

#### 4. Learning Why Mankind Is Worthy of Judgment

In our last topic, we saw that every person has a human spirit, which includes five things that God has given to us to bring glory to Him. We see that mankind has violated all five parts of the human spirit: natural light, conscience, wisdom, sensitivity and creativity. We saw that we want to help our children understand how mankind violated each part. This will help our physical and spiritual children to understand why each person is worthy of judgment if that person continues to reject Christ until he or she dies. In our topic today, we are going to see why every person faces judgment.

Because of the rebellion against God by mankind, Romans 1:26-27 says, “For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.” The phrase “God gave them up” speaks of the fact that God has allowed people to commit the sins that they have chosen to commit. The word that is translated “vile” speaks of passions that are dishonorable. Then, the verses describe how both women and men have turned to dishonorable passions.

First, we see that women exchanged the natural passions for what is against nature. The word that is translated “passions” can speak either of good or sinful desires or emotions. In the New Testament, the word is only used three times and all three times in an evil sense. Colossians 3:5 uses the word when it says, “Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.” The other use in 1 Thessalonians 4:5 says, “Not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God.” In each of these uses, we see that the word speaks of evil sexual passions.

Then, in verse 27, we see that throughout history men have turned from the natural desire for women to the unnatural desire for other men. God says that the result among men has been that they have committed unnatural acts with other men and commit that which is shameful. Here, we see that both women and men will choose to commit unnatural acts when they choose to fulfill the evil desires of their sin nature. Genesis 6:5-6 says, “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.” The flood was the judgment that God brought on mankind in the days of Noah.

However, unnatural acts also produce their own consequences. The last phrase of verse 27 says, “Receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.” Here, we see that every choice has consequences. God gave Israel a promise in Exodus 15:26 which reads, “And said, ‘If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I *am* the LORD who heals you.’” Good choices produce good consequences. God promised to protect from the diseases of Egypt for obedience. Evil choices produce evil consequences. Galatians 6:7-8 says, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for

whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.” God will not be mocked. He will allow people to reap the consequences of their choices. We want to help our children learn to explain to others that their choices will always produce consequences.

We see that mankind in its sin and rebellion went on to make further choices. Romans 1:28 says, “And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting.” The word that is translated “knowledge” in this verse is used in the New Testament to speak of things that are right and pleasing in the sight of God. Philippians 1:9-11 says, “And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which *are* by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.” Those who follow the Lord are encouraged to continue to grow in their knowledge of what is pleasing to God. In contrast, here we see God said that throughout history people have made the choice to reject any knowledge of things that are right in the sight of God.

As a result of the choices of mankind, verse 28 says that, “God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting.” The word that is translated “debased or reprobate” means *a mind that does not stand the test*. It was often used to describe metals that were worthless because they had so many impurities. Titus 1:16 says, “They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.” Here, we see that a debased or reprobate mind is disqualified for every good work.

When God gives people over to a debased mind, they do things that are not fitting. Here, we see why the evil thoughts in the mind of a person without Christ will eventually become evil actions. God allows them the freedom to think evil thoughts. Then, God allows them the freedom to carry out those evil thoughts by the actions that they commit. This helps us to explain to our children why people commit such evil actions. Jeremiah 17:9 says, “The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” Without Christ, every person has a heart that is controlled by a sin nature. As a result, their thoughts are evil. As they continue to think those thoughts, their thoughts will begin to cause them to carry out the things that they are thinking.

We see the results in Romans 1:29-31 where we read, “Being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; *they are* whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful.” Here, we see the full results of a debased mind as we look at this list of sins that people commit because of their evil thoughts.

First, we see a whole list of sins that they commit against other people. These things include both things that they do against others and also things that they say against others. One of the things that we notice is that people also become haters of God as they commit these evil actions. That is why the first phrase in verse 28 said that they do not even like to retain God in their knowledge.

They hate God and reject His Word because God clearly explains the meaning of sin many times in the Bible. For that reason, they become haters of God because of the fact that God says that these things are sin and people do not like to be confronted with their sin.

When people reject God in their thinking, they then become their own god and do the things that they do to please themselves. Two characteristics of this self-centered attitude are pride and boasting. This attitude of pride and boasting is clearly seen back in Genesis 4:23 where we read, “Then Lamech said to his wives: ‘Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; Wives of Lamech, listen to my speech! For I have killed a man for wounding me, even a young man for hurting me.’” Here, we see that Lamech was proud of the fact that he got even with a person who had hurt him. He boasted about the fact that he had gotten even by killing a young man.

When people reject God from their thinking, they quickly begin to reject any other person who has authority over them. As a result, we see that mankind quickly becomes disobedient to parents. Then, we see five common characteristics of people that have rejected authority. First, they become undiscerning. The word “undiscerning” means that they are *without understanding and lack wisdom*. Romans 1:21 says, “Because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.” We saw in our study of that verse that their foolish heart was talking about their conscience.

Second, we see that those who reject authority become untrustworthy. This means that their word means nothing because they do not keep the promises that they make. Third, we see that they become unloving. The word that is translated “unloving” can also be translated *unsociable or inhuman*. Such a person has no concern for others but his only desire is to please himself. The only other place that this word is used is in 2 Timothy 3:1-5 where we see that this will be a characteristic of many people in the last days. Fourth, we see that those who reject authority become unforgiving. They continue to hold the sins of others against them. Fifth, they show no mercy to others.

Romans 1:32 says, “Who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.” Here, we see that man in rebellion against God gives approval to the people who are committing any or all of the sins mentioned in these past several verses. This helps us to understand why mankind is worthy of judgment because God must judge all sin. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain to others why judgment must come to all those who reject the payment that Christ made on the cross for their sins. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children grow in the understanding of how to explain the necessity of judgment to others.