

Turn Your Back on God and This Happens

Written by Bill Perkins

How does God deal with us when we choose to live as though he doesn't exist? It might surprise you that God steps aside and turns us over to our base appetites (Romans 1:24-32). Maybe that doesn't sound so bad. But is it? An episode of *The Twilight Zone* provides an answer.

The Twilight Zone

The story centers around a self-serving restaurant critic who dies without realizing it. After entering a smoke-filled restaurant, he orders his favorite meal. A moment later the waiter places several plates of succulent food before the hungry patron. All smiles and nods the critic devours the delicacies and begs for more. Never has he tasted such delicious food!

As the show closes, the camera backs away from the table revealing a room filled to the ceiling with dinner plates. Even though he had eaten enough to feed an army, the critic longed for more. And then he realized, no matter how much he ate, his craving could not be satisfied. In despair, he cried out. But too late.

While that story doesn't describe hell, it does describe how God judges us when we turn our back on him. The Apostle Paul states that God has revealed himself to all people through creation. While there isn't enough information about God in creation for a person to believe in Christ, there is enough to prove God's existence.

Judgment Arrives in Three Ways

If men and women respond to that revelation by turning away from God—then God will judge them. But his judgment won't come as expected. Seldom does God strike people with a bolt of lightning. Or, command the earth to swallow them. Instead, his judgment arrives in three ways.

First — Evil Desires

First, he hands us over to our evil desires (vv. 24-25). Without God's Spirit and Law to bridle the evil within us, that evil will lead us to immorality. In order to justify ourselves, we'll deny God or find a religious system that permits our behavior.

Second — Shameful Lusts

Second, God will give us over to "shameful lusts." We'll do things we once considered wrong. We'll indulge in activities, which in the past, we would have hidden. Rather than choosing healthy relationships, we'll indulge ourselves in "indecent acts." Ultimately, our unbridled passions will consume us.

Finally — A Depraved Mind

Finally, God will hand us over to a “depraved mind.” Once that happens, we won’t be able to tell right from wrong! Paul lists twenty-one examples of such thinking. He climaxes his discussion with a shocking thought. Those with a depraved mind know their thoughts and actions displease God. They fear his judgment. Yet, not only do they continue in their lifestyle, they applaud others who live the same way.

Paul’s words are sobering. If we choose to turn our back on God, he won’t stand in the way. Instead, he’ll hand us over to our base appetites. Like the man who found himself in the twilight zone, we’ll discover appetites which can’t be satisfied, no matter how much we feed them.

In the context of Paul’s letter to the Romans, the apostle wants us to know that sin is serious. It’s progressive. It’s deadly. But as the rest of the letter points out, there is forgiveness and freedom in Christ. Thank God!