

God's Righteousness In Romans – Part 3

Wayde Miller

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.” (Rom. 1:18.) Not only does the existence of God get denied by forgetting Him, but the worship of anything other than God (idolatry) is bound to happen as well. But in Romans 1, Paul added another result to forgetting God.

The other consequence of suppressing God's truth flows out of idolatry. It is a sexual consequence, namely homosexuality. Notice what Paul said, “Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.” (Rom. 1:24-25.) Why did they dishonor their bodies? Because they exchanged the truth about God into idolatry. And what did Paul mean by “dishonoring their bodies? Read some more, “For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.” (Rom. 1:26-27.) Clearly, homosexuality is being discussed here. Paul tells us that homosexual behavior comes out of the worship of creation. When people turn from worshipping God, he gives them over to their sin (Romans 1:26, 28). After God gives people over, the body is dishonored and one of the expressions of this is homosexuality, as the natural is exchanged for what is unnatural. Cultural approval of homosexuality is a progressive development of a whole analysis of pagan, monistic (the denial of distinctions between God and the world) thinking.

In recent times, affirming (pro-gay) “Christians” have argued that in this text when Paul speaks of men and women acting “contrary to nature,” he is referring to heterosexuals committing homosexual acts, since that is contrary to their nature. Whereas, for a homosexual having same-sex relations is acting according to his or her nature.

Without question, this is not what Paul had in mind. When Paul spoke of acts contrary to nature, he was speaking in particular of God's created order, which the text makes clear. In Romans 1 the emphasis on nature is God's created order (see Romans 1:20). And in nature, we don't see homosexual behavior among any part of God's animal kingdom, except for humans. Male horses don't seek other male horses. But why do we see it among humans at all? Because people are the one suppressing the truth about God, not animals. In fact, the ONLY way to justify homosexual behavior is to get God out of the picture and anything can be justified. I don't care what the U.S. Constitution says – I care what God says and He clearly sees it as an abomination and suppressing the truth about Him. No wonder the wrath of God will be revealed against all unrighteousness.

Verses 28-31 tell us that this kind of mind lead to all manner of sins, everything from murder to anger, foolishness to boasting, inventing evil to hating God, gossips and ruthless to envy and deceit, all of humanity (including us today) find ourselves somewhere in Romans 1. All have been guilty at one time or another of suppressing the truth about God in favor of our own selfish pursuits. Woe is us!