

Study on Romans 1:18-32

May 6, 2026

God-Breathed

That Scripture is God-breathed

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That Scripture is God-breathed means that it is central to understanding the nature, authority, and reliability of the Bible. The Scriptures are not simply religious reflections; rather, they emerge from the very creative breath of God.

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture comes from one's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever brought forth by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the _____.

2 Peter 1:20-21

Through the Scriptures testimony and the promise of its divine source, we are assured that these words are not merely human reflections, but the very breath of God Himself, speaking into hearts, minds and lives for ____.

To understand Romans 1:26-27, consider these key points:

- The passage addresses the consequences of turning away from God.
- It describes God allowing people to pursue unnatural desires as a form of judgment.
- The text specifically mentions same-sex relations as an example of these desires.

- It emphasizes the idea of exchanging natural relations for those contrary to nature.
- The verses reflect a broader theme of moral decline and its repercussions.
- Contextually, this passage is part of a larger argument about human sinfulness and the need for redemption.

Sometimes people fail to acknowledge that God invented sex, and designed man and woman as sexual beings. God's intended design for a man and woman to be "one flesh" with another through marriage (Genesis 2:24).

Paul here is stating that like idolatry, sexual practices outside of God's design bring dishonor to our bodies, and bring in and of itself God's judgment. Paul also makes it clear in Romans that if we are controlled by our lusts or passions, we become their slaves (Romans 6:16).

When we choose sexual promiscuity and same-sex behavior, God also allows us to suffer the natural consequences. Paul writes to us in 1 Corinthians 6:18, *"Flee from sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body."*

A simple (but not comprehensive) definition for "sin" might be *"choosing a path counter to God's instruction and design."* When we sin, we damage ourselves. God instructs us in ways that are in our best interest. Even when non-believers instinctively follow God's ways, they are still blessed (Romans 2:14-15). The adverse consequence for sin is a natural consequence God built into the moral universe, and it falls on believers and unbelievers alike.

Sin brings adverse consequences, but sexual sin is especially hostile to us, which could be why Paul leads with this particular sin when discussing God's judgment on any unjust living. He will broaden the discussion of sin considerably in the following verses.

To understand Romans 1:28-32, consider these key points:

- **Rejection of God:** The passage discusses humanity's choice to reject God, leading to moral decline.
- **Divine Judgment:** It highlights that God allows people to follow their sinful desires as a form of judgment.
- **List of Sins:** The verses enumerate various sins, including wickedness, greed, and envy, reflecting a corrupt society.
- **Consequences of Sin:** It emphasizes the destructive nature of sin and its impact on individuals and communities.
- **Moral Awareness:** Despite knowing the consequences, people continue to engage in sinful behavior, showing a lack of repentance.
- **Community Complicity:** The passage notes that not only do individuals sin, but they also approve of others who do, indicating societal acceptance of immorality.

What It Means When Paul States that He is Unashamed of the Gospel

The following is an excerpt from Rosaria Butterfield (PhD), who is a pastor's wife, homeschool mom, and former Syracuse University professor of English and Women's Studies. She has authored many books, including Five Lies of Our Anti-Christian Age (Crossway, 2023).

When we live unashamed of the gospel, we do not live by the sword. This is not merely a political debate. This is actual, spiritual warfare.

We believe that God's elect people are everywhere, and can be pulled out of any sin pattern into a righteous life by the work of Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. No matter how lost someone appears, we know where there is life and hope. We know that the gospel comes with offense, and while we do not relish offending anyone, we understand that gospel offense pricks hearts and minds in order to draw sinners to Christ. The offense of the gospel is our wakeup call to reality.

When we live unashamed of the gospel, we apply God's appointed means of grace with consistency and intensity. We look out for people whose loved ones identify as LGBTQ, knowing that many, many people in the LGBTQ world are prayed-for children. Their faithful parents need our love and help and fellowship, not scorn or rejection or suspicion. We pray with Bibles open, feasting on the word of God, reading whole books at a time, and memorizing as much as we can.

God can deliver, and does deliver, people out of homosexuality by the power of his grace and Christ's work on the cross — *people like me*.

Living by Faith

When the just live by faith, they put more stock in God's providence and God's character than in their own individual point of view.

We first see this phrase "the just shall live by his faith" in the book of Habakkuk. The prophet Habakkuk lived during the Babylon invasion. This book begins with Habakkuk pouring out his heart to God, begging God to do something with his defiant and ungodly people. The charges that Habakkuk brings against God's people are serious: they defy God's law and the wicked are ruling over the nations (Habakkuk 1:4). Does any of this sound familiar?

God answers Habakkuk by telling him not to worry because he has a plan: the Babylonians will soon capture God's people and this will put an end to this problem. Habakkuk is stunned and horrified. He pleads with God to spare his people. He tells God that the Babylonians are far worse than them. He questions God's divine wisdom. God then explains to his prophet that he is using the evil Babylonians to teach his people that the "just shall live by his faith" (Habakkuk

2:4). Through trial and confusion and heartache and pain, Habakkuk learns what it means that the just shall live by his faith.

Likewise, we learn how the just shall live by faith through trial and heartache and pain and confusion. When the just live by faith, they trust God not only with their soul, but also with all of the details of their lives. When the just lives by faith, the Lord cleans house. God's people learn not to rely on their own understanding, and how to live in the means of his grace he appoints. We feast and feed off of God's word. We pray and fast. We appeal to God to bring revival. We repent of sin openly. We gladly and persistently gather with God's people. We live in a constant posture of humility, forgiveness, and hospitality. We don't despise the cross.

The Need of Sinful Humanity

Homosexuality is a serious sin. It ranks with the sins that attack the creation ordinance. While the blood of Christ is more powerful than the power of any sin, while grace is stronger than any sin, a sexual sin that attacks a creation ordinance warps both the mind, body, and soul of a person. Sexual sin lures others into its trap. And a sin that now has civil rights backing acts as a powerful bully, punishing the righteous as it rewards the sinful.

In the face of this, we must remember that the word of God alone meets the need of sinful men and women. The grand narrative of Scripture provides a means of God's grace while calling all image-bearers to a standard of duty and truth. This living and active, double-edged sword continues to interpret and defeat the idols of every age and of every generation, including today's reigning idol of homosexuality. The Bible has a birthright and a progeny totally different from every other book on the planet.

A.W. Pink in a little book entitled *Profiting from the Word* has insightfully commented that the word of God, when read the wrong way and for the wrong reasons, issues "no spiritual profit," but instead provides "a curse rather than a

blessing.” What is the right way to “profit” from God’s word, so that it serves as a blessing rather than a curse? Pink says that you can only profit from God’s word if it:

- convicts you of your sin,
- leads you to sorrow over your sin,
- draws you to confess your sin,
- develops in you a deeper hatred of your indwelling sins,
- causes you to forsake your sins,
- fortifies you against sin, and
- compels you to practice the opposite of your sin.
- Because the word of God is divine revelation and a groundswell of supernatural power, it can conquer your sin.

Progressive “Christians” and gay-rights activists have claimed that the Bible is on their side. They interpret the Bible to call sin grace and grace sin. Like the false prophets Jeremiah warns against, who “heal the hurt of my people slightly” (Jeremiah 6:14), the false gospel of gay Christianity cannot bring true peace (which requires repentance and faith), but can only bring momentary and fleeting cessation of war. Instead of using the Bible to anchor our fickle hearts in Christ, the Bible is bent and twisted in the hands of gay-activist “Christians” to serve our wicked hearts. In the hands of gay-rights activists who call themselves progressive Christians, the Bible becomes a curse.

Because of this Bible-twisting, I have recently been called by gay Christians to repent of my repentance of homosexuality. Why? Because if homosexuality is not a sin, then my repentance of it is. In a post-Obergefell world, any debate over homosexuality is never a debate simply over homosexuality. The issue is the infallibility, inerrancy, and sufficiency of Scripture.

True Christian’s Best Guide

Practicing homosexuals — of which I was once one — may not be conscious of the larger, biblical meaning of their sin as outlined in Romans 1, but it would be to their betterment if they were. While the LGBTQ world has become a machine, many individual people who practice homosexuality just want to be left alone to live in peace. But there is no lasting peace in sin, even for the unbeliever.

Listening to the challenges of people who identify as LGBTQ (as well as the praying parents that stand behind them) can be helpful if it allows you to meet them where they are with the gospel that changes minds, wills, affections, and allegiances. Biblical counseling and faithful preaching that breaks our hearts on the Rock of Christ is crucial to this conversation, as is kindness and genuine care for the well-being of others. But Romans 1 is the true Christian's guide as we seek to live for Christ in this post-Obergefell world. A person's well-being is never disconnected from truth, because truth is not only true, it is better, it is beautiful, it is ethical, and it is lovely.