

## 20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 17 (April 22-28, 2018)

God has given me a gift of linking passages together to understand much larger truths. Having used this gift in showing what happened to the **church** in last week's devotions, I will now show through God's Word what has happened to our **country** since 1962.

### **Sunday, April 22** (read Romans 1:16-17)

*I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. (Romans 1:16)*

You will never be a happy, contented Christian until you understand the **permanence** of His salvation that you accepted. Likewise, you will never understand His finished work unless you trust His Gospel (v. 16). How else could you ever know about Jesus and His redeeming work? The two verses today identify true salvation, which comes only **by faith** (Ephesians 2:8-9). The offer was extended first to the Jews, **but now** is offered to all who accept the simple message of the Gospel. Don't ever be ashamed of this message (Mark 8:38). It is the power of salvation! We are living in a dangerous time for our faith. Forces everywhere are trying to destroy it. The rest of this week will be spent in identifying the stages of this deterioration in the United States.

### **Monday, April 23** (read Romans 1:18-20)

*For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. (Romans 1:20)*

Those who reject the Gospel message of v. 16-17 will accept the lies of this world. I pray that you will be amazed by the verses that make up the rest of Romans 1. God always sends His **truth** to shield us from the politically correct worldview (2 Thess. 2:9-12); however, those who "suppress the truth" (v. 18) because of their wicked lifestyles will miss all the obvious signs (v. 19-20). For example, we only need to follow the life of a caterpillar, which gets tired of crawling along, so it spins a cocoon and rests before turning into a butterfly. We, likewise, need to realize that we are helpless to save ourselves and yield to His control, allowing Him to make us into His design. Not all men have heard the details of His plan of salvation, but all will stand before Him without excuse (v. 20) because of His **creation**.

### **Tuesday, April 24** (Romans 1:18-23)

*Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools . . . (Romans 1:22)*

In my opinion, the first step in the decline of America is clearly taught in this text. Verse 20 tells you that in His **creation** God made His existence known. However, evolution replaced creation in our schools starting in 1962. God was removed, paving the way for anti-Christian teachings to come in. Notice the amazing accuracy of v. 21-23. Some evolutionists claimed to believe in God, but they refused to glorify Him or give thanks to Him for His creation (v. 21). Therefore, their thinking became futile allowing them to accept the lies of the prince of darkness (Ephesians 6:12). They were proud of their worldly wisdom (v. 22), but they were ignorant of the Word of God. Because of this incorrect worldview, they taught all kinds of untruths about man, animals, birds, and reptiles (v. 23). We will see how this incorrect foundation affects the next 56 years beginning with tomorrow's study.

**Wednesday, April 25** (read Romans 1:24)

*Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. (Romans 1:24)*

After the teaching of evolution replaced the truth of creation in America's schools, the next step should have been predictable. The 1960's brought in the sexual revolution, and their slogan became, "Make love, not war." After all, if we are not here by God's design, why should we worry about morality? Verse 24 clearly predicts this tragic decade. Don't miss the truth that "God gave them over." When we willfully reject His Word to follow the sinful appetites of our human nature, He allows us to suffer the consequences of our choice. Such events as Woodstock made national news as drugs and sex dominated our college campuses. Now some of those who protested everything that we considered sacred are running our country and encouraging today's youth to hit the streets to protest authority, capitalism, and clear Biblical teachings. We will see in tomorrow's study what this leads to.

**Thursday, April 26** (read Romans 1:25)

*They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised, Amen. (Romans 1:25)*

The third step in America's downward spiral is in today's verse. Having rejected God's Word about creation, an entire generation grew up doing its own thing. They said, "There is no such thing as absolute truth," and replaced the Bible's teaching with "situation ethics" (if it feels good, do it). My generation not only failed to stand firm on Truth, but it also said, "We want our children to have more than we had." That was a self-fulfilling prophecy. The New Age Movement introduced crystal and angel worship. Materialism became foremost in a nation that said, "It's the economy, Stupid. Don't worry about morality." We began to worship and serve created things (v. 25). Today, we are encouraged to worship Mother Earth instead of Father God. The New Age is not new at all. It came from Satan's first lie in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:4-5). He just repackaged it and sent it back to America's youth. We'll see step 4 in tomorrow's study.

**Friday, April 27** (read Romans 1:26-27)

*Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. (Romans 1:26-27a)*

Morality became so loose after the 1960's that many young people actually got tired of natural sex. Once again, "God gave them over" to their fantasies. Notice the key verbs in these two verses: **exchanged** and **abandoned**. I know that God now gets all the blame, because "He made them that way." I hope you have seen from His Word that He **permitted** homosexuality to dominate our society only after America rejected creation, lived immorally, and worshiped created things. It won't be long before I (and anyone else who stands on His Word) will face prison for writing this devotion, because His Word is not politically correct and will be labeled as "hate speech." I believe the part about receiving "in themselves the due penalty for their perversion" (v. 27), in addition to the spiritual consequences, is a prophecy concerning aids. We do not break God's law; God's law breaks us!

**Saturday, April 28** (read Romans 1:28-32)

*Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, He gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. (Romans 1:28)*

Once again, today's text begins with a warning to those who do not "retain the knowledge of God" (v. 28). He allows them to do what their depraved minds could conceive, even though He knows the consequences. The rest of this chapter reads like the front page of our newspaper. Those who reject Scripture as being the infallible Word of God will see nothing wrong with doing the things that "feel good." The final verse acknowledges that Paul's readers then and now know Romans 6:23 in their heads, but they choose not only to accept these things as natural, but also to ordain into the ministry those who live like this (v. 32). I believe Romans 1 is the most amazing prophecy concerning the end times. For those who are ashamed of the Gospel (v. 16), God's judgment awaits. If you care to do extra credit, chapter 2 will explain the details of His judgment.