

## And God Gave Them Up Romans 1:24-27

Has God abandoned the United States? We assume that because we are who we are, God is somehow compelled to bless us. That's a dangerous presupposition. Do you remember \_\_\_\_\_? God's wrath is eschatological, eternal, cataclysmic and circumstantial. That last word is our emphasis this morning. Before we begin, "God gave them Up." What could that mean? They degraded God, so God degrades them. God is a God who is rich in mercy but does reach a point where He gives someone up. "God ceased to hold the boat as it was dragged by the river." This is \_\_\_\_\_. Human beings have been telling God "I just want you to \_\_\_\_\_." You know what, that's what He does.

### I. God Gave Them Over to Idolatry. 24-25

The strongest judgement short of hell is to be \_\_\_\_\_. When sinful men are allowed to act unrestrained, he will always \_\_\_\_\_ and those around him. Sin becomes rampant in this person and people exchange the \_\_\_\_\_ of God for \_\_\_\_\_. These foolish human beings choose to worship idols, even creation and, consequently, receive the \_\_\_\_\_ of their actions. This exchange is prevalent in other matters as well.

### II. God Gave Them Over to Homosexuality. 26-27

God gave them up/over to vile, dishonoring passions. A second indication that God has abandoned a society is the prevalence of homosexual behavior.

What would never have been talked about publicly is now trumpeted. We even have children's networks targeting the very young in an attempt to more easily recruit them later.

Paul doesn't use the words for man and woman in our text. He uses the words for male/female, paring us down to our essential dna. Normally, the women in a culture are the last to be affected by shifts. Paul uses the word "even," showing how far the Romans had gone.

Something very important here is the use of the word "unnatural." Homosexual relationships, according to the Word of God, are unnatural. This particular form of depravity has existed since the book of Genesis, documented in that book and in the history of civilization.

### III. General Instruction

- A. The Bible commends sexual activity in the context of marriage between a man and woman.
- B. There is no Biblical reference where God commends homosexuality.
- C. The most prominent OT passage is Gen 13, Sodom. God fiercely judged them for grave injustice and sexual perversion.
- D. The Law of Moses clearly prohibited homosexual behavior.
- E. The NT reaffirms the OT teaching in Lev 18:22, 20:13.
- F. The Apostle Paul writes plainly that homosexual relationships are indicted by God, against nature, corrupt, vile and bring dishonor. The Apostle also, through the Holy Spirit, reveals that homosexuals will not inherit the kingdom of God.
- G. Jude and II Peter refer to Sodom and Gomorrah, calling the behavior, filthy.

Is what I am saying today, homophobic? Telling someone that homosexual behavior is sinful is not homophobic, anymore than telling someone heterosexual relationships outside the marriage covenant is sinful. True homophobia would be implying that a homosexual's sin is outside the realm of redemption.

I Corinthians 6:9-11.

## #44 Cameroon

### What does persecution look like in Cameroon?

While Cameroon is officially a secular country, there are predominantly Muslim areas where Islamic extremism is growing. In the north, the extremist group Boko Haram is a violent presence—abducting, attacking or killing Christians, as well as disrupting church activities. In other areas, security injunctions have set heavy restrictions on church activities. Strong governance is lacking in Cameroon, adding to the vulnerability faced by persecuted Christians.

Christians who convert from Islam suffer persecution across Cameroon, and are at great risk if they tell anyone about their new faith, or if Bibles are discovered in their possession. They face this risk both from the wider community and their immediate family. Women who convert are often forced into marriage with non-Christians, and there are cases of children of Christians in the north being coerced by Muslim relatives to attend Islamic classes.

### Meet Fadi

“I need God to stay with me in every situation, to do His wonderful power in my life.” Fadi’s sister was kidnapped by Boko Haram, and Fadi has had to flee her home repeatedly

### What has changed this year?

Boko Haram attacks continue to bring grief and destruction. While there was a slight decrease in reported incidents of violence, it remains at an extreme level. The spread of Islamic extremist violence in Cameroon has also affected church life, with security injunctions and displaced believers among reasons why churches are unable to operate and flourish.

### Who is most vulnerable to persecution?

Christians in the far north of Cameroon are most vulnerable to Islamic extremist violence, but the risk of persecution is also growing in the northwest and southwest, partly due to weak governance and insecurity.

