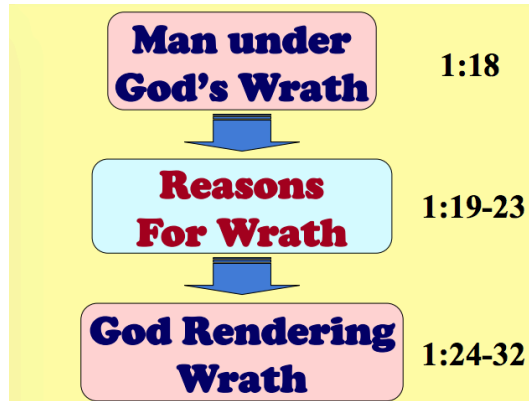


Romans 1.18-21 Truth, Revelation in Creation, Rejection, Abandoning, Wrath 018-022a
Ray Mondragon

[Romans 1.18-20 Revelation of the Truth 018]

- I. Introducción 1.1-17
- II. Provisión de la justicia de Dios 1.18-8.39
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One of the central passages in all of Scripture which elucidates the concept of Truth.



God reveals Himself adequately to all mankind, but man rejects Him and He pours out His wrath. The rejection is a reason for that wrath and Paul starts a list of aspects of that rejection.

1.18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

A statement that mankind knows certain things. Man has certain knowledge built in by creation. Even little babies—and we see from their attitudes the beginning of the suppression of the truth. There is the ability to assimilate into our thinking a concept of God. The word, and forms of it are common in the Old and New Testaments. Hundreds of

verses speak of things that we can know, things in terms of the unseen world that we can know, especially believers, who have access to absolute truth. Biblical knowledge is knowable and God Himself is knowable.

Known

1. **γνωστός** (gnos-tós) - something known, capable of being known, is intelligible. This, noun form is found 15 times in the NT. The verb form: over 200 times in the NT. Our word 'knowledge' comes from this word. The mind is able to grasp it and assimilate.
2. Miracles - Acts 9.42 *It became known all over Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.*
The miracle of Tabitha became known all over. The miracles stirred people and they had a knowledge of what was happening.
3. Spiritual truth - Acts 13.38 *Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you,*
There is a distinction of spiritual truth that scientists do not have; they are studying the natural realm. The concept of sin is knowable and we have an awareness of it and God's forgiveness.
4. God - Romans 1.19 *because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.*
God is knowable. We have a built-in knowledge of Him. It is general revelation that all humanity has since the creation of Adam and Eve.

General Revelation

1. Tendency - 1.18 suppression by mankind; even as believers we battle the tendency to avoid what God has revealed, eg, we find it hard to find time to actually read and study the Word.
2. Truth - 1.19 knowable, is already known, built-in.

1.18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

Evident = clear, manifest:

Evident

1. **φανερός** (fah-neh-rós) - evident, something made known, something visible, obvious
Galatians 5.19 *Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,*
It is what comes out of man.

1John 3.10 *By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.*

Obvious, visible in peoples' lives whether they are of God or the devil. It is clear enough. It is in our conscience.

General Revelation

1. Tendency - 1.18 suppression
2. Truth - 1.19 knowable
3. Clear - evident

1.18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

General Revelation

1. Tendency - 1.18 suppression
2. Truth - 1.19 knowable
3. Clear - evident
4. Internal - 2.14-15 conscience *For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, 15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,*

The Bible talks about searing our conscience leaving us with a callused conscience. We can renew our souls with the word of God.

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General Revelation

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5. Understood - 1.19 implanted *because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.*

Everyone has a sense of God's standards, it is 'hard-wired in', and if that is not enough, God *made it evident to them*.

The omnipotent, all-wise Creator-God built it in, programmed it into the DNA, if you wish. Mankind has the knowledge internal, within the conscience; God made it happen. The conclusion, then, is that everyone, wherever they are has a revelation from God—and therefore are 'without excuse.' If a person responds to the revelation, God will make sure that they hear the gospel. This word *made evident* is the verb for the adjective *clear*.

Evident

1. **φανερός** (fah-neh-rós) - evident, something made known, something visible, obvious
2. **φανερῶω** (fah-neh-ráh-o) - to make known or evident, to manifest
Colossians 3.4 *When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.*

This refers to the second coming; every eye will see. Christ is going to be revealed, made obvious. No one will miss it. We will see the reality of the new nature that we cannot see right now.

1Timothy 3.16 *By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.*

This is the incarnation. In the flesh. One could shake hands with Him. He came to show what the Father is like; we could know the Father by knowing Jesus Christ and now by the written word that describes Him.

This is General Revelation:

General Revelation

1. Tendency - 1.18 suppression
2. Truth - 1.19 knowable
3. Clear - evident
4. Internal - 2.14-15 conscience *For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, 15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,*
5. Understood - 1.19 implanted *because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.*

General revelation comes in different forms. This passage emphasizes the conscience:

General Revelation

- > Conscience - 2.14-15
- > History - interventions, events that happened in the past; the Bible reveals historical acts. Some have left such an impression that every culture has the story—like the flood story which, even though distorted, speaks of a God that destroyed the whole world.

1.20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Independent clause: *His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen.* This is the essence of the verse.

1.20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

The subject of the sentence: *attributes*. It has adjectives that explain it. The verb is: *have been seen*. *Clearly* is an adverb.

1.20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

The time frame: *since the creation of the world*.

Two attributes: *eternal power and divine nature*.

More on the attributes: *being understood*. through the creation, *through what has been made*.

Closing subordinate clause: *so that they are without excuse—* because His attributes have been seen.

General Revelation

1. Tendency - 1.18 suppression
2. Truth - 1.19 knowable
3. Clear - evident
4. Internal - 2.14-15 conscience *For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, 15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,*

5. Understood - 1.19 implanted *because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.*
6. Constant - 1.20 creation

The general revelation has been constant since the beginning of the world. Day six man was created and since then he has been observing general revelation. No individual has been excluded from general revelation.

Revelation

- > Extent - since creation, verse 20:

1.20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Verse 19 says that things are evident, but here, in verse 20, he says that they are invisible. The Bible is equally clear in saying the God is incomprehensible.

Revelation

- > Extent - since creation
- > Incomprehensibility - invisible. This means that mankind on his own has no capability of knowing God or understanding God. The key phrase is: 'on his own'. It is built in, but we have no way to actually understand it comprehensively. We have access to it because God has made it known; apart from God we have no clue as it requires spiritual perception. Only the creator can put it all together.

Incomprehensibility

- > His Incomprehensibility
Job 11.7 "*Can you discover the depths of God? Can you discover the limits of the Almighty?*"
The implied answers: No. He is infinite; we cannot discover the limits because there are no limits. We can't even conceive of that.

He is not exactly like anything or anybody —AW Tozer
He is totally outside of anything we can relate to or understand.

Some of the characteristics of the divine nature cannot be known by a finite intelligence —WGT Shedd

He is infinite; omniscience. Infinite power: omnipotence.
Infinite presence: omnipresence. Every aspect of God is infinite:
His love, compassion, grace...

Psalm 139.6 *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is too high, I cannot attain to it.*

The psalmist recognized the incomprehensibility of God.

After writing down all of this, Paul falls on his face and says: Romans 11.33-36 *Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! 34 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR? 35 Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN? 36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be he glory forever. Amen.*

‘The little bit that I have written in eight chapters is *unsearchable and unfathomable.*’ Then he quotes an Old Testament passage.

Matthew 11.27...*and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.*

The only one that has comprehensive knowledge of the Father is the Son. We cannot know God, except through the Son who reveals Him. And He has done it through general revelation for every single person and in special revelation in His word and in Jesus Christ. We can understand something of God—only through God’s work, the creation and the Son.

Incomprehensibility

- > His Incomprehensibility
- > His Knowability

God’s Desire

Jeremiah 9.23 *Thus says the LORD, “Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; 24 but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,” declares the LORD.*

He wants us to know Him and even boast about it. He delights in us probing and understanding who He is—which is always through His revelation, and even illuminating our minds and our hearts.

The greatest knowledge we can have is the KNOWLEDGE of GOD!!!

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a. Rejection of God	1.18-23
1) Revelation & Reason for God’s Wrath	1.18-19
2) Revelation & Rejection of God	1.19-20

1.20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Of God’s ‘invisible attributes’ displayed for mankind, consider His ‘eternal power’, first making a comparison to some of the most important power for us as human beings, the sun.

Omnipotent Power

Inherent Power of the Sun—but God is the one that built it, He is the Creator.

- > Diameter = 865,000 miles - 109x the size of the earth
- > From earth = 93 million miles away but we still feel its power
- > Light takes 8 minutes 20 seconds to get from the sun to the earth. Yet that power produces all of life on the planet earth.
- > Orbits the galaxy in 240 million years. (The earth is only 6000 years old.)

God’s power is much greater than the sun—which is only one of the estimated 100 billion suns in the Milky Way. His power is omnipotent:

1. Displayed in cataclysms - volcanoes
2. ... atoms - forces
3. ... galaxies - suns
4. ... judgments - Flood which destroyed everything on earth and was accompanied by many upheavals on the earth.
5. ... in Christ’s miracles - Acts 2.22 “*Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know*

Christ did many things that man cannot do: raised people from the dead, healed physical disease, turned water into wine, stilled the storm—all displays of power. Power is visible, is a revelation of God and it points to that attribute of God, His omnipotence.

6. ... in disciples' miracles - Romans 15.19 *in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ*

The miracles of the disciples display power in order to validate that they are of the Messiah that is, in fact, divine—God who is using them to display omnipotent power. Verse 20 is noting it displayed in the natural realm.

7. ... in creation - Romans 1.20

1.20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Also His *divine nature has been clearly seen*. It is an evident display; think about it, think logically, make observations. That revelation is clear—and available to all men. The same with other divine attributes.

Revelation

- > Extent - since creation
- > Incomprehensibility - invisible
- > Visibility - clearly

Attributes

1. Omnipotence - (above)
2. Goodness - Acts 14.15-17 *and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, WHO MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM. 16 "In the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their own ways; 17 and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness."*

In this context he is speaking to a gentile, unbelieving audience. Paul is telling them that this is available to them as unbelievers. It is not special revelation; he is talking about natural revelation in these passages. He appeals to creation—in which God reveals Himself, *did not leave Himself without witness*. And He gave goodness: every time it rains it provides nourishment for plants and crops. Why does it happen? How did this hydro cycle come about? Think

perceptively: God is revealing Himself—His goodness. That's another attribute of God. Then His self-existence:

3. Self-Existence - Acts 17.24-25 *"The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; 25 nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things*

He is speaking to the Athenians. Again he refers to the creation—and adds that He is self-existent, does not need anything. One can get the sense that everything must come from the creator.

4. Sovereignty - Acts 17.26 *and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation,*

Just study the history of mankind, and you can conclude that God has control over all humanity. He is sovereign. These are 'invisible', eternal attributes. Again one concludes this from seeing the natural realm. It is to an unbelieving, pagan, audience that comes to conclusions that convict them of their need for special revelation. And then, in that context, he presents the gospel.

5. Personality - Psalm 94.9 *He who planted the ear, does He not hear? He who formed the eye, does He not see?*

The creator that put eyes and ears into humanity, doesn't He have personality something like us? We can conclude that we are created in His image, we have the capacity to take in and hear as He does. There are several things we learn just by observing mankind.

6. Wrath - history

God's wrath is displayed throughout history in those judgments. So the natural realm can show something of His omnipotence, of His goodness, of His self-existence, of His sovereignty, of His personality, and of His wrath. You can probably find passages for other attributes as well. Man had compassion; if God is the creator of mankind, where does compassion come from? It's from a compassionate God. The capacity to love—for the same reason, there must be a source of all love. And these are being understood through what has been made—through the created realm.

1.20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Revelation

- > Extent - since creation
- > Incomprehensibility - invisible
- > Visibility - clearly
- > Means - creation

One of the means of revelation is the creation. If you go to a wilderness and find a little calculator by a tree and you open it up and look at the things inside, do you say, ‘Isn’t evolution wonderful!’? Would that be your conclusion? No! You would say, ‘Oh, I guess I am not the first one to show up in this valley.’ You would think that there is someone who has the capability to produce that type of device; that there is an intelligent being behind that little device. The trees, soil, etc, did not produce that complex thing.

Yet what do they say in biology class? That life started with simple, single cells. Darwin thought that a cell was very simple.

Evidence of Design

Evolution - Life began in Simple Form

Now there is evidence of design. Genetics tells us that evolution is *impossible*. There has to be an intelligent designer. Just as if you thought that that calculator came about by natural means, so also you have to come to the same conclusion, magnitudes greater, concerning life itself. One single cell is extremely complex.

One Cell

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| √ DNA | √ Ribosomes |
| √ RNA | √ Lysosomes |
| √ Mitochondrion | √ Lipids |
| √ ATP | √ Porphyrins |
| √ Polysaccharides | √ Proteins |
| √ Cyclic AMP | √ Amino Acids |

One DNA molecule itself is like a computer program. It has all the characteristics built in to not only reproduce itself but also to do all the functions that are required within the cell. Those listed are some of the complex items in a single cell.

“The cumulative result shows with piercing clarity that life is based on *machines*—machines made of molecules!” —Michael Behe

Life is based on *machines* irreducibly complex; if you take out one little part it doesn’t work. It’s on a micro biological scale.

Another quotation: is from a non-believer who still somewhat believes in evolution. He wrote a book, *Evolution in Crisis* because he understands that micro-biology destroys evolution. He says:

“Molecular biology has shown that even the simplest of all living systems on earth today, bacterial cells, are exceedingly complex objects. ...far more complicated than anything built by man ...”
—Michael Denton

More complex than anything built by man, eg, more complex than the space program, than any medical device, than computers. If it is absurd that a calculator came about by natural means, it is even more absurd to believe that *life* came about by natural means. This is observable; we can see it.

Cause and Effect: observable in the natural realm.

- > Fundamental Premise
- > Relates All to Phenomenon
- > No Effect Greater than Cause
 - If you can isolate the cause, you will always see that the cause is greater than the effect.
- > Implies a Primary Cause
 - There has to be a cause behind all the observable causes.

First Cause

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---------|---|
| √ Limitless Space | implies | √ Infinite cause |
| √ Endless Time | implies | √ Eternal cause |
| √ Boundless Energy | implies | √ Omnipotent source |
| √ Interrelationships | implies | √ Omnipresent cause |
| √ Incredible Complexity | implies | √ Omniscient cause |
| √ Spiritual Values | imply | √ Spiritual cause |
| √ Human Responsibility | implies | √ Volition, a first volitional cause that caused life |
| √ Human Life | implies | √ Living cause to produce life |

One can come to these conclusions just from science; that is general revelation.

General Revelation

- > Conscience - 2.14-15
- > History - interventions of God, by judgment and other ways
- > Creation - design and we also see cause and effect

1.20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Paul concludes that *they are without excuse* because there is revelation and it is clear, evident. That makes us accountable.

Revelation

- > Extent - since creation
- > Incomprehensibility - invisible
- > Visibility - clearly
- > Means - creation
- > Accountability - no excuse

Responsibility

1. General Revelation -
 - makes men responsible
 - is adequate for condemnation
 - but not for salvation

When men respond positively, God gives them further revelation. There are illustrations of this in Scripture.

General Revelation

1. Tendency - 1.18 suppression
2. Truth - 1.19 knowable
3. Clear - evident
4. Internal - 2.14-15 conscience
5. Understood - 1.19 implanted
6. Constant - 1.20 creation
7. Limited - condemnation

It is simply a judge; this is the case Paul is making. So, special revelation is needed.

Responsibility

1. General Revelation -
 - makes men responsible
 - adequate for condemnation
 - but not for salvation

2. Special Revelation needed An example from the Word: Deuteronomy 4.35 *“To you it was shown that you might know that the LORD, He is God; there is no other besides Him.* To *you*, that is, the Jews:
 - it was shown = revelation,
 - that they might know = knowledge,
 - that the LORD (Jahweh) is God.In other words, you have a general sense of God, but Jahweh, that is special revelation. He is God and there is no other besides Him—idols are nothing.

Sources

1. General Revelation: such as creation
2. Special Revelation: the Word of God
3. Jesus Christ:
 - John 1.18 *No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.*
 - We cannot see God, but He has ‘exegeted’ Him. The word translated ‘explained’ is the also word for ‘exegesis’; He explained Him. Jesus has explained or revealed in detail. He is the special revelation that all men need.

Responsibility

1. General Revelation -
 - makes men responsible
 - adequate for condemnation
 - but not for salvation
2. Special Revelation needed
3. Examples
 1. Ransford Sinabow: came from an animistic tribe in the darkest of Africa. They were idolators and head-hunters. He was raised in that culture. He said that inwardly he had a sense that what they were doing was wrong and that the gods they were worshipping were false gods. He also had a sense that there had to be a god that was bigger because he could see the creation and the creator-god had to be huge to be able to create the sun, the moon, the stars and everything on the earth. He remembers wanting to know that god. Something inside hm kept telling him: this is wrong; this is not the true god.

God sent a missionary to him who presented the gospel and when he heard it he knew that this was the creator-god. And that Jesus Christ was that God. Missionaries have always come into contact with people from these kinds of situations who have responded positively to the revelation that God had given them and He made sure that the gospel reached them. And God has passed

over others because they have not responded to that revelation; Paul says they are without excuse.

The more revelation we receive the more accountable we are!!! As believers we have an abundance of revelation to which we need to be constantly responding.

[Romans 1.20-21 Rejection of God 020]

1.20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

The Greek word for *without excuse* is from the same word that we use for *apologetics*, **ἀπολογία** (ah-po-lo-hée-ah), except it is negated. If they stand in court they do not have a defense—that is the meaning of that phrase. It is a legal term; men cannot stand before God and present a valid case because the revelation is clear enough. That makes man responsible. This revelation is adequate for condemnation. Only the Son, He is the only one who is a means of salvation; that is special revelation.



Responsibility

1. General Revelation -
makes men responsible
adequate for condemnation
but not for salvation
2. Special Revelation needed
3. Examples

1. Ransford Sinabow

2. Helen Keller

Born blind and deaf. Miss Sullivan cared for her and somehow by touch was able to communicate to Helen the gospel message. Helen responded: “I knew that God, I knew Him. I just didn’t know His name, Jesus Christ.” She had not observed the natural realm, but she still had contact with what God had created, and she had that inward sense that there had to be a God that was greater than all things.

3. Grace Hensarling

Grace was a missionary in a tribe in Columbia that was animistic, idolatrous. They had rejected all people outside—had something of a superiority attitude. She and other girls with her were accepted because of the medicines they used for healing. It took years to learn the language, write it, and teach children to read.

Finally the adults heard what was being taught. It was uncanny how many of the events in Genesis were a part of their traditions such as the flood. Also they believed there was a book in ancient times which was lost and they believed that someday, someone would bring that book back to them. And, in time, they had confidence that these people were bringing them this book. Of course that was the Bible. And they realized that the message of this book was the key to knowing the one true God. At last report some 300 people had accepted the message and were part of a church.

This is another example of general revelation, people responding, and receiving more information leading to a saving relationship.

So verses 19-20 tell us that man receives the revelation and realizes his need. This makes him responsible.

- | | |
|--|---------|
| a. Rejection of God | 1.18-23 |
| 1) Revelation & Reason for God’s Wrath | 1.18-19 |
| 2) Revelation & Rejection of God | 1.20-21 |
| a) Revelation of God’s Person | 1.20 |
| b) Rejection of God’s Person | 1.21 |
| (1) Knowledge of God | |

Verse 21: We tend to suppress the revelation of God and some suppress it so much that they convince themselves that there is no God. That is the extreme, but in reality there is no such thing as a true atheist. An atheist is simply someone that has suppressed that revelation that God has made clear to him and has twisted it so far that they have

convinced themselves that there is no God. But in reality, deep down they know there has to be a God; they have simply rejected Him.

There is always hope in delivering a gospel message—remember there is power and God can touch one of those individuals that call themselves atheists. So it starts with a knowledge of God:

1.21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened

Even though they knew God—past tense, referring to the same people he talked about in the earlier verse. All men have a knowledge and know God—His revelation is clear. As a matter of fact this whole passage emphasizes the idea of God making Himself known. We have already seen several words related to this:

God Known

1. To reveal - ἀποκαλύπτω ah-po-kah-lóop-to 1.18
This is the verb form. The noun form appears in the first verse of Revelation. It has the idea of conveying or passing on knowledge that can't be known apart from revelation.
2. Known - γνωστός gnos-tós 1.19
That which is known: the idea of knowing God permeates this whole passage.
3. Evident - φανερός fah-neh-rós 1.19
Also in verse 19 the word 'evident' and then in 20...
4. To be evident - φανερόω fah-neh-ráh-o
...the verb form
5. To be seen - καθορέω kah-tho-réh-o. 1.20
Another word for evident
6. To understand - νοέω no-éh-o 1.20
Related to our word 'to know'
7. To know - γνώσκω guee-nós-ko 1.21
The very common word in the NT. There is such a thing as knowledge, it is objective, it comes outside of man—contrary to the world we live in which sees knowledge as relative or non-existent. The Bible is very clear: we can know certain things and not just intellectual, factual things, but spiritual things—though the spiritual only when we come to Jesus Christ.

There are a lot of words in this passage related to knowing; that is why we are without excuse.

The next passage basically is a summary of world history. In general man rejects the revelation. It is a sad fact, but because of lostness, depravity, that is the nature of man. That is absolute truth,

the first thing to understand in sharing the gospel—that all men are rejectors of God and all men stand condemned as a result.

- a. Rejection of God 1.18-23
 - 1) Revelation & Reason for God's Wrath 1.18-19
 - 2) Revelation & Rejection of God 1.20-21
 - a) Revelation of God's Person 1.20
 - b) Rejection of God's Person 1.21
 - (1) Knowledge of God
 - (2) Rejection of God

1.21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened

The next part of the verse, *even though they knew God, they 'did not honor Him as God'*. That is generally what mankind does; they reject the revelation. And, even if they are raised in a culture where special revelation is available, they will reject that revelation as well. We are suppressors of truth. What is the word that is translated 'honor'? It is the word δόξα (dók-sah). It can be translated 'glory'. They did not glorify Him. God has inherent glory; He is glorious.

Looking up the word we find that the glory of God is His revealing something of who He is, something of His attributes. We saw in verse 20 that something of His divine nature was revealed: that is part of His glory, invisible attributes, sovereignty, omnipotence, omniscience, infinity—many of the attributes that scientists cannot see; they cannot perform an experiment to make them visible. The glory of God is the revelation of these. We need to recognize it and agree that He is a glorious God. We cannot give Him glory in terms of adding to His glory; all we can do is *ascribe* the glory that is due His name, ie, we say it, pray it back to Him "Lord you are glorious, wonderful..."

We can also *reflect* His glory by the way we live; people will see that there is a difference. We can reflect something of that glory: forgiveness, compassion, love. These are also attributes of God. When we do that we are glorifying God. But the unbeliever in this context, did not glorify God, or honor Him. This is the purpose of all things, the purpose for which God created all things is that all things would ultimately glorify Him. In The Westminster Shorter Catechism the first question is: Why is man here, why did God create the whole universe? It is a purpose which at the fundamental level man rejects.

Westminster Shorter Catechism

First question —>

What is man's purpose?

“Man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever”

We cannot enjoy Him until we respond to that revelation and come into a saving relationship. Then we can begin glorifying Him. In fact, that first step brings glory to Him because He pours out His omnipotent power in converting our hearts. Apart from that, in Ephesians 2.1 it says that we are *dead* spiritually. Paul says we are condemned, guilty, and it is only in the saving power of the gospel that we can begin to glorify Him and enjoy Him for ever—the chief end of man. The purpose of all things is to glorify God.

Purpose of All

> Creation - Psalm 19.1-3 *The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. 2 Day to day pours forth speech, And night to night reveals knowledge. 3 There is no speech, nor are there words; Their voice is not heard.*

The purpose of creation is to glorify God. Astrophysics: outer space is glorifying. No speech, but ideas are conveyed.

> Angels - Psalm 148.1 *Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; Praise Him in the heights! 2 Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts...*

This whole psalm is praise to the Lord. Glorify Him all angels and His host, stars,...He has built into the creation all different aspects of nature: hydrology, climatology, zoology, etc.

> Israel - Leviticus 10.3 *Then Moses said to Aaron, “It is what the LORD spoke, saying, ‘By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy. And before all the people I will be honored.’”...*

This is why God called Israel. But like all people they often suppressed His plan and failed to glorify God.

> Nations - Psalm 86.9 *All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, And they shall glorify Your name.*

This is in the future. Ultimately all nations, ie, the believers among the gentiles, will glorify God. The Hebrew word ‘go-yim’ can be translated ‘gentiles’. The Greek in the NT, ‘eth-né’ can be translated ‘nations’ or ‘gentiles’, ie, non-Jewish people.

> Church - 1Peter 2.9 *But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God’s OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

The church is to proclaim His attributes, *excellencies* or glory.

> Believers - 1Corinthians 10.31 *Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

Everyday mundane things—eating, drinking, working, whatever—do *all* to the glory of God. That is our purpose, what we are to do as individuals, all believers.

> Ultimately - Philippians 2.9 *For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Ultimately, *everyone* will bring glory to God. They did not honor Him: this is the failure of mankind, failure to fulfill their purpose. They failed to ascribe the glory to Him and thank Him:

1.21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened

We have given a lot of summaries of world history, but here is one related to verse 21 also: Over and over and over again we see man's rejection of God's revelation.

World History

1. Eden - Genesis 3.6 *When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.*

Eve started by thinking of herself—the tree was good... delightful...useful (to be wise)—and we suffer the consequences yet today.

2. Flood - 6.5 *Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

The wickedness of man was great, ie, there was a lot of rejection of the revelation. Man: *every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually* so there was no hope for mankind...and so the flood.

3. Babel - 11.4 *They said, “Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.”*

Man collectively, as an empire, we could say, also revolved around himself; note the personal pronouns. They wanted a name, not giving glory to God but to themselves. A deliberate and very clear rejection of what God had revealed—instead of filling the earth they wanted to increase their ‘empire’.

4. Nations - Psalm 2.1 *Why are the nations in an uproar And the peoples devising a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!" 4 He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them.*

Their plans are empty. They are planning against the Lord and the Son, separating themselves from Him, to be autonomous—rejecting the revelation He had given them. The Lord scoffs at them.

5. Israel - Numbers 14.21 *but indeed, as I live, all the earth will be filled with the glory of the LORD. 22 "Surely all the men who have seen My glory and My signs which I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet have put Me to the test these ten times and have not listened to My voice, 23 shall by no means see the land which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who spurned Me see it.*

Here they reject the revelation at Sinai, His glory, and therefore will die in the wilderness; and later on they reject the revelation concerning the spies.

6. Judges - Judges 21.25 *In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*

The book concludes with the self-centered attitude with which everyone rejected the revelation of God. A very dark period in Israel's history.

7. Exile - Jeremiah 13.16 *Give glory to the LORD your God, Before He brings darkness And before your feet stumble On the dusky mountains, And while you are hoping for light He makes it into deep darkness, And turns it into gloom.*

They did not heed the warning and went into exile in Babylon. A rejection of God's revelation, of His glory.

8. NT - Acts 12.23 *And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died*

King Herod was struck dead by God because he did not give God the glory. He was making Himself like God; he was self-centered.

9. History - Romans 1.23 *and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. 3.23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*

Romans is a record of man rejecting God's revelation, His glory— not fulfilling what God has intended for mankind. They even exchanged the glory...for an image... In other words, man cannot live in a vacuum. If he rejects the incorruptible (another attribute)

God, he substitutes for Him other, false gods. Thusly man falls into idolatry. All men have fallen short of the glory of God.



Rejecting the revelation of God and of His person results in the depravity of man.

- a. Rejection of God 1.18-23
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 - (2) Rejection of God
 - (3) Resulting Depravity

1.21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Plans, thinking, intellect became distorted. The unbeliever does not see reality. The only way to see it is to have revelation. The materialist has a distorted view of reality because there are things outside the material realm.

Results

1. Distorted thinking

ματαιῶ (mah-tahi-áh-o) - be empty, worthless
noun - emptiness, purposeless

Their thinking is empty with no reality, no absolute truth. It ends up worthless, translated 'futile' in this verse. The noun has the

same idea: purposeless. That's why a lot of people do not have purpose; they have rejected the person that makes life worth living. διαλογισμός dia-lo-gis-máhs - thoughts, reasoning, speculations

The result is an inability to know spiritual things. The 'natural man', ie, the person that does not have Christ and cannot understand spiritual things.

1. Corinthians 2.14 *But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised*

The 'natural man' is the one without Christ who cannot understand spiritual things.

Ephesians 4.17 *So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;*

Addressing believers at Ephesus who were *darkened in their understanding* with *ignorance* and *hardness of heart*. So, man comes up with alternative theories to explain things.

Alternative theories - evolution or other ideas of who God is, resulting in idolatry—and we have idols, too, in our culture.

Some of the ideas people are offering are nonsensical:

No human is illegal, Women's Rights are Human Rights, Black lives matter, Water is Life...

We might say: Law breaking is not legal, God is love and immoral behavior is devastating, Science is real—if based on reality, all lives matter... the Creator is source of everything.



Man rationalizes, creates new slogans to explain his ideas and purposes that replace the truth, the revelation that God has given.

[Romans 1.21-23 Results of Rejection 021]

We have looked at the first point describing the Results of man's rejection of God's revelation. It is almost depressing to learn the results of mankind rejection of the revelation of the glory of God. But Paul writes to believers so they can have the best understanding of how to communicate to the lost people. He is writing to us. Apologetics, defending the faith for those who are skeptical, is an attempt to get people ready, prepared to understand and receive the gospel message.

Again we remember that there are no atheists—they are people who have suppressed the truth that God has been revealed. They may not be aware of it because they have deceived themselves into believing that there is no God.

1.21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

He is talking about the heart darkened with all the morality involved; he even includes the word 'foolish' to suggest another aspect of the results of man's rejection of the revelation of God.

Results

2. Destructive Morality

ἀσύνετος (ah-sú-ne-tos) - senseless, foolish, perverse
similar to the word 'futile' seen earlier

σκοτίζομαι (sko-tíd-zo-mai) - become dark

Then the word for 'becoming dark'. Others passages that have this verb or its noun are in contrast to spiritual light, that is, Christ and God who give light. Apart from that the unbeliever is in darkness and has a darkened heart. This means that he has:

*a moral inability to do spiritual things. Not only does he have no ability to know and understand spiritual things, but also an inability to do spiritual things or produce anything spiritual. This is depravity. One can't produce anything of eternal value because of 'deadness.' It's a:

*blurring of right and wrong. Such a person does not have a clear understanding of right and wrong. He has that sense from his conscience, but it is often distorted and sometimes totally reversed. What happens to the unbeliever is now that:

*flesh and emotions control actions because he does not have the spiritual resource. One can ask, ‘what do I want deep inside, or what stimulates me? I am reacting emotionally rather than from a Biblical perspective or from a foundational level.’ The emotions and flesh begin to control one’s actions.

Matthew 15.18-19 “*But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. 19 “For out of the HEART come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.*

A darkened heart produces murders, etc, and other bad actions—and nothing eternal is produced.

Luke 6.45 “*The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart.*

The regenerate heart produces good things. But the darkened heart brings forth what is evil and there is total inability to do spiritual things. That is lostness. In fact, the heart is the source of all that comes out of us. There are passages that include the thinking processes of the heart, others include the emotional responses of the heart and others that link the will to the heart.



1.22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

Verses 22 and 23 are one simple sentence with a two-part predicate and a lot of modifiers. Subject: they Verbs: *became* fools and *exchanged*

Who are *they*? From the context, they are the unbelievers.

1.22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

Why did they *become fools*? This is another result of rejecting the revelation of God. Even if they have three PhD’s, they have nothing of eternal significance. They also exchanged something for God because they cannot exist without filling that God-shaped vacuum. This explains the seeking of another religion throughout the whole world; all false religion stems from man first rejecting the one true God. Now they become foolish, come up with alternative thinking (rationalization) and the darkened thinking process which ultimately results in religion. This is the explanation of what happens to cultures all over the world—there are millions of examples of it.

1.22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,

People say they are fine and consider themselves wise if they have plenty of education. But look at the results:

Depravity Results: and The Alternative for Believer who Has Christ

1. Distorted thinking - Ephesians 4.23 *and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind*,
Having your thinking renewed—with God’s revelation. That is the healing process. The word of God restores the proper thinking process in order for the heart to act on that foundation.
2. Destructive morality - 4.24 *and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.*

Now to deal with the negative things that the darkened heart does: the new self, the inwardly regenerated person: put it on, operate from it day by day. That corrects the morality, what comes from the heart; our words are different and we can offer praise to God, offer encouragement to others, we can effect eternal ministry.

3. Deceptive evaluation - 5.8 *for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light*

Coming to the conclusion that they are ‘ok’, they make a false, deceptive evaluation. But here is the contrast: *formerly darkness* but now one can *walk as children of Light*. This is the new reality in Christ: one is now light, no longer darkness.

1.22 Professing to be wise,, they became fools.

Coming to the wrong conclusion they are fools. But coming to Christ they can change.

4. Deluded foolishness - 5.15 *Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil.*

Here there is wisdom instead of foolishness: *making the most of your time* with a different perspective for everyday living.

1.22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

God has put eternity in the heart, there is a God-shaped vacuum that only God can fill and when man rejects the true God he has to fill that vacuum with something else. He exchanges the glory which is the revelation of the true, incorruptible, unchanging (immutable) God for these things listed. This is a deadly exchange:

5. Deadly exchange - 6.10 *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places*

There is an enemy that is going to bombard us with different ideas and alternative life-styles—we need to resist and not make the deadly exchange but put on the armor that God has provided.

1.22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

The exchange is *for an image* or *likeness in the form* = icon. Two words that describe idolatry.

1.22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

An image in the form of corruptible man; how often in history, instead of worshipping the one true God, they put man himself in the

center—and in our culture we are self-centered, in reality thinking *I am God*—everything answers to me and is about me.

Idolatry

1. Man - Babylon, Greeks, Romans, Tibetan Buddhism, Japan
They made their gods after the image of a man. The Romans worshipped their emperors; the Caesars claimed deity. The Buddhists worship the Dali Lama. In WWII the Japanese worshipped their emperors. Then it was North Korea. Their attempt to worship *something* and most often they end up worshipping man himself.

Depravity Results

- ...
6. Devout self-centeredness - 5.1 *Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.*

When we are self-centered we need to become imitators of the one true God, as His children. The alternative is to get outside of yourself and walk in love for others.

1.22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

Idolatry

1. Man - Babylon, Greeks, Romans, Tibetan Buddhism, Japan
2. Birds - Egyptians, Romans (eagle), American Indians
(thunderbird)
3. Animals - Egyptians (thousands of animals), Hinduism
4. Crawling creatures - Assyrians, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Africans
This includes snakes, frogs and other creatures.

“Mormons and Muslims are now two of the most rapidly growing religious groups in the United States - swiping ground from the Protestants and Catholics who dominated the country throughout the 20th century.”
—Daily Mail

From 1.5 to 2.6 million Muslims in 10 years after 9/11. Islam is the fast growing religion, projected to increase faster than the world's population as a whole.

Mormonism grew from 4.2 to 6.1 million between 2000 and 2010.
—internet

New Age

- > Beliefs - astral projection, reincarnation, psychic healing, past lives, UFO's, channeling, consciousness, transformations
- > 26% of US believe some or all these aspects

Occult

- > 200,000 registered witches in US
- > 8 million unregistered practitioners of Wicca
- > "Certain parts of the country, such as the Pacific NW, the mountain States (NM & CO) & areas near Salem, Mass., are the strongest in the US," in terms of the occult

Depravity Results

- ...
7. Degrading religion - 5.17 *So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit.*
 The alternative, for the Christian: being filled with the Holy Spirit. And no replacing the Spirit with our own volition!

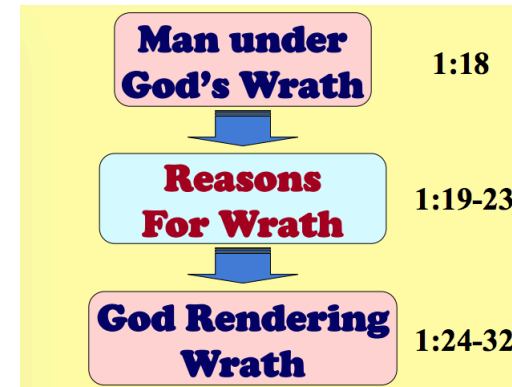


Praise our Lord for His work of REGENERATION!!!

[Romans 1.19-23 Abandoning & Rendering of Wrath 022a]

We are going to see why Christ had to die. Of course death could not contain Him as Himself, so He rose from the dead. And His death and resurrection are the means by which we have a relationship with the Father. All those that don't have a relationship are locked into Romans chapter one. We will touch on the verses 24-32.

Man is under God's wrath because of sin, because we are unrighteous, lost—the Bible uses a lot of phrases. Paul explains why in some detail because God has revealed Himself and man has rejected His revelation: 19-23. That Rejection has consequences or results.



And, in verse 18, the wrath of God is revealed—present tense, so the last part of the chapter, 24-32 is the rendering of wrath, ie, how that wrath is revealed and how you can observe it all around. It does not always come in the form of fire and brimstone, as over Sodom and Gomorrah, or as water in the Genesis flood, nor in the form of war and battle like with the Canaanites when God used the Israelites in the conquest—that was a judgment on the Canaanites. It also comes in a present tense form, and this is what this passage is all about. You can visibly observe that wrath because it is all around us.

