

**ROMANS SERIES FIVE**  
**TOUGH LOVE: THE KINDNESS THAT LEADS TO REPENTANCE**  
**Dr. Roger Barrier**  
**Romans 1:18-23; Psalm 19:1-4**

As we move deeper into the Book of Romans, we begin to get a view of man from God's perspective. This is not a pretty picture. This is why we need a savior—Jesus Christ. Mankind without Jesus is misguided, wounded, hurting, marred by sin—and Lost. The good news is that God has opened His heart in Christ to redeem man and restore an intimate relationship with His wayward ones.

The right view of the real God must come across. He is in the business of restoring broken and hurting lives.

In the first four chapters Paul placed the whole world on trial. We have all sinned and forsaken God to one degree or another:

The “Heathen” are without excuse (Romans 1);

Good People are without excuse (Romans 2);

Religious people are without excuse (Romans 3-4);

Fortunately, the restoration solution is presented (Romans 5-8).

In Romans 1:18-23 we see the action of God in unveiling Himself for the world to see. Then tragically, we see the horror of sinful man in forsaking God.

**GOD'S REVELATION (Romans 1:19-20)**

God uses two things to reveal Himself to everyone in the world—an internal and an external witness: The *Conscience*—Romans 1:19—is the “God spot” within every man and woman—the innate knowledge that God exists. See John 1:6-9.

*Nature*—Romans 1:20—reveals the existence of an Intelligent Designer. See Psalm 19:1-4. By the way the religious-scientific battle has never been God versus evolution. The real issue is Intelligent Designer versus Chance. (By the way, Evolution can be demonstrated on the macro level; but, evolution does not work on the sub-molecular level. As a complete theory of man's existence, evolution was a theory that failed.)

God gives general evidence through man's conscience and through nature that He exists. Those who reject His General Revelation are without excuse. (Special revelation are the Bible, His personal interactions with mankind and His Son Jesus Christ.

**MANKIND'S SUPPRESSION (ROMANS 1:18, 21)**

Men and women often take the light they have and the light they can see and suppress it!

In our present society a conspiracy of silence against God is evolving. Our culture seems to be doing everything it can to kill our collective conscience.

Moses vs. Freud

Exodus 32: “Don't blame me!”

**MANKIND'S IDOLATRY (ROMANS 1:23)**

Note the four categories of the degenerating signs of idolatry as they find expression in our society: man, birds, animals, reptiles.

The American entertainment industry looks a lot like the Roman pantheon in Paul's day: the gods and goddesses were capricious, immoral sexual perverts. Gracing the television and movie screens of our society are the god's and goddesses of our day. We accept their moral teachings; we listen to their politics; watch their fashions; imitate their addictions; and obsess over their marriages and divorces—most of which never succeed.

We say we have no idols; but, we have American Idol. We give them our time (sometimes all night) and our money (this is a multi-billion dollar industry).

### **GOD'S TOUGH LOVE (ROMANS 1:18)**

Two Greek words for wrath:

*Thumos* – uncontrolled, explosive rage;

*Orge* – settled, consistent, rising indignation which finally bursts.

Along with the tough love of God comes the patience of God. God is holding back much of His wrath—like water behind a dam. Water is released a little at a time. Sometimes the dam breaks.

At Calvary the tough love of God was fully revealed against sin.

God doesn't operate on man's time-table. Some of His wrath is being revealed while much of it is being built up.

This passage is a most interesting social commentary on our present-day society. Let's open our eyes. America is presently experiencing the tough love of God.

We cannot ignore that tough love is sometimes discipline and punishment for sin. But it is also for a divine purpose: to bring men and women to a repentant restoration with their Father-Creator.

See Revelation 16:9, 11.

### **OUR "TAKE AWAYS"**

- Parents, help your children find God in nature and in their inner consciences—then guide them into the special revelation of Jesus Christ. Remember that good parents often allow their children to suffer the consequences of their actions. If we don't discipline our kids, the world certainly will.
- Suppressing the truth invites the tough love of God; embracing the truth invites the full love and righteousness of God.
- The tough love of God is only understood when we have a deep relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

*Tapes and CDs of today's message and others like it are available at the Shepherd's Heart table on the Plaza immediately after this service.*