

SUNDAY - August 16, 2026

UNASHAMED - Romans 1:18-32 - Lights Out

SERMON SUMMARY:

Romans 1:18–32 reveals that humanity's deepest problem is rejecting what we know about God. Creation points to His power and truth, yet people suppress that truth and exchange the Creator for created things. This idolatry turns good things into ultimate things, producing desires that never satisfy and leading to greater sin. God's wrath is seen in His "giving them over," allowing people to pursue what they have chosen and experience the destructive consequences. Paul's list of sins is meant to be a mirror for everyone, exposing the universal tendency to replace God with something else.

The answer is not better arguments, culture, or human effort, but repentance and Christ. When we turn back to God, the Holy Spirit begins replacing the fruit of selfishness and sin with love, joy, peace, and self-control. Romans 1 shows the downward path of sin: reject God → replace God → distorted desires → distorted thinking → destructive living. The Gospel reverses that path by bringing us back to the Creator, restoring our hearts and transforming how we live.

SCRIPTURE:

Romans 1:18-32, Genesis 1:2, Genesis 3, Psalm 106:15, Matthew 19, Psalm 106, Habakkuk 3:2

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. According to the passage, what two things provoke the wrath of God?
2. What does the text say is the reason humanity is without excuse for not honoring God?
3. What are the three specific things God "gave them over" to, as described in the passage?
4. What is the ultimate result of a "debased mind" as shown by the list of behaviors in verses 29-31?
5. The passage describes God's wrath not as an explosive anger but as a "giving over." Why would a loving God respond to human rebellion by letting people have what they want?
6. How does the act of exchanging "the glory of the immortal God for images" lead to the specific immoral behaviors listed later in the passage?
7. The list of sins in verses 29-31 includes things like gossip, slander, and insolence, which many people might consider "small" or common. Why are these included alongside more severe sins, and what does this say about the nature of sin itself?
8. If creation makes God's existence and power so plain that people are "without excuse," why do so many intelligent people still claim to be atheists or agnostic?
9. Idolatry is described as taking a good thing and making it an ultimate thing. What good thing in your life—a relationship, career, goal, or possession—are you most tempted to elevate into a god-like position that promises you life and satisfaction?
10. The pattern of sin often starts with being unthankful. What are three specific things you can intentionally thank God for this week to combat a spirit of ingratitude and reorient your heart toward worship?
11. Confession is presented as the first step toward healing. Is there a specific sin pattern from the "debased mind" list that you need to honestly confess to God and perhaps to a trusted believer this week?
12. The Holy Spirit produces fruit like self-control, which is the opposite of being controlled by our lusts and passions. What is one area where you feel a lack of self-control, and what is one practical step you can take this week to rely on the Spirit's power in that area instead of your own willpower?
13. The passage serves as a mirror for self-examination, not a club for judging others. When you read the list of sins in verses 29-31, which one(s) convict you personally, and how does that change your perspective when interacting with others who struggle with different sins?

14. God's goal in wrath is restoration, not ruin. How does viewing a difficult circumstance or consequence in your life as a potential expression of God's loving boundary-setting change how you respond to it?