

America's Fall: The Modern-Day Roman Empire

"What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 1:9)

The Apostle Paul likely wrote his letter to the Romans about 25 years after Christ's death and resurrection (sometime between A.D. 55-57). Throughout the book of Romans, Paul warned of God's unfolding wrath against the Roman Empire – indeed, all of humanity – for mankind's embrace and practice of pagan morality.

Approach Paul's words with a modicum of objectivity and the reader is left with this dreadful realization: The words of Christ's hand-picked messenger likewise paint an eerily accurate portrait of America, A.D. 2013. The negligible difference is that ancient pagan morality has been sanitized with a new euphemism: postmodern "progressivism."

It is unbridled hubris that presumes America – lest she depart the wide path to ancient Rome – will not suffer that empire's same fate.

"The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them," he wrote. "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse" (Rom. 1:18-20).

Of course, an entire book could be written on this passage alone, but, essentially, Paul is noting that knowledge of God's existence, eternal power, divine nature and moral law are self-evident. His truths are written on the hearts of

every man, woman and child – Jew, Christian and pagan alike. Those who deny this reality are “without excuse.”

Yet, excuses we make.

Pull your eyes from your smartphone, America. Look around you. God’s wrath is “being revealed from heaven” once more.

“For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator – who is forever praised. Amen.” (Romans 1:21-25)

Indeed, there is nothing new under the sun. Sexual impurity in all its ugly forms – fornication, adultery, homosexuality, pornography, et al. – is celebrated by these “progressive” “fools.” American culture revels in the degrading of our bodies while purity is mocked. God has given us over to sinful desires.

Furthermore, while good earthly stewardship is a sound biblical principle, the pantheism and idolatry of which Paul warned (worship of creation and/or false idols over the Creator) prospers yet today in its contemporary, totalitarian forms: radical environmentalism and new ageism.

“Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones (lesbianism). In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.”

(Romans 1:26-27)

Was Paul rebuking “progressives” on the U.S. Supreme Court, President Obama, liberals in Congress and other cheerleaders for these “shameful lusts” and “unnatural relations” – or was he just describing the disproportionately powerful and “inflamed-with-lust” homosexual lobby they represent?

Probably both.

Either way, God’s “due penalty” is non-discriminating. America’s official endorsement of “gay marriage,” “gay pride,” homosexualist indoctrination in our schools, “transgender” bathroom bills and bans on counseling to help with unwanted same-sex attraction will not end well.

Ask the Romans.

“Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. 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 also approve of those who practice them.” (Romans 1:28-32)

Where to begin.

We have arrived. Shame on you, America. Our children – our adults – are depraved. They are “occupied” by envy. They attack innocent people, beating and killing them for sport. They murder one another in the streets without love or mercy. They disobey, gossip, slander and hate God. They are insolent, arrogant, boastful “little monsters.” They invent ways of

doing evil. Hannah Montana is what America once was. MTV Miley is America today. She “evolved” because we “evolved.” You saw it on display. It’s ugly. It’s Satanic.

It’s “progressive.”

Still, though we have become a Romans 1 nation and, absent widespread spiritual revival, will fall as did Rome, those who embrace and follow truth – who is Jesus the Christ – are a Romans 8 people:

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”
(Romans 8:1-4)

That’s the good news.

And that’s a column for another day.

Matt Barber (@jmattbarber on Twitter) is an attorney concentrating in constitutional law. He serves as Vice President of Liberty Counsel Action.