Bread & Cup we are about to take boldly declares that though we were *given over*, Jesus was sent to *win us back*! The Bread & Cup remind us what Jesus has done to rescue us, save us, redeem us, justify us, reconcile us, emancipate us, and adopt us from what we once were, so that we might become what He has called us to be?! (Quote by A.B. Simpson...)

B. The Bread & Cup declare that Jesus died for our "*born that way*" sinfulness and instead, we've been Born Again to a new life In Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord!

*** Pray and serve Communion...**

Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

Romans 1:16-32 (NIV)

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. **17** For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.” **18** The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, **19** since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. **20** For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. **21** For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. **22** Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools **23** and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. **24** Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. **25** They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. **26** Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. **27** In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error. **28** Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. **29** They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, **30** slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; **31** they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. **32** Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

Romans 3:9-24 (NIV)

9 What shall we conclude then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin. **10** As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; **11** there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. **12** All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." **13** "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." **14** "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." **15** "Their feet are swift to shed blood; **16** ruin and misery mark their ways, **17** and the way of peace they do not know." **18** "There is no fear of God before their eyes." **19** Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. **20** Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. **21** But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. **22** This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, **23** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **24** and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Quote by John MacArthur

"The prophet Isaiah says all of us are like wandering sheep. We've all gone astray. Every one of us has followed our own sinful path and the Lord gathered all the iniquity of all of us and laid it on Him. This is the amazing reality that Jesus Christ, God's Son, is the sinless substitute for our sins. He offered Himself, the sinless One, for the sinful one. Every person has sinned, and for everyone who puts trust in Jesus Christ, that sin is paid for. This is at the heart of the Christian gospel, Jesus the sinless One, dying as a substitute for sinners... God, the judge, determining what the punishment must be, and executing it on His own Son. Then when we put our trust in Him, with His death applied to us, our sins are forever covered, and the righteousness of Christ is given to us. It is in this great truth of the Christian faith, in which, we rejoice supremely. This rescues us from eternal judgment and gives us eternal peace with God."

Quote by A.B. Simpson

"[The Gospel] tells rebellious men that God is reconciled, that justice is satisfied, that sin has been atoned for, that the judgment of the guilty may be revoked, the condemnation of the sinner cancelled, the curse of the Law blotted out, the gates of hell closed, the portals of heaven opened wide, the power of sin subdued, the guilty conscience healed, the broken heart comforted, the sorrow and misery of the Fall undone."

Edifying Video Clips

The Gospel - Matt Chandler

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BVpLCnpuUYA>

The Glory of God (Sermon Jam) - John Piper & Matt Papa
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0oU-3voObLY>

Conviction and Change - Francis Chan
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjFw4EVhh6M>

Waiting - Matt Chandler
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gjOzmz4KYho>

Tim Keller on Homosexuality
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7dY0ZTuFGCE>

Fight Your Sin with Fear and Trembling - John Piper
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_EEPQ5bc_yE

The Gospel That Almost Killed Me
<http://thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/tgc/2014/03/27/the-gospel-that-almost-killed-me/>

Bonus Stuff

NIV Study Bible - Biblical Notes on Romans 3:24

Justified. Paul uses the Greek verb for "justified" 27 times, mostly in Romans and Galatians. It is translated "justify" in all cases except two (2:13; 3:20, where it is translated "declared righteous"). The term describes what happens when people believe in Christ as their Savior: From the negative viewpoint, He declares them to be not guilty; from the positive viewpoint, He declares them to be righteous. He cancels the guilt of their sin and credits righteousness to them. Paul emphasizes two points in this regard: **(1)** No one lives a perfectly good, holy, righteous life. On the contrary, "there is no one righteous" (v. 10), and "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (v. 23). "Therefore no one will be declared righteous in His [God's] sight by observing the law" (v. 20). **(2)** But even though all are sinners, God will declare those who put their trust in Jesus not guilty but righteous. This legal declaration is valid because Christ died to pay the penalty for our sin and lived a life of perfect righteousness that can in turn be imputed to us. This is the central theme of Romans and is stated in the theme verse, 1:17 ("a righteousness from God"). Christ's righteousness (His obedience to God's law and His sacrificial death) will be credited to believers as their own. Paul uses the Greek for "credited" ten times in ch. 4 alone.

Freely by His grace. The central thought in justification is that, although people clearly and totally deserve to be declared guilty (vv. 9-19), God declares them righteous because of their trust in Christ. This is stated in several ways here: **(1)** "freely" (as a gift, for nothing), **(2)** "by His grace," **(3)** "through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus" and **(4)** "through faith" (v. 25). **Redemption.** A word taken from the slave market--the basic idea is that of obtaining release by payment of a ransom. Paul uses the word to refer to release from guilt, with its liability for judgment, and deliverance from

slavery to sin, because Christ in His death paid the ransom to set us free (cf. Ex 13:13; 21:30; Mt 20:28; Mk 10:45; 1 Co 7:23; Eph 1:7; 1 Pe 1:18 and notes).

- NIV Study Bible, Biblical Notes on Romans 3:24, p. 1743.

Quote by John Piper

"This is the rock where we stand when the dark clouds gather and the floods lick at our feet: justification is by grace alone (not mixed with our merit), through faith alone (not mixed with our works) on the basis of Christ alone (not mingling His righteousness with ours), to the glory of God alone (not ours)."

- John Piper, *Faith Alone and the Fight for Joy*, p. 16.

Quote by C.S. Lewis

"When the author walks on to the stage the play is over. God is going to invade, all right: but what is the good of saying you are on His side then, when you see the whole natural universe melting away like a dream and something else--something it never entered your head to conceive--comes crashing in; something so beautiful to some of us and so terrible to others that none of us will have any choice left? For this time it will be God without disguise; something so overwhelming that it will strike either irresistible love or irresistible horror into every creature. It will be too late then to choose your side. There is no use saying you choose to lie down when it has become impossible to stand up. That will not be the time for choosing: it will be the time when we discover which side we really have chosen, whether we realized it before or not. Now, today, this moment, is our chance to choose the right side. God is holding back to give us that chance. It will not last for ever. We must take it or leave it."

- C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, p. 65.

Lord Kenneth Clark's Religious Experience

Lord Kenneth Clark, internationally known for his television series *Civilization*, lived and died without faith in Jesus Christ. He admitted in his autobiography that while visiting a beautiful church he had what he believed to be an overwhelming religious experience. "My whole being," Clark wrote, "was irradiated by a kind of heavenly joy far more intense than anything I had known before." But the "gloom of grace," as he described it, created a problem. If he allowed himself to be influenced by it, he knew he would have to change, his family might think he had lost his mind, and maybe that intense joy would prove to be an illusion. So he concluded, "I was too deeply embedded in the world to change course."

- Our Daily Bread, February 15, 1994.