

PureMen

PureMen Bible Study – Session 4 – 12/1/09

Something To Thank the Lord For?

Any testimonies of how this PureMen Study has made an impact on your life?

Recite Memory Verse (2 Timothy 2:22)

Review Study Questions from Chapter Three

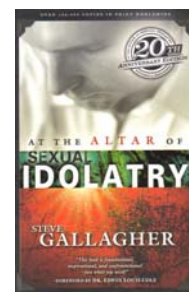
Lesson Title: Sin's Downward Spiral of Degradation

Romans 1:21-32

²¹Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. ²²Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, ²³And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

²⁴Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: ²⁵Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. ²⁶For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: ²⁷And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. ²⁸And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; ²⁹Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, ³⁰Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, ³¹Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: ³²Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them..

The outline of this week's lesson is from the book, *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, by Steve Gallagher.



[Question #1]: Write out the three parts of the “old adage;”

**Sin will take you further than you ever wanted to go...
It will keep you longer than you ever wanted to stay...
And it will cost you more than you can ever pay!**

- Unknown

I. Failure to Reverence and Give Gratitude to God / A De-Valuing of God (v.21)

- a. In this verse, these people knew God, but chose not to give Him the glory due Him. There was a clear lack of gratitude they had for His goodness to them.
- b. “Losing a reverential, worshipful spirit is the first step down into the spiral of degradation.” (p.50)
- c. **Jude 21** tells us to “*keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*” In Rev. 2:4, Jesus admonishes the church at Ephesus because they had left their first love.
 - i. **Q: How exactly do we do this? How do we keep ourselves in the “love of God?”**
- d. As we lose the sense of love and adoration for the God who saved us, certain aspects of the “old nature” begin to reemerge and take over:
 - i. ***Pride and self-glory*** – there is a danger, as the author points out, of thinking you are more than you really are! Gallagher states “...*once he learns a few spiritual truths, he begins to exaggerate his level of spirituality.*” (p.51)

[Question #3]: What is the “attitude which sneaks in very subtly?”

- ii. ***Ungratefulness*** also emerges.
 1. *Ask yourself, Am I truly thankful for what God has done for me in my life?*
 2. *Q: How do we fight against a spirit of ungratefulness?*
 3. *Do I take time every day to tell Him that I love Him and thank Him for His incredible gift of salvation and for His many blessings?*
 4. *Do you really feel that God loves you? In your private moments, deep within your heart of hearts, do you enjoy the sense of God’s unconditional love for you and His acceptance for you as His child? (Comment Next Week’s Lesson)*

II. The Darkening Heart / A De-Glorifying of God (v. 22,23)

[Question 5] p.53 *“Sin corrupts the soul and it’s vile touch doesn’t simply disappear when a person stops the behavior. Every act of sin takes a person further away from God and leaves a stain upon the heart.”*

- a. As a man continues in this downward spiral, he actually takes the glory reserved for Almighty God and focus in on the human form.
- b. As the sinner gives in more and more to his sin, the clutches of sin are strengthened. “The more he does it, the more he wants it.” As he continues downward, he finds himself open to more evil, sinful desires. He entertains thoughts that once repulsed him.
- c. Gallagher says, *“Many who pursue a course of sin convince themselves that they can simply repent and return to God afterwards. While it is true that genuine repentance does bring instantaneous forgiveness, also true is the fact that every sin committed bears a price. One of the great consequences of backsliding is that the further you move away from the Lord, the more difficult will be the return.”* Further he says, *“Every act of sin takes a person further away from God and leaves a stain on the heart.”* (p. 53)

III. The Suppression of Truth / A Distortion of God (v. 25)

- a. As the Holy Spirit convicts, they turn a deaf ear.
- b. Not only is truth suppressed, but deception enters in. As they continue their downward trek, they contrive all manner of distorted beliefs about God which accommodate their sinful desires to worship the creature and the image of corruptible man. They exalt their own fleshly gratification over the worship of God. They substitute the worship of the flesh instead of the Divine God.
- c. **[Question 6]:** Gallagher points out a couple of ways that a man who is spiraling downward in his sin will deceive himself:
 - i. *“I’m walking with God, I just have this one little problem.”* [pg 54]
 - ii. *I’m going through a difficult period of my life right now. I’ll come out of it.”* [pg. 54] - These are **waiting** to repent
 - iii. *“I’ve tried to quit. I’ve tried to follow the steps this book outlines. Nothing changes. I’m just as addicted as I have ever been.”* [pg 55] – There just havn’t truly **tried** to get victory!

IV. Given Over to Lusts of the Heart / (v. 26)

[Question 7] (p.55)

- a. As the downward spiral continues, the man becomes more and more controlled by the lusts overflowing unchecked out of his heart. As he acts on his lust, he may

find himself in a state of “intoxication” – given in to sins that he otherwise would never be involved with.

- b. **Q: Does sin ever truly satisfy?** NO! The more you give in to it, the more it wants! The more you feed the beast, the more it demands. What once may have been a “passing fancy” toward a certain sinful behavior now has full control of your life, demanding more and more – but it is NEVER SATISFIED!

V. **Given Up** (v. 26)

[Question 9] p. 58

- a. As Gallagher points out, God is extremely longsuffering with His people, but a time will come, if they continue to resist His promptings and insist on sinning, that He will give them over to what they desire. (p.58)
- b. “God gave them up” - “If you insist on having your sin, the time will come when God will surrender you up to the power of the enemy.” (p.59)
- c. The person having deserted the Lord actually finds himself to be the deserted one. The withdrawing of God’s protection! The withdrawing of His grace to keep us from sinning.
- d. Does this mean that God has totally given up on him? No! He still loves him and desires him to repent of his sin and be restored in proper fellowship. *“But it does mean that the Holy Spirit’s conviction no longer affects him. His mind no longer thinks sanely because his mind has become depraved.”*

VI. **The Reprobate Mind / A Denial of God** (v. 28)

- a. As they now deny God, they also reject all talk of Him. Even though its contrary to what they’ve embraced and practiced in the past, it’s just too painful now. They can’t even tolerate a thought about Him in their minds. God’s wrath against them is now revealed as *“he gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;”*
- b. Gallagher points out the Greek word **“Adokimos”** – God has given them over to be men without character – likely to do anything under the sun in their burning lust.
- c. To become a reprobate means “a person abandoned to sin; one lost to virtue and religion.” (Websters 1828)
- d. Gallagher points out that a reprobate’s conscious has become hardened. He ultimately is in danger of having conscious “seared with a hot iron” and they become totally desensitized to the guilt of sin.
- e. *If a person remains in sin long enough, he can reach a point where he is no longer influenced by the Holy Spirit. He has become so hardened that he will not listen – he does not want to hear anything that may attack his sin. (p.61)*

VII. **Filled With All Unrighteousness / A Despising of God** (v. 29-32)

- a. As they continue on, they become “Haters of God” – Their intolerance of God has become hatred of God.
- b. Gallagher says, “*Nothing now is too gross, too shameful, or forbidden. The cup of iniquity is now full. Sin has been given complete reign over the man’s mind.*”
- c. His companions are all now men of like desires (Q: Who should our companions be?)
- d. They truly have become slaves to sin. **And sin is never satisfied!**

Psalm 51:1

“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.”

- Let’s have an all-consuming belief in the basic goodness of God.
- We have a God who is a loving Heavenly Father with His arms outstretched longing for our return.
- *“The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.”* **Psalm 103:8-12**

Close in PRAYER!

