

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Romans

Theme: The Righteousness of God – The Gospel of God

Outline:

- **Prologue:** 1:1-17
 - **Doctrinal:** 1:18-8:39
- God's holiness – man's sinfulness – 1:18-3:20
Justification by grace through faith – 3:21-5:21
Sanctification of the believer – 6:1-8:39
- **Dispensational:** 9:1-11:36 (The place of Israel and the church)
 - **Practical:** 12:1-15:33 (Duties and privileges of the believer)
 - **Epilogue:** 16:1-27

The first 17 verses of Romans are the prologue of the book where Paul introduces himself and the gospel of God. And then like a skilled surgeon Paul begins to dissect the particulars of gospel truth in a very precise and detailed manner. The book of Romans contains the most systematic presentation of the gospel found in the New Testament.

Following the prologue Paul launches into his first major section related to the gospel and that is the issue of SIN. The larger part of the first three chapters FIRST deal with SIN before Paul gets to the answer to our sin problem. People first have to know they have a SIN problem before they can meaningfully appreciate the truth of a God-provided SAVIOR!

Paul methodically shows that the whole human race (without exception) is under SIN!

Slide # 2

Romans 1:18 – 3:20

The Whole World Guilty Before God

- 1:18-32 – Depraved Pagans
- 2:1-16 – Hypocritical Moralists

- 2:17-3:8 – Self-Righteous Religionists
- 3:9-20 – The Whole Human Race

In Romans 1:18 we see that the wrath of God is present tense revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness. In this verse and the verses that follow Paul presents the WHAT, the WHY, and the HOW.

Slide # 3

- **WHAT:** The wrath of God revealed – 1:18
- **WHY:** The truth of God suppressed – 1:18-23
- **HOW:** God gives people over to their own devices (abandonment) 1:24-32

The wrath of God revealed is the result of willful sinfulness!

This morning we pick our study up at Romans 1:28 where Paul continues the theme of God's wrath resulting in people being being given over to their own rebellious sinfulness. It's not pretty, but it is accurate! It's not pretty, but it reads like the daily newsfeed in today's world. If you have ever wondered if the Bible is up to date – just note the passage we are studying this morning.

Romans 1:28–32 (NKJV)

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;

These people in their rebellion do not want God in their thoughts. They defiantly reject the knowledge of God. As noted early it explicitly says in verses 18-21 that they have known the truth about God, but they have rejected Him. They don't want anything to do with Him. They are anti-God in their orientation. They don't want God running their life.

The phrase “did not like to retain” is often translated as “did not see fit”. It is the idea of “to approve by testing”. It was often used of testing metals to see if they were of an acceptable quality or not. For example, gold would be tested to see if it was genuine or merely fools gold.

The idea here is that these people in their arrogance sat in judgment on God. Wow! Talk about depraved arrogance, this is it! They put God to the test and found Him lacking – not worthy in their minds, and so they rejected Him. In their minds they did not see it fit to hold Him in their knowledge. He wasn't worthy to be thought of as God who is supreme over them and to whom they are accountable. They rejected God as God in their thinking.

There have been a lot of people who weighed God in the balance of their own thinking and then rejected Him because they don't consider Him the kind of God to their liking. They don't like the truth of God as He is so they reject Him. They don't like His sovereign Lordship. They don't want Him ruling over them. They have a God-problem.

Charles Darwin started out as a theist supposedly believing in God. But then his little daughter named Annie died at age 10 in 1851. That changed everything. That destroyed Darwin's Christian faith. He found this event to be incompatible with the idea of God being a GOOD God. A relative of his wrote: "After Annie's death, Charles set the Christian faith firmly behind him". From then on he in earnest began to seek for "naturalistic" answers. You see Darwin weighed God in the balance of his thinking and rejected Him.

Oprah Winfrey shares about how as a young woman one day she was in Church and the preacher was "preaching about how 'the Lord thy God is a jealous God, the Lord thy God will punish you for your sins.'" She says "I looked around and thought, 'Why would God be jealous? What does that even mean?'. ...That's when I started exploring taking God out of the box, out of the pew." That marked the time she walked away from the God of the Bible because as she weighed Him in her thinking, He did not pass the test.

Want to go to hell just put yourself above God as His JUDGE! Talk about a depraved reversal of roles. This is a LORDSHIP issue and people in their depraved thinking have a problem with this. It is the difference between true believers who do accept the truth of God's Lordship and unbelievers who don't.

In the end everyone will find out that indeed the God of the Bible is JUDGE of all. He is CREATOR of all and He is the rightful JUDGE of all. None of His created beings have a right to sit in judgment of Him. That is perverse and leads to a totally depraved MIND that can no longer think right.

Note the word “knowledge” in verse 28. It is the Greek word “epignosis”. It refers to “precise and correct knowledge”. It is deep knowledge that aligns with truth. Epignosis differs in use from other words translated “**knowledge**” (*gnosis, ginosko, epiginosko, etc.*) as it refers to ethical and divine knowledge of God, which is accurate and correct (cf. Phil. 1:9; Col. 3:10; Eph. 1:17). In other words, these people in Romans 1:28 refuse to accept the truth of God as it is for Who He really is.

Humans sat in judgment on God to decide whether He fit the qualifications of a God that would be to their liking; they decided He did not meet those qualifications and so dismissed Him from their lives. They had the knowledge (they were not ignorant), but they did not want to use it. – ***Life Application Bible Commentary***

You see the problem lies not with the intellect but with the will. They willfully do not want to retain God in their knowledge. They want Him out of their minds, out of their thoughts, out of their lives.

Romans 1:28 has an interesting play on words with nuances that are hard to bring across in English. In the Greek “did not like to retain” and “debased” have the same root words in view.

The word “**debased**” has the meaning of “unqualified, “worthless”, “not standing the test” or “unapproved.” It was used of coins that were tested and found below standard and therefore rejected.

Slide # 4

The “sense” of Romans 1:28a...

- “As they found God worthless to their knowledge... God gave them over to a worthless [debased] mind.”
- Since they did not “approve” to know God, God gave them over to an “unapproved” mind.

Doing is based on thinking! As the mind thinks so the person does. **God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting.** People in all out rebellion against God have a MIND problem – THEY CAN’T THINK right! The world truly is CRAZY – spiritually speaking – morally speaking.

Really what the text is saying is because they judged God “worthless” in their thinking God gave them over to a worthless mind.

Slide # 5

Literally, they were given over to a “**rejected mind.**” They rejected God, and God rejected their mental attitude. – ***R. Kent Hughes***

They became “mental rejects”. This in turn resulted in them falling into all manner of sin as the text goes on to describe. Worthless thinking leads to worthless living. With mental perversion comes moral perversion.

There is a progression of thought in view here. Three times in this chapter Paul says God gave them over. First of all they are given over to sexual perversion as seen in verse 24; then they are given over to homosexuality as seen in verse 26-27; and then finally they are given over a debased mind that can no longer function right morally as seen in verse 28.

And this my friends is where we are today. As a society we are seeing the wrath of God on display as God has given us over to depraved thinking which is morally insane. God gave us up to sexual perversion in the sexual revolution of 50 years ago. This was followed up by God giving us over to the homosexual acceptance as seen in the changing of our laws and all manner of pride events, etc. And finally God has given us over to a debased mind that no longer even knows the difference between a man and a woman – to where legally biological men can in many places use the women’s restroom. That is totally insanity. And it is so insane that if you say differently you can be in legal jeopardy – its called “hate speech”.

This notion that you are something other than your biology is a cultural construct intended as an assault on God. The only way you can address it, honestly, is to say, ‘God made you and God made you exactly the way He wanted you to be. You are not only fighting God in His physical creation, you are fighting God in His sovereignty. You are fighting God in His spiritual relationship to you. This is a war on God’.

– ***John MacArthur***

The mind is a terrible thing to lose. Years ago there was an advertising campaign that emphasized that danger of losing your brain to drugs.

Slide # 6



Let me make a biblical application. Your mind rejecting God results in a spiritually fried mind – morally speaking. It no longer functions right. It is worthless. It is rejected. It is unapproved.

Slide # 7

Ephesians 4:17–18 (NKJV)

17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the **futility of their mind,**

18 having their **understanding darkened,** being alienated from the life of God, because of the **ignorance that is in them,** because of the **blindness of their heart;**

This is a description of a person given over to a debased mind. They have MIND problems – they have MENTAL problems. They are spiritually CRAZY. They can't think right! It's a tragic situation. And the further society goes away from God the crazier it gets.

It gets so far from reality that they no longer believe in absolute truth. It has been said that FACTS don't care about feelings. But a debased mind comes to where FEELINGS don't care about facts! And that my friends is where we are as a society in general. It's all about natural instincts and feelings – FACTS no longer matter. Both 2 Peter 2:12 and Jude 10 speak of those who function on the level of "brute beasts". This is descriptive of those whose mind no longer functions properly.

To claim to believe in absolute truth is now seen as being arrogant. Fixed truth that is objective has given way to everything being relative. Virtual reality has replaced actual reality. Truth that is unchanging is now thought to be unknowable. Gender is now based on feelings not biology. Dogmatism is arrogance – diversity of thought is honorable. Claiming there is ONE WAY to God is offensive and hateful, while claiming there are MANY paths is popular and loving. Nothing is CERTAIN anymore for debased thinking.

In terms of the last 2000 years of history some speak of western history in terms of PRE-MODERN THOUGHT; MODERNIST THOUGHT, and POSTMODERN THOUGHT. And in this we can see the downward spiral of thought that has led us to where we are today in the context of last days madness. This is a general overview and there is much overlap.

Slide # 8

- ***Premodernism Thought*** (God/Faith Oriented)
- ***Modernism Thought*** (Humanistic Oriented)
- ***Postmodernism Thought*** (Narcissistic Oriented)

In the old days before the advent of modernism there was still a basic God-oriented perspective held by most of society. Mostly, it wasn't right but it was still in place. They held to the divine right of rule - even though many rulers often ruled like there was no divine. However, in general there was an overarching worldview that believed in the God of the Bible.

This gave way to what is called modernism. This came in with what is called the age of enlightenment involving a huge advance in discovery and human knowledge. This became the age of science. Science became the end all in terms of knowledge. No longer did people "in the know" look to God now the emphasis was on humanism. Man and his knowledge was now the measure of all things. Modernism put tremendous confidence in raw human reasoning. Human reason now dominated over faith.

The rule of science was that if it can't be proven through the scientific method then we can't be certain it is true. The Scientific method proves something by repeated testing. But of course, much of what came to be called science was not really science. This became a problem. For example science discovered the 1st and 2 laws of thermodynamics but much of so called scientific theory (such as evolution) flat out contradicted these known laws. Also a naturalistic view of reality did away with moral and spiritual values because such things are abstract and can't be proven in a lab test.

This gave way to a new generation that saw many inconsistencies. Yes, modernism gave us much in terms of medicine, and all kinds of technological advancements, but at the same time the world experienced two world wars and the holocaust. And there were all kinds of discrepancies and contradictions between the scientists on what is truth and how can we really know it. And so society turned INWARD!

Modernism gave way to postmodernism which is totally self-oriented in nature. Under postmodernism there is no fixed truth. Science is no longer the measure of truth – self is. Now everyone created their OWN truth. There is no one standard of truth. Everyone has their own custom made truth. “You have your truth – I have mine.” The only thing one cannot claim is that there is universal absolute truth. We can now be certain of nothing.

A person may be male in the morning and female in the afternoon and everyone is expected to play along. Love embraces diversity you know! The ONE thing you cannot do is claim there is ONE ABSOLUTE truth – a one size fits all – you know like the TRUTH CLAIMS of Christianity!

And so we have reached the point of mindless absurdity and this is the BOTTOM as seen in Romans 1. It is where people in their rebellion under the wrath of God end up! They end up with WORTHLESS minds that are total rejects in terms of all that is fitting and proper!

The world has a MIND problem because they have a GOD problem. This is exactly what Romans 1 teaches.

Slide # 9

Biblically, the certainty of a truth is not determined by how I feel or what I think of it. The certainty of any truth is established by the reliability and the weight of whatever witness attests to that truth.

– Pastor Phil Johnson

In the Bible the pattern set down by God is that everything is established in the mouth of two or three witness. To put someone to death in the OT there had to be 2 or 3 credible witnesses (Deut. 19:15). In the NT in 2 Cor. 13:1 Paul said that everything would be established in the mouth of two or three witnesses.

Now HUMAN witnesses can be fallible. Only God is absolutely infallible. And God has given us multiple witnesses as to what is absolute truth – what is God’s truth. He has given us the witness of conscience as seen in Rom. 1:19. “*What may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has show it to them.*” He has given us the witness of natural revelation as seen in creation as referenced in Romans 1:20 so that all without excuse. And then we have the witness of the Word of God which is infallible. Jesus said in John 17:17, “*Your word is truth*”. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). It is a supernatural reality. In saving faith, God miraculously shines the truth of Jesus Christ into our hearts (2 Cor. 4:6).

God is the author of truth and we only know truth by His revelation! And that is exactly the point in Romans 1. There is a very strong connection in Romans between God's revelation and faith. Faith affirms the revelation of God. Faith takes God at His Word and biblically it is on this basis that we KNOW TRUTH.

Slide # 10

Hebrews 11:1 (ESV)

1 Now faith is the **assurance** of things hoped for, the **conviction** of things not seen.

1 John 5:10 (ESV)

10 Whoever believes in the Son of God **has the testimony in himself**. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son.

God has revealed His truth and people in depraved rebellion have walked away from it leaving them in a position of a worthless mind that has no answers to the most basic questions and realities about life. Indeed, the mind is a terrible thing to lose and this is what happens to those who walk away from God.

Footnote: There are various causes for mental illness or mind problems. For example, a person may have a physiological problem or some other legitimate medical problem. The text is not speaking to these issues. Rather what is being addressed are SIN problems and the consequences of sinful rebellion. In view in the text is willful rebellion against God and the resulting consequences related to the MIND and ensuing BEHAVIOR. Perverse thinking and perverse behavior are traced back to the willful rejection of God's revelation followed by His wrath of abandonment!

Rebel rejection of God ends up doing all manner of sinful things that are not fitting. They are completely out of whack – nonsensical, perverse, and crazy! People who reject God end up being mentally dysfunctional – morally speaking. Dysfunctional is the word that describes them morally and socially. They are spiritually dysfunctional. And Paul at great length now goes on to describe this pitiful condition!

Paul in verses 29-31 goes on to give 21 descriptions of a dysfunctional mind that has been abandoned by God. Paul has a number of such lists in the NT but this one is the most extensive (cf. Rom. 13:13; 1 Cor. 5:10-11; 6:9-10; 2 Cor. 12:20; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 4:19, 31; 5:3-5; Col. 3:5, 8; 1 Tim. 1:9-10; 6:4-5; 2 Tim. 3:2-5; Titus 3:3; also see Mt. 15:19; 1 Pet. 4:2-3).

Each one of these is a description of the wrath of God revealed against those who have rejected God. They abandoned God so God in turn let them go in that abandonment resulting in the various types of sin mentioned— and it isn't pretty.

29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers,

Paul begins his catalogue of things which are not fitting by saying, “**being filled with all unrighteousness**”. Note the emphasis, “**being filled with all**”. The sense is that their lives are overflowing with sin. The idea is that left unrestrained wickedness knows no bounds.

Unrighteousness is a general word meaning “wickedness” referring to things that are not morally right before God. It is the antithesis of righteousness.

Paul begins with a general catch all word that in effect encompasses all the other sin categories named on the list, but then the list goes all over the place being somewhat hard to put into neat categories in terms of classification.

Slide # 11

Scholars have found it difficult to detect any satisfactory classification in the long list of offenses included here, which only confirms the fact that sin is irrational in itself and disorderly in its effects. - **Expositors**

In the New King James the next thing listed is “**sexual immorality**” but the older manuscripts don't have it. The idea seems to be that Paul has already dealt with this extensively in relation to the first two “given over” texts as seen in 1:24 and then 26-27. Now he goes on to deal with all manner of other sinful manifestations related to a life of mindless disorder.

For the most part (apart from “haters of God”) these sin descriptions relate to dysfunctional and harmful human relations.

People given over by God to their sinful proclivities not only act out against God, they also hurt one another. Right relationship with God is healthful and loving, but those who walk away from God not only destroy themselves in the process, but they also hurt everyone around them.

Next on the list is “**wickedness**” (Gk. *poneria*) which is also translated as “**evil**”. This word is often used to describe Satan as “the evil one” (Mt. 6:13). It refers to vileness that seeks to corrupt and harm people. Wicked people are not nice! They have a harmful bent to them.

Then comes “**covetousness**” (Gk. *pleonexia*) which is often translated as “**greed**”. This is an inordinate desire to selfishly have more. This person is never satisfied and doesn’t care who it hurts in the mad fascination for more.

Maliciousness (Gk. *kakia*) is also translated as “**evil**”. It is the most general word for badness and is also translated as “**depravity**”. It is the spirit of “ill-will” or the desire to injure. It desires harm on others and is venomously hateful.

And then after a short breath (if you will) he continues on again emphasizing “**full of**”. Note the double emphasis in the sentence: “filled with all” and “full of” which emphasizes that the lives of these people are saturated with these things.

“**Envy**” (Gk. *phthonos*) not only wants for self but wants to deprive others in the process. It wants to get ahead at the expense of others. Envy is annoyed at the success of others because it wants it all for self.

“**Murder**” (Gk. *phonos*) is the premeditated taking of another person’s life. It hates so bad that it ends their life. Jesus traced the seed of this sin back to anger in the heart (Mt. 5:21-22). 1 John 3:15 equates hatred with the spirit of murder.

“**Strife**” (Gk. *eris*) is the idea of quarreling, contention, or wrangling – especially in the sense of hostile rivalry. This sin always involves fighting drama of some sort.

“**Deceit**” (Gk. *dolos*) is a word used of bait in fishing. It is the idea of intentionally misleading someone to take advantage of them.

“**Evil-mindedness**” (Gk. *kakoetheia*) is also translated as “**malice**”. It is the idea of intentional and continual wickedness. It continually seeks out the worst for others. Thus it is the opposite of biblical love that seeks the other person’s highest good.

“Whispers” (Gk. psithyristes) is the idea of secretly spreading malicious stories about others in a way that they can’t defend themselves because they do it behind closed doors. A whisper is a “back stabber” who operates in secret.

30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

“backbiters” (Gk. katalalos) is the idea of one who speaks openly against someone seeking to destroy their reputation. Their “bite” is poisonous!

Slide # 12

Backbiters are those who seek to ruin or defame someone’s character – vilifiers of character. – **Wycliffe Bible Commentary**

“Haters of God” (Gk. theostyges) pretty much speaks for itself. These people are at war with God. They are openly hostile and opposed to Him.

“Violent” (Gk. hybristes) is also translated as *“insolent”* which is the idea of being rudely arrogant. This person has a lofty sense of superiority and puts everyone else down. They are cruel and insulting.

“Proud” (Gk. hyperephanos) comes from a word meaning “wandering”. It is also translated as “boastful”. In the old days merchants would often wander about making extravagant claims about whatever they were trying to sell. Thus, the idea is that of being a braggart who makes extravagant claims that aren’t true.

“Boasters” go hand in hand with “proud. Boasters are braggarts who constantly parade themselves as the BEST. They are number “one” – just ask them.

“Inventors of evil things” are not content with just sinning, but are ever pushing the limit in terms of even greater ways of sinning. It not only wants fornication legalized, but also sodomy and then pedophilia and on and on. It’s always pushing the envelope on SIN. And the world calls this “progressive”.

“Disobedient to parents” shows no regard for parental authority. In the OT such children were to be stoned.

Slide # 13**Deuteronomy 21:18–21 (NKJV)**

18 “If a man has a **stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey** the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and who, when they have chastened him, will not heed them,

19 then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city, to the gate of his city.

20 And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is **stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey** our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.’

21 Then all the men of his city shall **stone him to death with stones**; so you shall put away the evil from among you, and all Israel shall hear and fear.

Interestingly, in the whole history of Israel we never even one time see this being carried out, but it was clearly part of the law.

Someone says, “Oh such action seems really drastic.” Yes, but so then is that of a stubborn and rebellious child who will not obey. As Paul describes last day’s apostasy in 2 Tim. 3 one of the prevailing sins named is that children will be “***disobedient to parents***” (2 Tim. 3:2). It really is a very serious situation that can destroy an entire society as we are seeing happen right before our eyes.

31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful;

“**Undiscerning**” (Gk. asynetos) refers to acting stupidly, especially in the moral realm. It is also translated as “foolish” or “without understanding”. It is not a vice to be unintelligent but there is a moral element involved here. They are senseless because they have no fear (reverence) for God which is the beginning of wisdom (Ps. 111:10; Prov. 1:7; 9:10).

“**Untrustworthy**” (Gk. asynthetos) refers to those who break covenants or don’t keep their word. There is no loyalty or faithfulness!

“**Unloving**” (Gk. astorgos) this is the idea of being without natural family affection. Usually this is a lack of love in regard to children for parents or parents for children. Paul uses this exact word in 2 Tim. 3:3 where he says it will be indicative of last days perilous times. This shows total disregard for normal family ties and obligations.

“Unforgiving” is not found in the older manuscripts.

And then to round out the list we have...

“Unmerciful” (Gk. aneleemon) meaning the person lacks compassion, care, and kindness toward those who are in a miserable condition. They are ruthless and heartless, being cruel and showing no pity.

So there you have it, when you have a society filled with sexual immorality, homosexuality, unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, and unmerciful – well then you clearly have a society under the wrath of God’s abandonment!

Sounds like last day’s perilous times that will usher in the Antichrist. And that is where the last days of the Church Age goes – it more and more presents a time of apostasy that prepares the stage for Antichrist.

Slide # 14

1 John 2:18 (NKJV)

18 Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, **by which we know** that it is the last hour.

When God just lets people go all the wheels come off the wagon to where there is unsolvable dysfunction, disintegration, and destruction on every hand. The whole of human society is adversely affected. Immorality destroys biblical marriage; no natural family affection destroys the family. Instead of normal motherly love, we now we want to kill them in the womb. Self-centered narcissism is everywhere is seen in greed, envy, and pride. And people feed on BADNESS hurting and hating one another continually.

Slide # 15

Titus 3:3 (NKJV)

3 For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.

Slide # 16



And that my friends is where we are and where we are headed. The new world order is a one world order given over to a debased mind where as Psalm 2 says, the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing... the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and His Anointed saying let us break the shackles of God's law, truth, and order.

We are a society given over to judgment. Indeed, the "wrath of God is revealed from heaven". Right now the judgment is in a "passive phase" meaning God is just letting it take its natural course. But one day in the day of the Lord judgment He is going to directly and overtly intervene in the affairs of human history and then the full day of His wrath will have come.

And then Paul says...

32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

Note the word "*knowing*" once again in this context. All the way through the emphasis is on the fact that down deep these people know the reality of the one true living God and yet they suppress and defy Him. But they KNOW!

Slide # 17

- v. 18 "who **suppress** the truth"
- v. 19 "may be **known** of God is manifest in them"
- v. 19 "God has **shown** it to them"
- v. 20 "His invisible attributes are **clearly seen**"
- v. 20 "**understood** by the things that are made"
- v. 21 "they **knew** God"
- v. 28 "did not like to retain God **in their knowledge**"
- v. 30 "**Haters of God**"
- v. 32 "**knowing** the righteous judgment of God"

They have a conscience. They know how they are living is wrong! Yes, one can come to have a seared and calloused conscience that no longer functions properly and that is precisely what we have in the people given over to sin as seen here in Romans 1.

But innately on some level they know God's judgment is righteous and that those who practice these things are deserving of death. I think that is why all their lives they are fearful of death.

Slide # 18

Hebrews 2:15 (NKJV)

15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Why do people universally have a fear of death if there is no God? This is part of the God-consciousness inherently God-wired into the soul of every person. Down deep people know they are sinners and they know they must answer for it. Now they seek to suppress it but the fear of death essentially remains.

But in their depravity people while knowing the righteous judgment of God and knowing they are deserving of death still persist in practicing the catalogues of sins mentioned and they do so with abandonment. God lets them go in abandonment which is really an expression of His wrath.

Not only do they practice all these forms of unrighteousness, but they also approve of those who practice them.

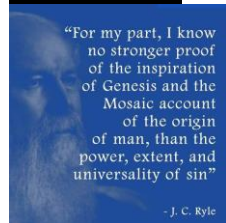
This the fellowship of those under the wrath of God. It is a fellowship of evil. They celebrate their sinfulness. They practice and approve of their sinfulness! They are PROUD of it. They not only endorse it, they applaud and promote it. As Jesus said, "If you were of the world, the world would love its own." (Jn. 15:19)

The world has its own "fellowship" and it is centered in the fact that they hate God and love darkness (cf. Jn. 3:19).

Where does all this violence, immorality, cruelty and degradation come from? It happens when men abandon the true knowledge of God, and the state of society reflects God's judgment upon them for this. – **David Guzik**

The great proof of the Bible is that it tells it like it is – it rings true to life. The Bible shows that there is a moral universe because there is a moral God behind it all. The whole world knows it is wrong to kill, cheat, and steal? Where did we get these ideas? The only reasonable explanation is that there is moral supreme being Who is the Creator of all Who has created us in His image exactly as the Bible says. Why do we constantly see humanity acting out in harmful and hurtful ways? Well, the best explanation is the universal reality of sin exactly as the Bible shows.

Slide # 19



The Bible knows us!

Emile Cailliet lived in France and fought in World War I. He writes of his conversion: “I had in a strange way been longing...for a book that would understand me. But I knew of no such book.” One day his wife went to a Protestant Church and brought a Bible home and gave it to him. As he began to read he said, “suddenly the realization dawned upon me: This was the Book that would understand me!”

The story is told about an African Tribal chief who was brought a mirror by a visitor. The chief peered into the mirror and commented how ugly the person he saw in the glass was. When he came to realize it was himself he was enraged and smashed the mirror on a rock.

The Bible describes God’s truth as a mirror (Ja. 1:23-24). Some people - when the mirror reflects the ugliness of their sin react against it violently. However, the same Bible that exposes the ugliness of our sin also reveals the glories of God’s love and grace as found in the Lord Jesus Christ. The same chapter (Romans 1) that shows the depths of depravity also says, the gospel is “the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes” (Rom. 1:16).

The Bible is shown to be so very true regarding the human condition; but it is also equally true regarding God’s provision of a Savior as found in Jesus!

The great issue is what will we do with God's provision? Jesus is the only answer to our sin problem.

When we come to put our faith in Jesus as our Lord and Savior God works a miracle of conversion in our hearts. And from that point God begins what the Bible calls, "the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2). As we come to know Christ and focus on Him our thinking becomes more and more Christlike.

But it all begins with repentance and faith. Paul summarized the message he shared everywhere in Acts 20:21 saying that he was continually...

Acts 20:21 (NKJV)

21 testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yes, in Romans 1 we have the dire condition of depraved humanity on full display, but we are also introduced to the glorious gospel of grace which is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes.

This is the ultimate issue: Have you believed? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved! (Acts 16:31)