

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, Feb. 26, 2012

Passage: Romans 1:28-32

Memory Passage: Romans 8:5-6

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Rom 1:28-32 & Rom. 6.** How were the people not acknowledging God? What did they “see fit” to do instead? What was the consequence of this decision?
- (b) The word translated “debased” was used of metals that, because of impurities, were rejected by the refiners. From this the word began to mean, “not standing the test,” or “worthless.” Knowing this, what does Paul mean by using the term, “debased mind?” What was the result God intended by giving them over to a debased mind?
- (c) Contemplate for a moment the order of events given in v. 28. What is the sin being judged? What is the cause-effect relationship between God’s revealed wrath and the sins Paul mentions in vs. 29-31? In other words, what sin is God judging and what is His judgment? Does this change the way you relate to those caught up in the sins that are about to be mentioned? Why or why not? *Should* it cause you to relate to them differently? Why or why not?
- (d) *Family:* Prepare in advance a bowl or bag full of animal crackers in which app. 25% of the crackers are broken or chipped. Then place the bowl on the table and tell your family: “You are now animal cracker inspectors! It is your job to make sure that only whole crackers make it through your inspection, and you must make a pile of those crackers that pass the test and those that don’t. **AND NO EATING CRACKERS!**” After they have the crackers separated into two piles, tell them that in Bible times metal workers would evaluate pieces of metal in the same way, judging the metals for impurities, and those pieces that did not pass the test were called “adokimas,” which is the Greek word translated “debased” (or whatever word your translation uses: depraved, worthless). The word came to mean “not standing the test” or “worthless.” **Read Rom. 1:28-32** and explain that this week they will learn about 21 different behaviors that are “worthless” and “do not pass the test” of God’s righteousness. These behaviors are a result of their idolatry and God “giving them over” to a “debased (adokimas) mind.”

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Rom. 1:18-27 & Rom. 7.** Let’s look first at the structure of these verses: Do you see any grammatical divisions in the text? If so, how many groups do you see? Do you see any significance to these groupings or are they arbitrary?
- (b) Write out a definition for each of the 4 terms in this first group. What is the difference between “unrighteousness” & “evil?” (If your version has the word, “fornication” between these two terms it probably should not be there. It is not in the best manuscripts). Do you think these two vices are stand-alone vices or general terms that describe all the vices that follow?
- (c) **Read Col. 3:5 & Eph. 3:5.** What do you learn about covetousness from these verses? Do you struggle with covetousness? Consider this fully before you answer: Is there anything, anything at all, that you currently do not have but possess an inordinate desire to have? Is there anything your neighbor/friend/coworker has that you are jealous to have for yourself? Have you made purchases of items that you did not have the money to purchase simply because you, “had to have it!”? Are you upset or unhappy because you don’t have what other people have? Are you satisfied with what God has provided for you or are you constantly clamoring for more stuff, more upgrades, better models, etc.? What does God say about these desires in the verses you just read? What should your response be to the truth of God’s word as a gospel-centered believer?
- (d) *Family:* **Read Rom. 1:28-32.** Briefly explain that Paul is presenting a list of sins (vices, hence a “vice list”) that result from the debased (worthless, remind them of last night’s lesson) minds to which God gave the people over. Show them the divisions in the list (the first 4, the next 5, the next 12), and explain that Paul is not meaning anything specific by the divisions, that they are only a way to write in a more interesting manner. Lead them through developing a definition (by asking questions and prompting discussion) of each of the first 4 words. Then ask, “Are you ever covetous?” Lead them through questions similar to (c) above to identify this sin in their lives, and then point them to the gospel (repent and believe in the finished work of Christ) and lead them in a prayer of repentance and invite them to find their joy and satisfaction in Christ rather than the things they are tempted to covet. Use an example from your own life in which you coveted something, gained what you coveted, but found that it ultimately brought you no joy, but that Christ always provides joy & satisfaction for you.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Rom. 1:28-32 & Rom. 8.** Write a definition for each of the 5 words in the second group. Answer this question for each of them: “Why is this something that ‘ought not to be done’” (v. 28)?
- (b) With which of these do you struggle most (before you answer, you should read Matt. 5:21-22)? Why? 2nd most? Why? What should your response be considering you are a believer over whom sin has no more penalty or power?
- (c) Notice that each of the 1st & 2nd section begins with either, “filled with” or “filled.” What does this tell you about the people of whom Paul speaks? Do any of these sins “fill you up?” If so, what warning might this text be giving you?

(d) *Family*: **Read Rom. 1:29 (the first 9 sins)**. Ask, “Are any of you in this room murderers?” When everyone says, “No way!” then have them **Turn to & read Matt. 5:21-24**. Explain that Jesus is saying that anger in our hearts toward others makes us guilty of the same judgment as one who murders someone because anger leads to desires to destroy the other person. Remind them that James says, “The anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God” (James 1:20), and lead them through Matt. 5:23-24 and show them how to reconcile with someone with whom they are angry.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 1:28-31 and Rom. 9**. As Paul starts his 3rd section, what significance do you place on the fact that he does not use “full of” to describe these sins but just says, “they are?” If there are any words in this list of 12 sins that you are not able to define fully then look up those meanings and write them down.

(b) J.B. Phillips translates the word for “gossips” as “whisperers-behind-doors” and the word for “slanders” as “stabbers-in-the-back.” What types of conversation would you consider to be gossip? Is saying something true about someone ever gossip? Why or why not? Are you tempted to gossip (to spread information about someone, true or untrue, that will cause harm to them or their reputation, or to spread rumors that are at worst untrue and at best unconfirmed)? What do you do when you hear someone else gossiping? What should you do (i.e. what *will* you do next time)? **Read Ps. 101:5, Prov. 10:18, 16:28, 18:8, 26:20, & 1 Tim. 5:13** to remind yourself of what the Scriptures say about participating in and the dangers of gossip & slander.

(c) *Family*: 30 minutes prior to this lesson, go separately to each child and tell them a secret about another family member, something like, “Don’t tell anyone, but I am so mad at Ted for talking back to me that I am going to punish him tonight after our devotional! You must keep this a secret!” As you start the lesson, act mad, and **Read Rom. 1: 29**, stopping at the words, “gossips and slanderers.” Then tell them that the secret you told each of them earlier was not true, and you told them so they would understand the danger and destruction of gossiping against and slandering another person (be ready with definitions of both words). Ask them questions about how they felt to be told such a secret, did they tell anyone (more gossip!), how did they feel when they found out you had made up a story about them and told it to other family members, etc. **Read Ps. 101:5, Prov. 10:18, 16:28, 18:8, 26:20, & 1 Tim. 5:13** and teach them what the Scripture says and encourage them never to be involved in any kind of slander or gossip.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 1:28-31 & Rom. 10**. Are you guilty of committing any of the sins you studied this week (in case you have to stop and think, the answer would be, “Yes.”)? How do you reconcile your guilt with God’s decree found in v. 32? Why does Paul infer that those who not only practice these things but approve of others who do as well are somehow guiltier?

(b) I am out of room for this week, so here is your final assignment: In 2-3 sentences summarize Paul’s flow of thought from vs. 18-32. Then, answer these questions: What does God’s righteousness have to do with God’s wrath? Is God judging the sins listed in these verses or are the sins themselves God’s wrath? Against what primary sin is God’s wrath revealed?

(c) *Family*: Since I am out of room for this week, I hope you can develop your own lesson tonight for teaching v. 32 and tying up all of verses 18-32 so your family understands Paul’s purpose for this section.

DATE: February 26, 2012

PASSAGE: Romans 1:28-32

Given Over (Part II)