



ROMANS:
The One Great RUIN we Share and are saved from
(Romans 1.16-2.3)



Last Week
My Foundation
My Framework



Last Week
My Foundation
My Framework
This Week
My Conviction



Last Week
My Foundation
My Framework
This Week
My Conviction
March 30
My Answers (FAQ's)
My Concerns
My Hope



because the Bible must direct

MY CONVICTION



Regarding Sin (Romans 1.18-32)

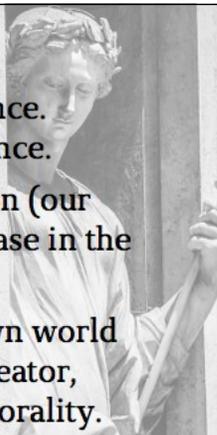
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We reject His sovereign presence.



Regarding Sin (Romans 1.18-32)

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Disorder in the vertical dimension (our relationship with God) leads to disease, distortion, and destruction in the horizontal dimension.

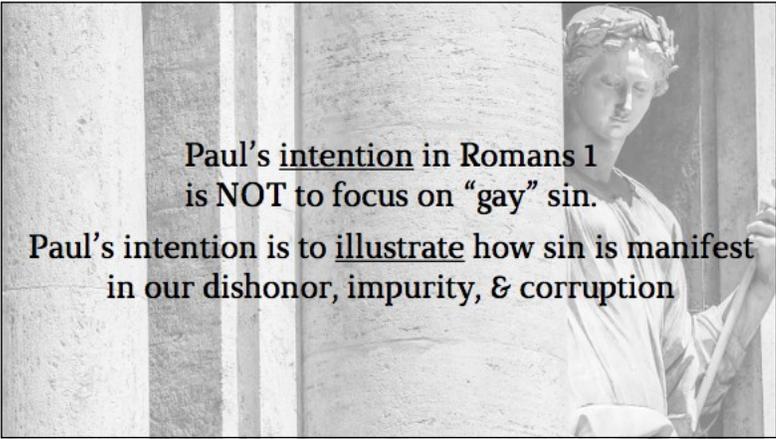


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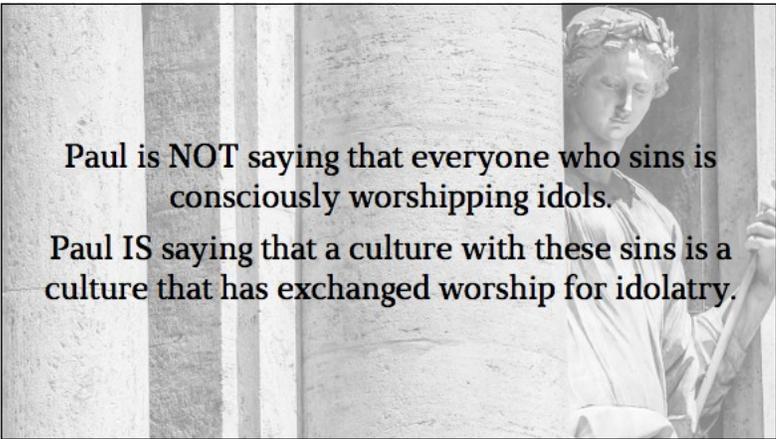
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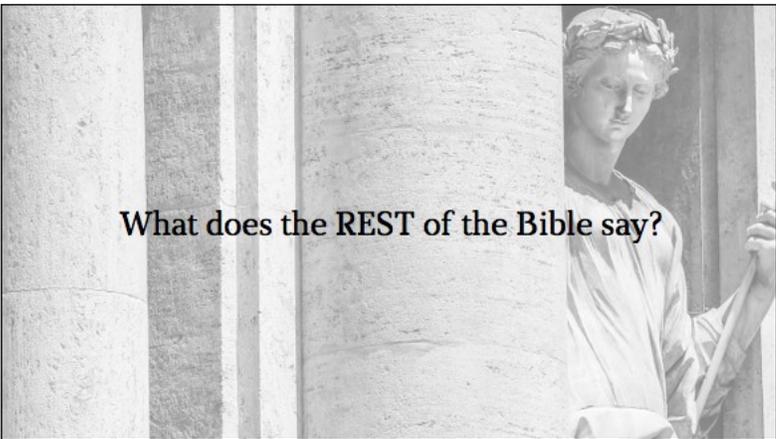
This disease leads to an upside down world where the creature, not their Creator, defines humanity, identity, and morality.



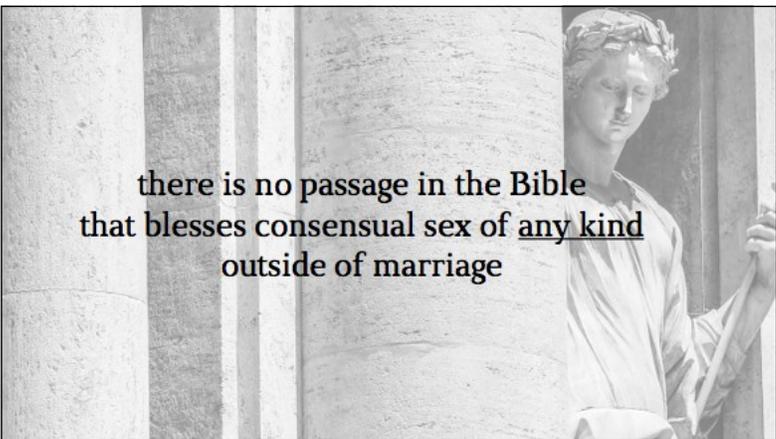
Paul's intention in Romans 1
is NOT to focus on "gay" sin.
Paul's intention is to illustrate how sin is manifest
in our dishonor, impurity, & corruption



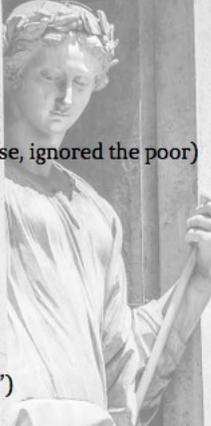
Paul is NOT saying that everyone who sins is
consciously worshipping idols.
Paul IS saying that a culture with these sins is a
culture that has exchanged worship for idolatry.



What does the REST of the Bible say?

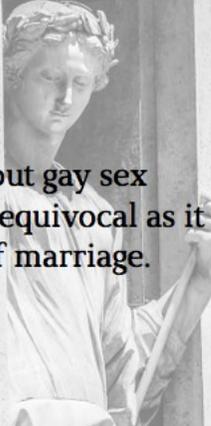


there is no passage in the Bible
that blesses consensual sex of any kind
outside of marriage

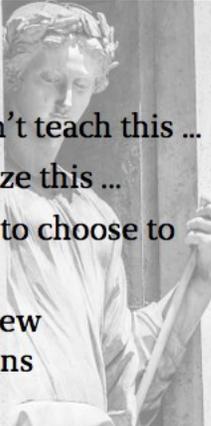


Genesis 19.1-29
Sodom and Gomorrah
– gang rape the angels/daughters
(see Ezekiel 16.49: arrogance, abundant food, careless ease, ignored the poor)

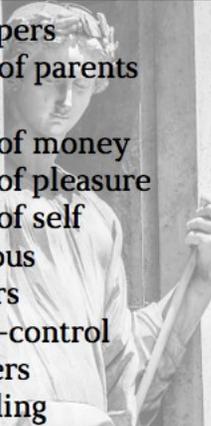
Leviticus 18.22; 20.13
1 Corinthians 6.9-10
1 Timothy 1.9-10
Jude 7
(gross immorality and “strange flesh”)



the Bible has very little to say about gay sex
however its testimony (OT/NT) is unequivocal as it
is for all consensual sex outside of marriage.



It does little good to pretend he doesn't teach this ...
It is not productive to marginalize this ...
The mature and honest response is to choose to
agree or disagree ...
but before we do let's review
Paul's understanding of sins



adulterers	drunkards	kidnappers
anger	envy	killers of parents
arrogant	evil	liars
boastful	gossips	lovers of money
brutal	greed	lovers of pleasure
conceited	hateful	lovers of self
deceit	haters of God	malicious
disobedient to	insolent	murders
parents	inventors of evil	no self-control
disorderly	irreconcilable	perjurers
behavior	jealousy	quarreling

rebellious
reckless
selfishness
slander
slanderosly
critical
(reviler)
strife
swindlers
thieves
treacherous

ungrateful
unholy
unloving
unmerciful
untrustworthy
wicked

?? fornicators
?? homosexuality



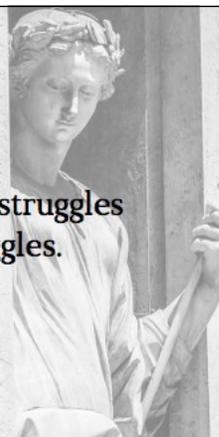
The Gospel invites us to roll back the clock.
By faith we can exchange
– the lie for the truth (1.25)
– the unnatural for the natural (1.26)
– the corruptible for
the glorious & incorruptible God (1.23)



The Gospel is God, the Father's
unilateral,
unconditional, and
unceasing commitment
to save us from our sin so that He might secure for
us everything He created us to enjoy even if it
means sacrificing God, the Son on our behalf.



it is better to surrender WITH our struggles
than to surrender TO our struggles.



Some additional notes on Paul's understanding of sins that illustrate the sin that ruined all of us ...

Since technical difficulties prevented the message from 03-16-14 from recording I have taken the time to quickly write up some notes to supplement the sermon slides which have the major teaching points of the message ... I have tried to keep things brief. I hope these are helpful!

Mark

re: Paul is NOT saying that everyone who sins is consciously worshipping idols.

Paul IS saying that a culture with these sins is a culture that has exchanged worship for idolatry.

Remember, the sins Paul highlights illustrates the scope and scale of *the sin* that leaves no life untouched. Paul is not saying that when we sin we are consciously choosing to worship an idol. When I struggle with greed I am not consciously choosing to "worship Mammon". When I contend against lust I am not intentionally submitting myself to the goddess, Eros. Idolatry itself, according to Paul, in Romans 1, is itself an illustration that we have exchanged the worship of our Creator for the submissive worship to the creature.

The sin which has ruined us all creates and cultivates a culture that disorients, distorts, diseases, disrupts, and destroys thereby making victims of us all. Our thoughts, aspirations, choices, and actions personally, socially, and nationally are shaped and skewed by this sin. A fallen creation under the leadership of fallen creatures is the only reality we know until and unless the Creator's purpose and intent is revealed and received through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The problem is we cannot be both gods and creatures. Who we have faith to be will determine who we worship and who will shape our understanding of humanity, identity, and morality.

re: "the mature and honest response is to choose to agree or disagree ..."

It remains my conviction (for reasons I will explain on March 30) that perspectives that advocate the biblical legitimacy for monogamous same-sex marriages are incorrect. No one is served by pretending that Paul does not have the understanding that is clearly advocated in these verses. The honest and mature response to Paul's understanding is to either agree or disagree. One's understanding will be based upon your understanding of the nature and extent of the Bible's authority for theology and morality.

Let me highlight three perspectives that permit their adherents to disagree with Paul. The first two occur within the Church. The first, is an understanding of morality embracing a "quadrilateral

interpretation"¹. The second, embraces a perspective that our moral understanding is based on Scripture and the Church whose tradition and leadership are free to add and address issues authoritatively. The third is the modern and postmodern perspectives who consider the Scriptures, at best, to be a collection of "sage" narratives that can inform and guide us although we recognize the limitations of their antiquity and culture.

All three perspectives, highlighted above, are free of any constraint to affirm the sole authority of Scripture and to surrender to the revelation I confess and believe it reveals, heralds, and preserves. While I will disagree with perspectives that dismiss Paul's teaching as intolerant and culture-bound. I regard the person who has the honesty to say, "Paul teaches ... but I cannot agree with him"

re: the two slides with Paul's list of sins ...

I know that there are many of us who are predisposed to disagree with Paul's teaching on homosexuality. The perception remains that he is homophobic, judgmental, and lacking in compassion. I asked the congregation to review a list of sins taken from the "sin lists" from Paul's letters. As I read through them I asked those present to note anything that they did not consider a sin ... Honestly, when I review the list I find myself agreeing with Paul wholeheartedly. Our lives and our world would be a far better off if the world was free of this list of brokenness that wreaks havoc, brokenness, and destruction. There would be no broken homes ... there would be no Ukraine crisis ... there would be no poor ... just to highlight three.

I intentionally left two sins off this list: fornication (all sexual intimacy outside of marriage) and homosexuality.² The reason I left these off the list is because they are in question within today's Church. Many people feel it is perfectly fine to live together if you are committed to one another and moving toward marriage. Many, increasingly, feel the same about gay relationships/ marriage.

My question is simply this: if Paul is correct with his observations and understandings regarding this larger list, should we not urge caution before we reject his understanding of sexual sins?

Personally, I remain convinced that God knows more about humanity, identity, and morality than I do. He knows more about healthy relationships (friendship and family) than I ever will and He is passionate that we enjoy them. I am convinced that the God who has loved me in Jesus, and who

¹ "Quadrilateral interpretation" of Scripture recognizes that our understanding of Scripture that informs our theology and morality is equally shaped by

(1) Scripture - what does the Bible (appear to) teach?

(2) Tradition - what has the Church across time taught?

(1) Reason (Science/Wisdom) - what does science and common sense teach us?

(3) Experience - does our experience promote knowledge of God, love, and justice?

² When Scripture refers to "homosexuality" it is referring to same-sex sexual intimacy. Scripture is addressing a behavior not an orientation.

testifies to that love through the Holy Spirit, is neither capricious nor indifferent to the impact of sin. He has come to redeem from sin, reconcile us to Himself, and reverse the fallout of the sin that ruins us. He has come to save and set us free. He can't set us free without being and telling us the Truth in Whom we must trust ...

The pastoral challenge that creates conflict ...

If we are going to trust in the God who has "made Him who knew no sin to become sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him",³ then we must surrender to His love, mercy, and *understanding*.

A contrite heart before Him will be honest and recognize that there is a complex relationship between our belief and our behavior. Our beliefs shape our understanding for the behavior we choose— although, sadly, this is no guarantee of purity, health, loving relationships or our obedience. On the other hand behaviors and relationships that we cherish will influence/ challenge our beliefs. We are reluctant or stubborn to give up relationships, behaviors, or choices that we value— especially if we believe that there is nothing of equal or greater value in exchange.

Beliefs inspire our understanding and behavior. In the classic musical, *The King and I*, tells the true story of an English tutor (Anna Leonowens) six years serving the Siamese court of King Rama IV. In the movie version she pulls down a map of the world and show the 67 children of the King where Siam (Thailand today) is located. The children are horrified and scold their tutor declaring that Siam is the biggest country in the world and is located at the center of all nations. Siam, they claim is the richest of nations and their father, the wisest of kings. Their beliefs drive their understanding and behavior.

Behavior also challenges and changes our beliefs. A generation of Christian parents believed that living together was a "sin before God" until their own children began living together. The desire to love their child, support the relationship, fear of creating a breach, etc. caused their previous conviction to come under review. No parent wants to knowingly sacrifice their relationship with their child. Therefore, a new understanding emerged in its place that affirmed "monogamous relationships" outside of marriage without searching what Scripture might teach on this.

A recognition of Scripture as God's revealed and enduring Word gifts us with a compass for understanding God's truth, love, righteousness, and grace. The Gospel reveals and illustrates a powerful and profound Kingdom principle: truth need not muzzle love nor will righteousness paralyze grace. While the world around us may accuse us of intolerance and lovelessness. I am

³ 2 Corinthians 5.21

convinced that God's love will prevail as we, in faith and trust, surrender to Him prevail with love in our relationships. Remember: "Love is an orientation"⁴

It is better to surrender with our struggles than to surrender to our struggles ...

We all struggle with our sins ... just look at what Paul confesses in Romans 7.18-19:

And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. 19 I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway.

There is no shame in our struggle because our struggle, itself, is an expression of our faith and trust in the Lord. It is better to surrender with our struggles to God in Whom we will always find welcome, grace, and strength for the struggle.

When we surrender to our struggles we will inevitably grow distant from God for two reasons. First, when we surrender to our struggles we give up and no longer believe that God is able or willing to overtake our sin and love us. Second, when we surrender to our struggles we frequently will justify our behavior or choices and deceive ourselves with the pretext that this is not *really* sinful. We cannot have a growing relationship with God when we justify or deceive ourselves by accepting as "good" or "normal" what God considers sin. God's love in Christ came to save us from "the Lie" not to relate to us in a manner that will encourage it.

Remember: The Gospel is God, the Father's
unilateral,
unconditional, and
unceasing commitment

to save us from our sin so that He might secure for us everything He created us to enjoy even if it means sacrificing God, the Son on our behalf. This is why his last word on sin is not "wrath", it IS "Gospel".

⁴ The title of Andrew Marin's outstanding and thought provoking book: *Love Is An Orientation*, IVP Books, 2009. Don't let the places you may disagree prevent you from engaging with this thoughtful and courageous author.