



ROMANS

MARCH 9, 2025

ABANDONED

Romans 1:24-32

Last week, we studied Romans 1:18-23. In the preceding verses Paul warned the Romans of God's wrath. As we continue in verse 24, the apostle describes what that wrath looks like. "God revealed His wrath, not by sending fire from heaven, but by abandoning sinful men to their lustful ways."¹ Romans 1:24-32 is perhaps the most tragic and sobering passage in Romans because of this one thought, **man has been abandoned by God.**

The major point of Romans 1:24–32 is that when men persistently abandon God, God will abandon them (see vv. 24, 26, 28). Even when God's own people ignore and disobey Him, He may temporarily abandon them. "But My people did not listen to My voice," the psalmist wrote in behalf of the Lord, "and Israel did not obey Me. So I gave them over to the stubbornness of their heart, to walk in their own devices" (Psalm 81:11–12). Hosea reports the same tragic reality concerning the unfaithfulness of the northern kingdom, represented by Ephraim, to whom God said: "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone" (Hosea 4:17).²

Key thought: If you abandon God, He will abandon you to the natural consequences of your sin.

1. GOD'S RIGHTEOUS RESPONSE TO MAN'S REBELLION

The fundamental sin of man is a failure to worship God, to place Him as one's highest priority. (Romans 1:18-23). All other sin is a consequence of this one. God exists, he is to be worshipped and served. When we commit the sin of idolatry, (place anything in priority above God), we are prone to all other sins.

(1:24) "Gave up" is *paradidomi*, "to give into the hands of another, to give over into one's power or use." Since men chose to give up God and worship the creature, God could do nothing but give men into the control of the sinful things they preferred to God. In other words, God would not violate man's will and force him to do something he did not want to do. When men persisted in following their totally depraved natures, God allowed them free rein. The natural result was immorality of the vilest kind. Alford, says of God's act of delivering mankind over into the control of utter human depravity, "not merely permissive, but judicial, *God delivered them over*. As sin begets sin, and darkness of mind, deeper darkness, grace gives place to judgment, and the divine wrath hardens men, and hurries them on to more fearful degrees of depravity."³

1 Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 519). Victor Books.

2 MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). *Romans* (Vol. 1, p. 98). Moody Press.

3 Wuest, K. S. (1997). *Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader* (Vol. 2, pp. 33–34). Eerdmans. Page 1



- a. **God gives you over to impurity. (vs. 24-25)**
- b. **God gives you over to degrading passions. (vs. 26-27)**
- c. **God gives you over to a depraved mind. (vs. 28-32)**

2. GOD'S RESPONSE IS JUDICIAL AND REDEMPTIVE

Judicial abandonment is not the same as eternal rejection or condemnation to hell. That will occur at the final judgment. God lets men go to the consequence of their sin and all the while seeks to reach them with the message of His salvation (2 Peter 3:7-11). MacArthur has said,

“As long as sinful men are alive, God provides opportunity for their salvation. That is the marvelous good news of God’s grace, which Paul develops later in the epistle. Despite His righteous wrath against sin, God is patient toward sinners, “not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).⁴

God’s righteous anger against sin, often described as “wrath,” serves as a catalyst. An instrument that God uses to reveal the severity of sin and bring men to see their only hope is God’s provision in Christ.

a. God’s abandonment is a preview of the wrath to come.

“God often allows men to go deeper and deeper into sin in order to drive them to despair and to show them their need of Him. Often He punishes men in order to heal and restore (Isaiah 19:22).”⁵

b. God’s abandonment is an expression of righteousness and redemptive love. (Luke 15:11-32)

(Isaiah 53:6, Isaiah 53:12; Romans 3:23-25; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; Hebrews 10:1-4)

Take away: How should I respond to this passage?

- a. **A warning**
- b. **An invitation**

⁴ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). *Romans* (Vol. 1, pp. 100–101). Moody Press.

⁵ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). *Romans* (Vol. 1, p. 101). Moody Press..