***Abandoned to Evil, No. 3
RO10-02***

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Our subject is "Abandoned to Evil" in Romans 1:24-30. The immoral man is described in these verses. Paul has been zeroing in on the particular abandonment to sin because of the darkness on the mentality of those who have been guilty of negative volition to the testimony about God and about salvation. So, this type of person is spiritually dead. He is without hope in the world. There is nothing before him except the lake of fire.

Now, the apostle Paul is yet going to describe for us two other types of people. One is the moral type, which we will look at in the first 16 verses of chapter 2; and, the other is the religious type, which we will look at in verses 17-29 of the second chapter. The reason the apostle Paul is doing this is in order to establish the fact that all kinds of people are under the judgment of God and headed for the lake of fire. It matters not that you are the immoral type, such as we've been looking at (which is clearly an evil person); the moral type of person who obeys the ten commandments, yet is an unbeliever whose soul is also headed for hell; or, the religious type, who goes to his ceremonies and rituals, and yet he too, as an unbeliever (as an unregenerate person) is headed for the lake of fire. After Paul establishes that all three types of human beings are under the judgment of God, then he picks up the magnificent story of justification by faith in the third chapter of Romans.

**Expressions of Evil**

God has abandoned to evil those who are negative to His revelation. These people, whom God has abandoned as a result of the darkness upon their minds, dishonor their bodies through perverted sex. We have looked at lesbianism and homosexuality. These people have rejected the truth, which has been revealed to them, and instead, they have believed the lies of Satan. And God releases the immoral type to the kind of thinking which God condemns. This human viewpoint expresses itself, as we have seen, in a series of evil practices. Let's review them briefly. We find them in Romans 1:29-31.

The darkened mentality, which God has abandoned because of its negative volition, expresses itself in these evil ways. But again, I want to remind you that all of these evils come from the old sin nature. And the old sin nature is in the believer as much as it is in the unbeliever. The only difference is that the believer has a control element, in the person of God the Holy Spirit, which can restrain the old sin nature in its expression. The unbeliever has no such restraint. Nevertheless, all of these things that we find listed here in Romans 1, as being characteristic of the immoral man who is headed for the lake of fire, can find expression also in you and me as believers, because we too have the sin nature.

So, don't dismiss these things if something rings a bell on your conscience and says, "Yes, there is a problem for me," but recognize that these things can't find expression in your own life as a Christian; confess it; remove it; and, act accordingly (act upon it).

1. **Unrighteousness**

The first one is unrighteousness. This is wrongdoing between people.

1. **Fornication**

Next in Paul's list is fornication. However, this is not in the Greek Bible. This has been. This has been inserted subsequently, though elsewhere in the Word of God, this certainly is a sin which is condemned to such.

1. **Wickedness**

Next 3 is wickedness. This refers to the bad effects that sin has in the form of suffering.

1. **Covetousness**

Next is covetousness. This is greed to have more and more.

1. **Maliciousness**

Next is maliciousness. This is evil in quality or character.

1. **Envy**

Next is envy. This is the displeasure which a person experiences over another's good fortune.

1. **Murder**

Next is murder (homicide).

1. **Strife**

Next is strife. That refers to wrangling and contention.

1. **Deceit**

Next is deceit (guile) in order to trap somebody.

1. **Malignity**

Next is malignity – putting the worst light on things.

1. **Whisperers**

Next is whisperers. These are secret slanderers.

1. **Backbiters**

Next is backsliders. These are open slanderers.

1. **Haters of God**

Next is haters of God. These are people who despise divine authority.

1. **Insolent**

Next is insolent. Those are insulting and violent in their expression.

1. **Proud**

Next is proud. This refers to an arrogance which is overlaid with a quality of violence.

1. **Boasters**

Next is boasters. This refers to one who is a quack or an impostor – not what he pretends to be.

1. **Inventors of Evil**

Next is inventors of evil – those who devise new ways of expressing evil.

1. **Disobedience to Parents**

Next is disobedient to parents. They reject parental authority.

1. **Without Understanding**

Now, beginning with verse 31, we conclude this list, which expresses the old sin nature as it finds its expression in the immoral man. The next one is without understanding. This is the Greek word "asunetos." "Asunetos" means senseless or "lacking in discernment." It's the same word that we had back in verse 21, where we read, "And because when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God; neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish (their senseless) hearts (or minds) were darkened. A good translation is just plain stupid. Their stupid minds were darkened as the result of their negative expression toward the truth of God. This connotes a blindness to what is right and wrong, and it connotes a quality of confusing what is right and wrong: calling what is wrong as right; and, calling what is right as wrong. They have no grasp of any reality toward life in any area.

**Vietnam**

We have many examples of the expression of the senseless mind of men, particularly in government. These include the laws that we have increasingly passed in this country which invade a citizen's privacy; his property; and, his freedom. Vietnam was a prime example of the stupid mentalities of government leaders functioning in such a way that they are now horrified by the consequences of their acts. And that's why we are hearing so much about having no recriminations about what took place in Vietnam. Of course, the government leaders don't want any recriminations, because their hands are bloodied with the lives of 50,000 Americans plus thousands of South Vietnamese. But why not recriminations, when we have paid that great a cost in blood and treasure? Why not recriminations to see who is at fault? And the thing that we would find as being at fault is the darkened mentalities of government leaders. That is the very thing that the Bible tells us is characteristic of men who have rejected God's viewpoint. They are without understanding. Consequently, they perform acts such as in Vietnam.

Now we have these same government leaders championing laws concerning the use of land. A law is to be passed now so that if a farmer wants to put a drainage ditch or an irrigation ditch on his farm, he has to get a government permit. If a farmer wants to put up a building in a certain place on his land, he has to get a government permit to do it, in order to decide whether that would be a proper use of the land. It's unbelievable that our Congress would even be discussing things like this.

They want to have a planned economy. Hubert Humphrey says that the greatest bill of his whole career is the one he is now introducing as planning the national economy. These same men have been confronted with the question" "Isn't this socialism that you're suggesting – a planned economy?" Recently, when this question was put to them, some of their associates (some of their aides) said, "Yes, it is socialism, but you realize that we cannot use this word publicly in the United States." However, the government is in the economy to stay. Therefore, we must start adapting ourselves to the fact that the government must plan our economy.

We have gun control laws constantly being threatened against this nation, in spite of the Constitution's assurance that the individual citizen has the right to bear arms. This concept is supported by the senseless idea that if people don't have guns, then the criminals will not be able to carry on their work. You really have to be dumb, blind, stupid, and ignorant all at the same time to think that gun control laws are going to stop criminals. Even I can see that.

Not the least of the stupidity that is reflected in government is the grinding away at your mobility. The energy crisis, contrived as it was, has given the political leaders of this nation (with their liberal darkened mentalities), who have been trying to bring this nation to where it is controlled under government edicts. One of the greatest problems in the United States is the mobility of people. Just imagine what would happen if overnight you couldn't jump in your car and go to wherever you please. Just think what this would do to your lifestyle as you've known it, as an American – as people nowhere else in the world know it. And behind the energy crisis is the stupidity of the darkened minds of government leaders, but it is also the calculating minds of government leaders, in their darkened expression, to seek to bring what they believe will be a better way of life, and a more equal sharing of wealth in this country. And one of the ways to do it is to restrict the American from his mobility, so that the individual citizen can be controlled by government.

You can't go to a town in Russia which is not the town in which you live. If you stay in that town for over three days, you must immediately report to the local police and tell them that you're there. That's how much mobility is restricted under a communist regime. That's the better way of life that the people who are elected to Congress are seeking to bring to us.

Now, we could multiply this over and over again. The average American is not aware of these things, and the reason he's not is because he himself, as the voter, has a darkness upon his mind such that he can't discern these things. He can't analyze and see what's going on. And he can't project where these things are going to take us – "without understanding." This is a pathetic condition, and it amply describes people today in all walks of life.

1. **Covenant Breakers**

The next on is covenant breakers. It's the Greek word "asunthetos." This comes from the Greek word "suntithemi." And when you put the little letter "a" in front of it, which is the Greek is a negative, it means "not put together," or "not agreeing:, or the idea here is faithless. This is a person who is not a covenant keeper. The old moral idea was that a person's word is his bond. If you say you're going to do something, then we used to like to think that that meant it was as good as done. It's refreshing when you find a person of whom you can say that today: that his word is his bond; that he is not characterized as a covenant breaker; and, that he is not going to commit himself to something, and then you discovered that he reneges and cuts out on you. Instead, you hope to discover that his word is his bond. What he says he will do, he does.

You will notice perhaps that there is a little play on words, if you recognize the preceding word that we have here – the word "asunetos" followed by "asunthetos." That's a deliberate play on words on the part of the apostle Paul in the Greek language. In grammar, it's called a paronomasia. It's a similar sounding word, but with different meanings. For example, in English, we might say "the ham what am." "Ham and "am" sound the same, but they're different words. They sound the same, but they have different meanings. This is a way of emphasizing things in the Greek language. As a matter of fact, there are four words here in this 32nd verse (the last verse of the first chapter of Romans), and all four of them begin with the letter "a."

So, covenant breakers are those who do not keep their word.

1. **Without Natural Affection**

The next one is without natural affection ("astorgos"). That comes from the Greek word "storge," which means "love of kindred." Again, when you put the Greek letter "a" in front of it, it makes it a negative: lack of love of kindred; or, lack of family affection. The normal affection that we would expect to exist between members of the same family is lacking in people who are immoral, and who have darkened mentalities. As a matter of fact, they may have an outright hatred toward those who are members of their own family. To hate your relatives is an abnormality. It is one thing that is characteristic of the unregenerate mentality.

1. **Implacable**

Next is implacable. This is the Greek word "aspondos.” This one, again, is not in the Greek text of the book of Romans. However, it is found in 2 Timothy 3:3, and it is again one of the legitimate sins describing darkened mentality, though it doesn't belong in this list. This word comes from the Greek word "sponde," which means "libation," or "a drink." When you put the negative in front of it, it means "not drinking," or, as was done in a treaty (when people closed a treaty in ancient times), they would exchange a libation. They would drink, so to speak, to the treaty. This word "implacable" is describing the act of not drinking to the treaty; that is, not being reconcilable. We would call this "an unforgiving spirit." It is an attitude which refuses to be reconciled. That's what "implacable" means. You refuse to come to a truce. You refuse to agree to a treaty.

1. **Unmerciful**

The next one is unmerciful "aneleemon." This comes from "eleemon," which means "merciful;" and with the leading "a," it's negative: unmerciful. It means "without pity on the sufferings of other people." This is characteristic again of the unregenerate darkened mentality of the immoral person such that he lacks a pity for the suffering; the sorrows; and, the needs of others.

This is the climax emphasized by Paul, by putting four words together that begin with the letter "a" – like hammer blows, in order to finalize and to finish up this list of horrendous things that are characteristic, and that he reels off of those who have darkened mentalities.

Verse 32 then closes the list; the summary; and, the conclusion of being abandoned by God. Here is the ultimate end of this kind of person's thinking. Verse 32 says, "Who, knowing the judgment of God." The word "who" is the Greek word "hostis," and it means "such as who." It refers back to the immoral type of person referred to in verse 21, and which we have been describing all the way along here. This type of person is lacking spiritual enlightenment as the result of the rejection of the information which has come to him, and now he's in the position of being a heathen.

**A Heathen**

Please remember the very important fact that a heathen is a person who has rejected the enlightenment that God has given through nature, and through other sources. A heathen is not a person who has not heard the gospel. A heathen is in that condition because he has been negative to the revelation which God has given to every human being who's ever taken the breath on the face of the earth.

So, it's this kind of person ("such as this"), who, knowing. And the Greek word is "epiginosko." c, no scope. This is the Greek word for "full knowledge." It is the word that connotes full knowledge as the result of an experience. Here it is a full knowledge of an understanding about the fact that God is out there because of what the experience of nature has taught the individual. Experience through nature teaches a person a full understanding concerning God. That's why nobody goes to the lake of fire unjustly. That's why nobody can ever stand and say, "God, You never told me. If I'd have only known...," because everybody comes to the revelation concerning God. The question is what that individual's response is to that information when it breaks through, and he comes to the accountability of that knowledge.

This is in the aorist tense, which means a point in the past when he has received this divine viewpoint information about God. It is active. He has personally received this as the result of what he observed. It is a participle, which means that here is a statement of a principle that these people have received information.

Now grammatically, this is called a concessive participle, so that we translate it as "Although they knew," or "although they had full knowledge." They were taking a position in spite of the fact that they're informed. Don't think that these terrible sins that we've looked at are things that have attacked these poor people, and that they're helpless victims of these sins. That is not so. These sins are upon them because they deliberately said, "We have examined the God who has been revealed to us through nature; His power; and, His authority, and He does not match up to our understanding of what He should be, and we reject that information. Then the blanket of darkness descends upon the mind, and God abandons the individual to that position. Out of that mind then evolve all of these evils. The person (although he had full knowledge of these things), and because it is an aorist participle, this indicates to us that this knowledge (this knowing) comes before the main action of this sentence, which is, "Do the same." Before they proceeded to do these evil things, they had a knowledge of God which they rejected. That's important to note. The aorist participle tells us that first their full knowledge, and that's what they rejected. God was perfectly gracious to them, and then they moved into darkness.

What were they having full knowledge of? In this particular case, they had full knowledge of a judgment. The Greek word is "dikaioma," which normally means "a righteous act." However, in this particular context, it means an ordinance or a decree of God. We would say, "A divine decision." Even though they knew of a divine decision of God... And here it is *the* God, indicating God the Father. Here, it is a decree which God the Father possessed and passed on, and they knew it. It is a decree – a judgment (an ordinance). In other words, God said, "If you reject the information I give you, then this is going to be the consequence. God had conveyed to these people, through revelation of nature, and of conscience, an understanding that they were facing the judgment of God if they rejected the information that came to them.

So, in spite of the fact (although they had this full understanding about the consequences of rejecting what God was revealing), they acted in an insane way: "Who, although they had full knowledge of the ordinance of God." What full knowledge? "That they who commit such things:" "That" is the Greek word "hoti," which introduces an explanation of what the ordinance is that they did know: "That they who commit." The word "commit" is the Greek word "prasso." I want you to notice this. We're going to come back to this in a moment. "Prasso" means "to practice." That's where we get our English word "practice." It is in the present tense. It means a continual lifestyle – a continual way of life. It is active. These people chose to commit these particular evils. It is participle. Here is a principle being stated for our understanding.

**Such Kinds of Things**

"They practiced as a lifestyle, such things," which is the word "toioutos." That means "such kinds of things." In other words, you might have read all these 20-some evils, and as you looked at them, you might have breathed a sigh of relief, and said, "Thank God I'm not guilty of any of those. I don't do any of those." But I have to remind you that if you're clean on those 20-some items, that they are only a representative list of "such kind of things." And some of those things are of a certain kind that you have your own variations of. And those probably come to your mind immediately.

We could have an interesting service for the rest of the night, as you shared the kinds of things that come to your mind that are your own personal variations of this list. However, we won't ask you to do that. We'll ask you to come back next week, and then we will have that session. It says, "Such kinds of things." Now, look through the list again, and think of the amazing, unbelievable things that human beings are doing that were in that list.

These people practiced these things and other things like them as a way of life. It signifies a quality. It refers to this list of evil, in verse 29-31, as characterizing the immoral man and other things. These are the things flowing from the darkened mentality.

**Death**

"Such kinds of things are..." And the word "are" is the Greek word "eimi," which means "keep on being by choice." It is present active indicative. This is their present constant choice: "Are worthy..." The Greek word is "axios," and that means "deserving." They are deserving of something, and that is "thanatos" (death). The word "death" always connotes separation. To define death, you must define it in terms of the word "separation." Death never means nonexistence.

There are some cults that teach that when a person dies, if he is rejected of God (if he is an unbeliever), he simply is rubbed out of existence, and death means nonexistence. That is not true. We have ample evidence in the Word of God, in the rich man and Lazarus, for example. The rich man died and Lazarus died, and they were both very conscious. They were not out of existence. Their souls were not asleep. So, the word "death" means separation, but it does not mean nonexistence.

What kind of death is being referred to here? Well, this is the death that the Bible speaks of in terms of the lake of fire. Please remember that all of us are born spiritually dead. Ephesians 2:1 indicates to us that we are born physically alive, but we move through life as spiritually dead: "And you he has made alive who were dead in trespasses and sins." You, who are physically alive, have now been made spiritually alive. That is what this verse is saying: where you were previously spiritually dead in your trespasses and sins.

**Spiritual Death**

What is spiritual death? Well, that's the separation of the soul from God. Your human spirit is dead. You experience spiritual death. Your soul is separated from fellowship and communion with God.

**The Second Death**

In Revelation 20:11-15, we have described what is called "a second death." The second death is what happens to a person who is born into the human race physically alive but spiritually dead. He goes through his whole life, and he comes to the point of physical death where he is still in the status of spiritual death. If you die physically while you are spiritually dead, then spiritual death is perpetuated forever – throughout all eternity, in your case, in the form of what is described here as the second death. And this second death finds its fulfillment in the lake of fire.

So, while physically alive, a spiritually dead person, who does deserve the lake of fire as his destiny, can change his destiny by changing Christ as Savior. You may have walked in here today, and you were a religious person or a moral person, and therefore you have confused that with being a born-again person. You are physically alive, but you are spiritually dead because you have never understood the fact that in your sin you are totally helpless. Nothing you can do can solve this problem between you and God. Only what God has done for you through Christ, who paid for your spiritual death, and paid for your sins can solve this problem for you. Therefore, the only solution is for you to accept the gift of eternal life that God has offered.

Suppose that you came in here as a moral religious person, but spiritually dead. At this moment, you can change your destiny. At this moment, you can realize that: "I'm headed for the lake of fire. I'm not a believer. I'm a good moral person. I'm a good religious person. But trusting in Christ – no, I've never trusted in Christ. I've never recognized that He is my life, and that eternal life is a person. It is not something I do in being a good person, or something I perform in religious rituals." It is possessing Christ – that is eternal life.

So, all of a sudden; without any fanfare; without raising your hand; without signing a card; and, without saying anything, you might suddenly, right there in your own mind say, "Now I see it, and I accept Christ as my Savior." You might even pause for a moment, and say, "God, my father, I accept your Son as my Savior." Well, if you had done that, you would have, in that moment, changed your destiny from the lake of fire to eternal life. And the second death would be canceled out for you.

However, you may have come in here as a moral or religious unbeliever. And the older you are, the more hazardous that position is for you, because you've been at it so long that you really think you're something okay with God. The longer you've been a church member, in that kind of blindness and darkness, the tougher it is for you to realize where you're headed. If you should leave today, and make no change, and die before you get home, you would discover that you would open your eyes in sorrow and in personal torment as you would be transferred in your soul to Hades, awaiting your transfer to the lake of fire in the end times. This is what this verse is speaking about. The people who do these kinds of evil things deserve only one thing. They have only one right, and that is the second death, or the lake of fire.

That's what is referred to here by the apostle Paul, who says that: "They who commit such kinds of things are deserving of death. Romans 1:32 refers to this second death. The heathen deserved this judgment from God. It is right that God should do this. The heathen know that these kinds of evil acts are under God's sentence. They know that there's judgment of some kind before them for it. The United States is filled with heathen who have heard the gospel. They have received the warnings of preachers of all kinds concerning what is out there when they face God. They have had their attention called to these sins. It is not that if they would stop doing these sins, they would be square with God. But they have had their attention called to their sins to indicate to them that there is something wrong on the inside of them, and that this lifestyle should be acceptable to them. And God is trying to tell people, in one way or another (including through you) that this lifestyle of evil reflects the fact that you are headed for the second death. And unless you do something about it before you die physically, then you will be doomed forever. The soul experiencing the second death will be in sorrow forever (Luke 16:19-31, Luke 13:28).

**Resurrected**

The heathen also deserve physical death and that's another kind of separation – the separation of the soul from the body, and they will receive that. But the soul and the body in time will be brought together. The bodies of unbelievers as well as believers will be resurrected. The souls, spirits, and bodies of believers will enjoy heaven forever. The soul and bodies of unbelievers will experience pain forever in the lake of fire. This will be done at the great white throne judgment (John 5:29).

However, for the believer, the future is much different (2 Corinthians 5:8, Philippians 3:21, and Revelation 21:4). The destiny of a believer is much different. We have a destiny where we're going to have a body that is reconstructed so that it is free of sin. Revelation 21, I think puts it, perhaps, in the most beautiful way of all: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." That's talking about us, folks: "And there shall be no more death; neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain. For the former things are passed away." There shall be no more death; no more sorrow; no more crying; and, no more pain. All of these things have passed away. For whom? This is not for people who are not capable of doing these kinds of evil things. But this is for people who have taken the solution that God has given to control our natural inclination to live with these kinds of things as the expression of our lives. These have taken more than a moral step, and more than a religious step. These who have taken a person, the Son of God, as their substitute for their sins. The believers' future is a magnificent, marvelous joy.

So, Paul says, "Such as who, knowing full well the ordinance of God the Father, that they who commit (who practice) such kinds of things are worthy of the second death (eternal separation from God in the lake of fire); not only..." The word "not only" is the strong negative in the Greek language. The word "not" is "ou," and the word "only" is "monon:" "not only do," and here is "poieo." This is present active indicative. "Poieo" is a different word from "commit." Previously, we had this word "prasso," which could be translated as "do" also. It is, however, doing in terms of a habit or a practice. This is the process. Now we have something that has become a completed action (an accomplishment).

Here previously, he says, "Knowing the judgment of God, they who practice such things as a way of life, now not only do the same..." This has become entirely characteristic of them. This is the totality of how their lives would be described. This is the accomplishment of their lives. The process of individual acts of evil become the accomplishment (the summation) of their lives. We're getting really deep down into the cesspool of human endeavors here. What is a process of practicing sins becomes the totality of what is a person's life.

This found its ultimate expression before the flood. That's what had happened to people then all over the world, except for the eight who believed. There was nothing but people who were practicing these kinds of things, so that the totality of their life was evil and violence. And the Bible says that: "Every thought of man was continually evil." They never had a good thought. Can you imagine a world full of people who never had one good thought? Everything they thought of were these things compounded.

**Pleasure in Evil**

So, this is an interesting comparison. First, they were practicing these things. And you go deeper and deeper and deeper into practicing evil until the Bible says that this becomes your life. This becomes what you are. They not only do the same things (these things in verses 29-31), "but have pleasure in them." The word "but" is "alla." We begin with "not only" ("ou monon") before. And now we have "allah" ("but"), but with the word "kai," which is "also." So, you have: "not only, but also." The Word of God is telling us that what these people on the one hand did was bad enough. Their practices were bad enough. It was bad enough what they had done to themselves. Their whole lives had become an expression of evil. That was bad enough. But they didn't stop there. They went one step further, and this is characteristic of the darkened mentality of the immoral man.

It says, "That they have pleasure," which is "suneudokeo." "Suneudokeo" literally means "to think well with." The word "sun" means "with;" "eu"" means "well;" and, "dokeo" means "to think." It means that they took pleasure with others in some way.

What did they see in other people that gave them pleasure"? The things that gave these darkened minds pleasure was to see other people acting in sin. When they could see a person who was filled with unrighteousness; when they could see a person who was filled with wickedness; when they saw that people were murdering one another; when they saw strife, deceit, and malignity; when they listened to slanderers; when they expressed their hatred of God's authority; when they were insolent and proud; and, when they were fakers and boasters – when they saw people do this, they had a great pleasure in it. It just raised a warm spot in their hearts. They were just delighted.

Now you have to put yourself in the place of these people. What brings pleasure to you? What is a delight to you? Put yourself in this place as a parent. What do you delight to see your children do? Good. Now imagine yourself watching your son; your daughter; and, yourself delighting in seeing them practicing evil; seeing how immoral they can be; and, seeing how violent; how vicious; how dirty; how cunning; and, how all the other things they can be, and say, "It's wonderful. He's really going to go someplace in life."

That's what these people are doing. They took pleasure. They were just pleased, not only with what they were doing, but in seeing others do the same. This is almost absolutely unbelievable. The word "suneudokeo" is in the present tense. This was continually their attitude. It is active. They chose to approve them. Not only did they do these things, but again, we have the word "do" ("prasso") – those who do them (the "practice" word). Again this is the idea of the process of living. They delighted to see people with whom this was a continual lifestyle. And they rejoiced to see this evil.

This is the lowest form of degradation that a human being can sink to. It's bad enough when you practice rotten things. It is lower when you rejoice to see others doing it; and, eagerly introduce other people to evil practices. God finally says, "I will deliver you up to the natural expression of a darkened mentality. What we have read in these closing verses of Romans 1 is the normal expression of a darkened mentality coming up from the old sin nature. And the divine judgment of God declares that if you do these things as a way of life, it indicates that you are an unregenerate person, and the result will be the lake of fire (the second death) which you deserve.

That's where every immoral person anywhere in the world stands today relative to Almighty God – the one who's open sin he makes no pretenses of being moral or religious. This man is doomed to the second death. He knows it, and he makes light of this. Have you ever heard somebody say, "Well, yes, I know I'm going to go to that place when I die, but all my friends are there, and I'd rather go where my friends are. I'd hate to go someplace where I was lonely and I didn't know anybody." What are you listening to? You're listening to the cute talk of an unbeliever who is reflecting to you by those words that he knows that God says, "I'm going to bring an ax down on you. When My wrath starts pouring out, there'll be no stopping." He knows that he's under the judgment of God, and he's making light of it. This is one reason why the immoral man and the immoral woman delights to bring others into their practices, because somehow they think that: "If the whole world can act like this, God is going to be stuck with us. Then what's He going to do? Send everybody to hell? Surely He won't do that." Yes, He will.

The Word of God stands. The wrath of God has a period of grace. However you walked in here today – if you walked in here as a believer, then rejoice in the grace that has led you to enlightenment. If you walked in here as an unbeliever who is moral or religious, take heed that these things that we have read here are characteristic of you one in way or another, and even your moral and religious front is not going to carry you with God.

Or perhaps you're just a plain open sinner. Then God says, "Be advised as to where this is going to lead you – to the lake of fire. It will be no picnic. It will be nothing to smile and laugh about it."

As a matter of fact, people keep making the mistake of thinking that the lake of fire is some kind of a kingdom that Satan rules over. Television helps us to imagine that Satan is sitting there on his fiery throne directing his demons. They're just having one big party. They're having one big fantastic orgy. But I reminds you that the lake of fire was a place of punishment, designed, first of all, for Satan and the demons. The human beings who go there are those who have aligned themselves with Satan's lifestyle, which we have read here in the end of Romans 1. It will not be a picnic. The Word of God says, "Who, knowing the judgment of God, that they who commit such things are worthy of this kind of spiritual death; not only do the same, but they have pleasure in those who make this their lifestyle." For the Word of God to say that they are worthy of death, believe me, God means it.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1975

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