

# APPROVING PEOPLE WHO PRACTICE SIN

Romans 1:32

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*Romans 1:32: who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.*

## INTRODUCTION

Twenty-five years before Paul wrote this epistle to the Romans, he was a persecutor, on the road to Damascus to imprison the Christians there. Now twenty-five years later Paul writes, as a bondservant of Jesus Christ, an apostle, empowered to preach the gospel of God.

In all his journeys, from Ephesus, to Macedonia and then to Corinth, Paul was determined to go to Rome.

It was from Corinth that Paul wrote this letter to the church in Rome.

Paul's desire to go to Rome, was to come to minister to the church that he might impart to them deeper knowledge of God's words and how they can tap into God's power by which they can be established.

Paul also wants the church in Rome, to know that God has revealed Himself through nature; man can know God through nature. Nature is a revelation of God. It is speaking to man of the existence of God. It is declaring the glory of God, His power, His wonders.

That if a man or a child of God, refuses to be bound by such revelation,

such a one will degenerate to the following levels:

1. Refusing to know the truth of God
2. Refusing to practice the truth of God
3. Refusing to glorify God
4. Encouraging, stimulating and approving of and get excited watching or take pleasure in those who also do the same refusals.

## OUR NATURAL LINK TO GOD

Naturally, every one of us has a moral sense, that is, we are all capable of knowing the will of God.

*How?*

Through our reasoning, our conscience, and our observation of the effects of wickedness, corruption, hatred, uncontrolled anger, oppression and injustice, we can naturally arrive at the knowledge of God.

Naturally, there is within the consciousness of every one of us that which we know to be right, that which we know to be wrong. It is manifest within us.

God has, in His own way, put it into our hearts and minds and our consciences, and we know what is right, we know what is wrong.

For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes of God are clearly seen, we can naturally understand that there is a higher being,

a supernatural being, a divine being above all human beings, we can feel and experience His eternal power and Godhead, to the extent that we don't have excuse to disbelieve that God exists and that He has laws to guide us, for our entire wellbeing.

The heavens declare the glory of God and the earth shows His handwork day by day, night unto night. God understand the language of all His creatures and creation.

By nature, we are all aware that God does exist. It is only a fool who says in his heart that, "*There is no God.*"

**Romans 2:14-15** added an emphasis to this rule of natural link: *for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them).*

## THE POWER IN GOD'S WORDS

In addition to this natural means, it is only by deeper study of and better understanding of the word of God, that we can be well established to do what is approved by God.

Jesus knew that without knowing God's power and His word; we are bound to make mistakes.

**Matthew 22:29:** *Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.*

Paul wanted Timothy to understand this principle that better understanding of the word of God, gives one advantage of being able to do what is pleasing to God.

**II Timothy 2:15:** *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

In essence, we can never be free spiritually, if we do not have better understanding of the word of God and practice same.

**John 8:32:** *And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

## THE USE OF GOD'S WORDS

An important question, that comes to mind is that, *does having the knowledge of God's word, itself keep us from sinning?*

*No!*

It is only the practice of the word of God that can actually validate our relationship with God.

It is only by practice of God's word, in totality that we can be recognized by Jesus Christ as His own.

**John 14:15:** *If you love Me, keep My commandments.*

**John 15:14:** *You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.*

**Matthew 7:23:** *And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice (that is, those who act as if there is no God's law set for them, those who disregard God's set law)!*

**1 John 3:22:** *And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.*

Having God's words and knowing God's words, is not enough. In **James 1:22**, James said, *we must be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves.*

The importance of practicing God's word cannot be over-emphasized.

## APPROVING PEOPLE WHO PRACTICE SIN

**Romans 1:32:** *who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of*

*death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.*

Sometimes, we often say that, "I never commit fornication, I have never murdered anybody, I have never lied, I do not dress immodestly, I do not drink alcoholic beverages, I do not smoke, I do not take bribe, I do not cheat, I do not extort, I do not steal, I do not keep malice, I do not hate, I do not take vengeance or I have never done this or that or the other."

If we commit these sins (*all inclusive*), we all know that we have sinned. If we don't commit these sins (*all inclusive*), good for us, but does it end with the fact that we don't commit these sins?

Paul says that apart from the disappointment, that we (*as Christians*) commit these sins (*all inclusive*), we even go further, to add to the disappointment, by taking pleasure in those that commit the same sins.

This means that we know (*obviously*) what was wrong by nature and by God's words and we know God's penalty of such, *but we don't care*.

Instead, we actually enjoy seeing people committing these sins.

We develop a kind of an excitement watching people committing these sins.

We delight in those who commit sin; and hence, encourage them in it, and excite them to it.

We give these people, *thumbs up*, that is, we give them an indication of satisfaction or approval for the sins they are committing.

*This is a very low and destructive point in human history and especially in the life of a Christian.*

But that is what we now see in most of our lives as a church and as individuals.

Remember, the Corinthian congregation, in **1 Corinthians 5:1-13**,

where a Christian brother was openly guilty of sexual immorality—immorality so debased that even the unbelievers and misbelievers were not guilty of it.

The so-called Christian brother was living with, and having sexual relations with, his stepmother, a sin explicitly condemned under the law of Moses (**Leviticus 18:8**).

He was guilty of the grossest kind of sin: *A man was living with "his father's wife" (1 Corinthians 5:1)*. Even in a wicked city like Corinth, this sin—the sin of incest—would have been uncommon and abhorred.

Yet, the church was not asking the right question of how did such happen, of what should be done to deal with this sin, and of what should be done to stop the spread and influence of this sin over others.

The church tolerated it; it was as if the brother was given a famous and celebrity Christian star treatment in the church. Their arrogance was just so wrong.

This disgraceful case of immorality within in the church was bad enough, *but their attitude toward it made matters worse*.

Yet, this kind of approval of those who sins, also happens in our midst today.

We drink or don't drink alcoholic beverages yet we encourage others to drink. We actually enjoy watching them drink. We even excite them to drink. We degenerate to the low level of justifying their drinking and give them thumbs-up.

*We don't care about the Holy Spirit stand on alcoholic drinking, the effects on our spiritual maturity and God's penalty on such.*

We dress or don't dress immodestly yet we encourage others to dress immodestly. We actually enjoy watching them dress immodestly even excite them to dress immodestly. We

degenerate to the low level of justifying their dressing immodestly.

Some parents are so happy, seeing their children dress immodestly and seductively, in the society and even to the church services.

The same goes for husbands with wives, brothers with sisters, and friends with friends.

In fact, it has become a thing of delight to watch; something that has become a way of life.

Right on the social media, we can see a brother or sister dress immodestly, seductively, and we are so proud to click the *like and love buttons*.

We even make our comments of our beautiful and sexy they look.

We give them thumbs-up.

*We don't care about the Holy Spirit stand on modest dressing, how it enhances our spiritual living and God's penalty on immodest and seductive dressing.*

We are involved or not involved in yahoo-yahoo yet we encourage others to be involved in yahoo-yahoo. We actually enjoy seeing them succeed in their yahoo-yahoo efforts. We even excite them to be involved in yahoo-yahoo.

Today, we have parents' association of yahoo-yahoo boys and girls. Some parents without their children consent, go ahead to register or initiate their children into yahoo-yahoo.

We degenerate to the low level of justifying yahoo-yahoo lifestyle and give them thumbs-up.

*We don't care about the Holy Spirit stand on godly means of living, how it enhances our spiritual living and God's penalty on dishonest means of making money.*

We are involved or not involved in malice, bitterness and hatred yet we encourage others not to forgive those who has offended them.

We actually enjoy seeing others spreading gossips, and false information about brethren, friends and colleagues.

We even excite people not to ever reconcile with others.

We take pleasure in seeing quarrels, hatred, factions, tribalism, rise and establish stronghold right in our midst.

We degenerate to the low level of justifying these unhealthy practices.

*We don't care about the Holy Spirit stand on unity, forgiveness, true love, God's penalty on those who practice otherwise.*

## CAUTION

Approving of others' committing sin is even more depraved than doing them.

A man, woman, Christian brother or sister who applauds and encourages those who practice something sinful and shameful, though not him or herself practicing it, is not only as depraved as those who practice it, but actually more depraved than they.

For those who applaud and encourage the vicious actions of others make a deliberate contribution to sin thereby promote the power and spread of sin and therefore commit sin.

**In Matthew 5:28**, Jesus said that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. The same thing applies to the woman lusting after a man.

What Jesus meant is that the thought that produces adultery is as sinful as executing the act of adultery itself. Yet, this lust can also lead one to physically commit the adultery.

**Acts 8:1** tells us that Saul was in hearty agreement with putting Stephen to death.

Saul did not actually engage in the stoning of Stephen but he did hold the cloaks of those stoning Stephen.

His holding of the cloaks was a thumbs-up, was an excitement to the killers to commit murder.

He was as guilty and much more guilty than those who did the killing.

He started out by just standing idly by, later he was in the middle of the persecution but end up becoming an actual persecutor.

For example, we don't commit fornication yet we watch pornography or encourage others to watch pornography.

This can make us degenerate to actual fornication, masturbation and rape, which are now common, popular and destructive traits, in many young and unmarried ones.

You can see that giving others support in sinning or giving sin a support, is a snare for us to actually be involved in that sinning later in life or such may manifest in the lives of our families.

## **CONCLUSION**

Brethren, let's be careful.

We are being bombarded on every side by Satan's tricks, to make us commit sin even by not becoming the actual person executing the sin.

Paul says that the decision we must make regarding right and wrong is as critical as a death issue.

Let's make efforts not to commit sins and to stop taking pleasure in or approving people who commit sins.