



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: A Nation Abandoned by God – Part 2

Guest(s): John MacArthur

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Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello everyone, and welcome to this broadcast. You're listening to another edition of Family Talk. As most of you know, this is a division of James Dobson Family Institute. I'm James Dobson, and we're going to let you hear the second half of a recording that we began yesterday featuring the voice of Dr. John MacArthur. He's senior pastor of Grace Community Church in California. He's had his own radio program. He took that position in 1969. He's now heard on more than 2,000 radio outlets throughout the world. It's called Grace to You. He's written many, many books. I could take the rest of the program to introduce him to you, but I bet you already know.

About 10 years ago or so, Dr. MacArthur came to Woodmen Valley Chapel here in Colorado Springs, a very prominent church here. On that day he gave a stunning presentation on America's moral decline. He took that message from Romans 1:28-32. I don't do this very often, but I'm going to read that Scripture to you to understand the context of what John MacArthur said.

"Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lust. Even their women exchanged natural relations with unnatural ones, in the same way the men abandoned natural relations with women who were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, He gave them over to a depraved mind to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed, depravity. They're full of envy, murders, strife, deceit and malice. They're gossips and slanderers, God haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful, and they invent ways to do evil. They disobey their parents, they're senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things, but they also approve of those who practice them."

Now going back to what I said, Dr. MacArthur came to Colorado Springs and gave this stunning message based on that Scripture having to do with the depravity of that day. We aired the first half of that message yesterday. Today we're going to let you hear the balance. This is a warning directly to us from the writings of the Apostle Paul.

John MacArthur:

The final step comes in verse 28, middle of verse 28. "God gave them over to a depraved mind." Now, the version of the Bible you may have, I'm reading the New American Standard, might have a different translation for depraved. Let me tell you what the word means. Non-functional. It doesn't work. Useless. Can't think. Can't reason. Can't comprehend. You look at this world and you say, rampant sexual immorality, out of control, destroying people willy-nilly, even in the church, even in the leadership of the church. Homosexuality, same thing, rampant, out of control, demanding to be accepted as normal, and the society rushing to affirm that acceptance. Isn't there anybody in the system who would stand up and call this what it really is, a massive moral disaster? Can't they see it? Can't they figure it out? No. No.

1 Corinthians 1 says, "Man by wisdom knew not God." Human wisdom just on its own doesn't get there. Then you add that the God of this world has blinded the minds of them that do not believe, and you've got a compounding blindness. And then you add the fact that they are blinded by virtue of the sweeping, dominating elements of their culture, and you're just not going to get anybody to rise up and take that position and have people rally around it. You're going to have more people in leadership in the country outing themselves as homosexuals. If you think that you've seen a lot of that, you haven't seen any of it yet, as it becomes more and more accepted.

A depraved mind in the original language is one that's tested and found useless, therefore disqualified for its intended use. The reasoning faculty has been corrupted by the influences that surround it. If you have a culture that has developed an aberrant morality, then you have consciences that function off of that aberrant morality. And you get all the stuff, all the inexplicable behaviors.

That's why in verse 32 it says, "Although they know the ordinance of God, all they know, all they know inherently in them," Romans two, "what is right and what is wrong, they who practice such things are worthy of death. They know that, they do them anyway, and they give hearty approval to those who practice them."

Sexual revolution, down one more step, homosexual revolution, down one more step. You can't ever get your way out of it because the mind, the cultural mind is gone. I would put it this way, maybe simply, there's no sure indicator of a corrupted, wicked, and abandoned society under God's wrath than when that society does not tolerate anger against sin.

It was C.S. Lewis who said, "The last experience of the sinner is the horrible enslavement of the freedom he desired."

Paul is unfolding for us this picture of what a society looks like when it's abandoned. It's not my description. Now you see why I said I think America is here going through the cycle of Romans 1. Here's why it happens.

Verse 18, "The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven in this form of abandonment against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men that makes up this society." Verse 18, "Who suppress..." What? There it is. That's it. They suppress the truth. It's always about the truth. What truth? Real truth. As Francis Schaeffer used to say, the true truth. God saves to the truth. You're begotten again. Peter says, "By the word of truth." You're sanctified by the truth. Jesus said, "Sanctify them by thy truth, thy word is truth." John 17:17. That's all we have.

It's amazing how people mock biblical truth today. Amazing. Oh, you can figure out a way to make it so smooth and soft and take out all the hard parts so it doesn't have the sting, but if you give the unadulterated unexpurgated pure Word of God, it will generate a negative reaction in many environments. You need to speak the truth in love, but all we've got is the truth. Suppress the truth.

Let me expand that a little bit, give you four things to think about. Four reasons for wrath that have to do with the suppressing of the truth. Number one, revelation. We've been given the truth. Suppress the truth in unrighteousness because that which is known about God is evident within them, for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes, eternal power, divine nature, have been clearly seen being understood through what has been made so that they are without excuse.

What is this? This is not even talking about the Scripture. This is talking about the fact that God is inlaid His truth into the fabric of man's being. He is not without a witness to the truth. Look at chapter two for a moment. Drop down into verse 14, "The Gentiles who do not have the law do instinctively the things of the law. These not having the law are a law to themselves in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness."

Part of being human, like all the other parts of being human, to be able to think and to make relationships, to speak and to act in the ways that humans act. Those kinds of things are the familiar components of what it means to be human. But another one is the law of God written in the very fabric of man's nature so that he cannot plead ignorance. In fact, it says in verse 20 that he has enough of the law in himself, enough of reason to be without excuse.

Reason is simply a cause and effect device. Reason is simply thinking our way through patterns of cause and effect. This leads to this, this leads to this, this leads to this, and that's how reason works. Eventually you get back to the first cause of the massive universal effect of creation. Reason is a device given by God to all human beings that leads them directly back to Him.

Don't tell me that one time there was a pile of protoplasm and it decided to become this. My reason tells me there has to be a creator. Do you know the whole world believed that until Darwin came along? Jonah out on the boat, and the sailors, pagan sailors, say to him, "Well, why is this going on?" He says,

"Well, it's my God. He's doing it because He's punishing me. So it's my God." And they said, "Well, who's your God?" He didn't say, "Well, let's see. He's the Hebrew God. He's the God of the Hebrew people. That's who He is." He didn't say that. He said this. He said, "Well, He's the God who made the earth and the sea." "Oh." That's a natural assumption. Natural assumption.

Go to Mars Hill. Paul's up there. They have a deal there for the unknown God. Paul says, "I want to tell you who this unknown God is." He doesn't say, "This is the Christian God of New Testament." He says, "This is the God who created everything. This is the God in whom we live and move and have our being. Everybody got it?" Only in the modern world do we not get it.

You go back to God, the massive first cause of everything. That's in the fabric of being human and you know have to work hard for a couple of hundred years to convince an entire society that that's nonsense and that what makes sense is nobody times nothing equals everything. Though it doesn't make sense, it works in a totally immoral culture, because if there's no creator, there's no judge. So reason is the first thing that shows you God. The second thing is morality, which is built into the fabric of all of us and has to again be cultivated to the point where you've got a society of people whose reason doesn't need God and whose sense of morality has been totally perverted.

Here we are. This society has rejected God. That's our second point. Point one, revelation. God has revealed Himself to every person. Second, rejection. Men have turned away from the truth.

Verse 21, interesting. "Even though they knew God, that is humanity, that is society in any given period of time by God's creative design, have the knowledge of moral law and reason that leads them back to a moral lawgiver and a judge and a creator. Even though they know that innately, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks, but instead of doing what was reasonable and moral, they became empty in their speculations and their foolish heart was darkened."

The bottom line is that they don't like the God their reason leads them to and they don't like the God that their innate sense of what is right and wrong leads them to, and so they abandon that God and the lights go out.

They didn't honor Him as God. They weren't thankful to Him for what He had given, and the lights went out. They became empty in their speculations, their thinking, their patterns, their ideologies. Their foolish heart went black. Empty human ideas. Now you can't know God. You can't know the truth. But you think you're smart. Look at verse 22.

"Professing to be wise. Professing to be wise, they became fools." That's the third step. You go from revelation, to rejection, to rationalization. Men insist they're doing fine, never did better. We're very advanced. Professing to be wise.

In fact, it says, "Professing to be wise, they became fools." The word is morino from which we're getting moron. Proud morons, giving each other Ph.D.'s.

Finally, it comes down to, it goes from revelation, to rejection, to rationalization, to religion. Yeah, religion. That's right. Verse 23, "They exchange the glory of an incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man, birds, four footed animals and crawling creatures." What religion is that?

Oh, how about environmentalism? Where you worship what? The creation. Not the creator. Wow. Yeah, this is man at his... Isn't this man at his highest? He's worshipping. No, this man at his lowest. False religion is man in the pit. He's gone so far down, he's created the fantasy of false religion. Religion is not man at his highest. It is man at his lowest. The ultimate insanity is to worship any other than the true God.

We see what happens in a society when God turns them over and we see why He turns them over. That was just a quick overview.

We look at our nation, our hearts are broken, the mind is depraved. They think they're smart, they're morons. They can't get to the truth. The mind is completely gone. They invent bizarre religions. They become religious. Today, they like to talk about being spiritual, right? I'm very religious. I'm very spiritual. What in the world does that mean? What does that mean? As if you can invent your own worship and your own religion. That's man at his lowest. That's all the way at the bottom, total complete rejection of the true God and the true faith.

That's where we are. Now the question is, how do we pray?

Turn to Psalm 81. I want the Holy Spirit to give you direction here as we think about this. See if this doesn't sound familiar. Verse 11, "But my people did not listen to My voice or My Word. Israel did not obey me." Verse 12, I what? Gave him up. Wow. If He would do that with Israel, the covenant people, what do you think is going on in America? We are not a covenant people. "So I gave them over to the stubbornness of their own heart to walk in their own devices. I let them go. I let them go to the consequences of their choices."

This is God. He's abandoned them. But look at Verse 13, and here's the heart of God that I think we have to grasp in America in this hour. Here's God, His words. "Oh, that my people would do," what? Yeah, there it is. "That they listen to me. Listen to me. That Israel would walk in my ways."

Right there, folks, is your mandate to pray. What do you have to pray for? You have to pray for the word of the living God to be proclaimed across this nation. It's the answer. You think God might react? He said... I love this. Verse 14. "I would quickly." You like that word? That a good word? I don't get the picture God's dragging His heels here. "I would quickly subdue their enemies. I would

turn My hand against their adversaries and it would be so great that even the people who hate Me would pretend to obey Me."

And then I love this. I love Verse 16. "And I would feed you with the finest of the wheat and with honey from the rock, I would satisfy you." That's metaphoric. I just drown you in blessing. God only wants one thing out of a nation. Listen, and believe this book.

There's only one solution, and that's the truth. The truth by which God saves, by which God sanctifies. If this nation will respond and listen to His truth, God will open the floodgates and we might be the greatest recovery story in history. But there's no other way than that people listen to me and walk in my ways. It's not going to happen. If there's a famine of the hearing of the word of God, pray that the word, as Paul said, would have free course and that it would run with all its power across this land, with all its beauty and magnificence, all its power and grace, that people would hear and believe and be saved and be obedient. All that to the glory of God.

I don't know what God's plan is. I just see here what his heart is. "Oh, that My people would listen to me." That's the heart of God.

Roger Marsh:

Well, what an incredible promise of God's faithfulness when we turn our hearts back toward Him. Friend, you've been listening to Family Talk today and a challenging presentation from pastor and author, Dr. John MacArthur. Now, if you'd like to hear either part one or part two of this message again in its entirety, all you have to do is visit our website at drjamesdobson.org/familytalk.

Now, if you've been listening over the past couple of days, and you might be wondering, what does it mean to be a Christian citizen? Well, here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, we have a helpful resource that will encourage you and also inform you about being a faith-filled member of your community. The special three disc CD collection called, "What Does It Mean to Be a Christian Citizen?" We'll be happy to send it to you as our way of thanking you for your gift of any amount in support of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute today. Remember, we are a completely listener supported broadcast outreach and we're very grateful for your prayers and financial support. So, go online to drjamesdobson.org, select the resource tab, and then click onto store. Once you're there, search for, "What Does It Mean to Be a Christian Citizen?" Again, go to drjamesdobson.org, hit the resources tab, and then click on store.

I'm Roger Marsh. On behalf of Dr. Dobson and the entire staff here at Family Talk, thank you for tuning in today. May God continue to richly bless you and your family as you grow deeper in your relationship with Him. And be sure to join us again next time right here for another edition of Family Talk.

Announcer:

This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.

Roger Marsh:

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