

5. Given what Paul says about “depraved minds” (1:28), how should we respond (see Romans 12:1-2)?

6. Why are we prone to use passages like this as ammo instead of holding them up as a mirror?

7. How can we build a more resilient faith and discipleship that won’t bow or break under the pressure and that will take the gospel to the ends of the earth, sacrificially do justice and compassion, and living for the glory of God in every arena of life? Consider the closing words of the sermon in your answer.

“The pressure to cave on biblical teaching or manipulate Scripture is everywhere around us, even among our fellow believers and within ourselves. There is pressure to justify cohabitation to save money, pressure to justify slander and malice in politics to make a point or win a victory for a cause, pressure to justify putting ourselves first in our relationships in order to reach our potential, pressure to justify greed and hoarding for the sake of financial security versus stewarding our money for the sake of God and his kingdom, pressure to justify being uncritically partisan in politics, pressure to justify bowing to the dictates of current social justice theories or being silent on biblical social justice and the sin of racism, even pressure by some Christians to justify taking an unborn life because of the hardships that life might face or because of the hardships that bringing the baby to term will entail.”

**The Gospel Journey Back to God  
(A Series on Romans 1–4)**

“How We Find Ourselves Far from God”  
Romans 1:18-32

N.T. Wright: “Humans were always designed to be central to God’s plan to rule his creation: that’s part of what it means to be made ‘in God’s image.’ So when humans go wrong, the world as a whole is put out of joint.”

When we fail to find our way back to God, we suffer and everyone suffers, and we miss out on so much—a close and loving relationship with God, true community, and meaningful service to God in our \_\_\_\_\_.

**How We Find Ourselves Far from God**

1. We \_\_\_\_\_ the truth about God. (Romans 1:18-23)

They suppress the truth... what may be known about God is plain to them because God has made it plain... God’s invisible qualities have been clearly seen... they are without excuse... they knew God... but exchanged God’s glory for images...

When we suppress the truth about God, the end result is we displace the real God with false gods—we exchange God’s glory for lesser \_\_\_\_\_.

We need the gospel journey because we are right now under judgment and the final judgment will only seal the choices we are making \_\_\_\_\_.

God is \_\_\_\_\_ because of the pain and destruction our journey away from him brings into our world.

2. God gives us what we \_\_\_\_\_. (Romans 1:24,26,28)

God’s wrath isn’t about lashing out, it’s about cutting us loose to pursue our desires apart from \_\_\_\_\_.

3. We choose to break God's boundaries for human flourishing and for \_\_\_\_\_ him. (Romans 1:24-32)

- Sexual \_\_\_\_\_. (Romans 1:24)

- Shameful \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 1:26-27)

"Lust" refers to a strong desire for something that is out of bounds (i.e., misplaced desire) or a desire that is out of \_\_\_\_\_.

- Depraved \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 1:28-32)

### Call To Action

- Hold this up as a mirror; don't use it as \_\_\_\_\_. (Romans 2:1,3; 3:22-24)
- Remember you are not \_\_\_\_\_ or unredeemable.
- Treat grace as an opportunity to grow, not as a license to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Be prepared for serious pushback, pressure to compromise your biblical values, and the temptation to \_\_\_\_\_ and manipulate Scripture.

We need a more resilient faith and discipleship that won't bow or break under the pressure and that will take the gospel to the ends of the earth, sacrificially do justice and compassion, and living for the glory of God in every \_\_\_\_\_ of life.

### Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

2. Read Romans 1:18-32. What does Paul say about the "exchanges" we make (1:23,25,26)?

3. How would you explain "the wrath of God" as it is spoken of in this passage?

4. How do God's "rules" for living support human flourishing and bring him glory?