Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the small group study of *Unvarnished Truth: Life’s Greatest Story* these sermon outlines will use different Scripture passages related to the small group study theme, so the pastor can reinforce the study from the pulpit. Humans are constantly searching for meaning. The Bible has not left us in the dark as to why we were created. Romans 1:18-32 helps us to see we were created for worship.

Introduction: In his book *Cat’s Cradle*, famed atheist author Kurt Vonnegut invented his religion called Bokonism. He imagined creation a bit like this:

“In the beginning, God created the earth, and he looked upon it in His cosmic loneliness.

And God said, "Let Us make living creatures out of mud, so the mud can see what We have done." And God created every living creature that now moveth, and one was man. Mud as man alone could speak. God leaned close to mud as man sat up, looked around, and spoke. Man blinked. "What is the purpose of all this?" he asked politely.

"Everything must have a purpose?" asked God.

"Certainly," said man.

"Then I leave it to you to think of one for all this," said God.

And He went away.”

Sadly, many follow Vonnegut’s understanding of creation, that God has left us to ourselves to understand our purpose. Our culture often speaks of “finding yourself” and “discovering your purpose”. God has not left us in the dark.

We often turn to Romans 1:18-32 to understand the doctrine of God’s wrath or to engage discussion on sexuality. This passage is also a place to discern the purpose for which God created us.

### 1. Humanity was created to reflect God

It has been said that your life either tells the truth about God or it tells a lie. This is true because of Genesis 1:26. There we read that humanity was created to be an accurate reflection of the greatness of God. We are glory-reflectors. Romans 1:18-23 shows that humanity does not accurately reflect God. We are like broken mirrors or those fun house mirrors which have a glimmer of reality but largely distort the truth.
You have a purpose—to live life in such a way that you accurately show the greatness and the goodness of God.

2. Humanity was created to worship God

Romans 1:24-27 is a hotly debated passage in our day because of its reference to homosexuality. But this passage actually has something even bigger to say about worship and purpose than it does our sexuality. It does speak to our sexuality, but a biblical view of sexuality is intimately connected with our theology of worship. For Paul, skewed sexuality comes from skewed worship.

In Romans 1 Paul is chiefly concerned with idolatry. His point in 1:18-23 is that God created mankind to worship and serve Him (“honor him and give him thanks”). All of creation cries out that this is the case. Humanity in response has suppressed the cry of creation and in rebellion we have “exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images…” We have “exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator”.

Paul’s point is that creation was not formed to worship creation. We are not made to worship and serve the like. Idolatry does just this, it makes us worship things that are creaturely, just like ourselves. God designed us to worship that which is outside ourselves. Rather than being the mirror of God’s glory we were created to be, idolatry causes us to worship the mirror of ourselves.

You have a purpose—to joyously worship One who is greater than You.

3. Humanity was created to enjoy God

C.S. Lewis once said, “I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation.” You were created to enjoy God. This is why Paul so quickly moves to the dishonorable passions. We are hard-wired for worship. Another way of saying this is that we are joy-seekers. When we’ve exchanged the glory of God it is only fitting that our passions will be distorted. We now love what we should hate and hate what we should love. This often leaves our lives in shambles. You weren’t meant to enjoy fleeting pleasures. You were made to enjoy the eternal. You and I were made to give thanks to God and to enjoy His daily presence.

Conclusion:

If Romans 1:18-32 were the only verses in our Bible we would have an accurate view of the human heart. We would know that we had a purpose but we would be powerless to fulfill the reason why God created us. Thankfully, Paul continues his argument in Romans; he is leading us somewhere. All of humanity has failed to glorify God as we should—we have not fulfilled our purpose. But thankfully there is one whose life told the absolute truth about God—one who was the exact representation—Jesus the Christ. It is only through relationship with Jesus that we truly come to understand and fulfill our purpose.

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