



## Rice Memorial MBC

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### **Ignoring God's Clear Truth**

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance  
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or Roget's Thesaurus – **June 26, 2016**

## **Romans 1:18-23, 28-32**

**Introduction:** This letter was written by Paul to the Roman church in 57 AD just prior to his journey to Jerusalem where he hoped to deliver the money that he had collected from the Gentile churches on behalf of their Jewish **brothers** and **sisters** in Palestine who were **facing severe drought**. He was, however, aware of the dangers that faced him in Jerusalem and asked the Romans to pray for him, that he would be delivered from the **enmity** (ill will; hatred; unfriendly dispositions) of the Jews, as it was his intention to visit them (the Roman Christians), in the event he went to Rome in chains.

Rome was the only church to which Paul wrote for which he had had no part in its foundation. It had probably originally been started by Christian Jews and proselytes who returned to Rome after Pentecost (Acts 2:10-11), and many Christians would later have moved to it as the hub of the Roman empire, some of whom were known to Paul, as is evident from chapter 16. He was therefore not aware of any major problems there, and was able to concentrate in his letter on giving a **full presentation of the Gospel of God** (chapters 1-8), and **an explanation** of God's dealings with the Jews (chapters 9-11), while at the same time indicating that Jewish Christians (of which there were many in Rome) and Gentile Christians should have forbearance for one another and for each other's religious foibles (moral WEAKNESSES) (chapters 12-15).  
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/pet/romans-0.html>)

**Romans 1:14-16**, I am **debtor** both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to **preach** the **gospel** to you that are at Rome also. For I am NOT ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the **POWER** of God **unto salvation to every one that BELIEVETH**; to the **Jew** first, and also to the **Greek (non-Jew:- Gentile)**.

**Believeth defined 4100, to entrust (especially one's spiritual WELL-BEING to Christ).**

**Romans 1:17**, For therein is the **righteousness of God** revealed from **faith to faith**: as it is written, **The just shall live (ALIVE) by faith**.

**NOTE:** "As it is written, But the righteous shall live by faith ..." is a quotation from Habakkuk 2:4 and is understood as Old Testament support of the **principle of salvation by faith**, it being the great end (GOAL) of the Christian religion to **produce faith** in all people, inasmuch as it may be possible. Without faith, it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6); and the statement here that the just shall live by faith is emphasis upon the fact of **man's utter inability** to **live (BE ALIVE)** without it.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/romans-1.html>)

**Habakkuk 2:4**, Behold, his soul which is lifted up is NOT upright in him: but the **just** shall **LIVE (keep, make ALIVE)** by **HIS faith**.

**Thought 1.** Notice, the scripture does not mean “Keep ALIVE by good works” that we do because of faith. We should do good works, but NOT to stay “alive.” Remember, faith to stay alive means “trusting Jesus (Yahushua) for spiritual well being.” So, as long as we “KEEP the faith”, we have eternal LIFE and are ALIVE.

**1 John 5:13**, These things have I written unto you that **BELIEVE on the name (authority)** of the Son of God; that ye may **KNOW** that ye **HAVE eternal LIFE...**

**Ephesians 2:8-10**, For by **grace** are ye **SAVED** through **FAITH**; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of **WORKS**, lest any man should boast. For we are **HIS workmanship**, **created IN Christ Jesus** unto **good WORKS**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

**2 Timothy 2:19-20** ...The Lord KNOWETH them that **ARE HIS**. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ **depart** from **iniquity**. But in a **great house** there are not only vessels of **GOLD** and of **SILVER**, but ALSO of **WOOD** and of **EARTH**; and **SOME** to **honour**, and **SOME** to **dishonour**.

**Romans 11:20-22** ...because of **UNBELIEF** they were broken off, and thou standest by FAITH. Be **NOT** highminded, but **fear**: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare **not** thee. Behold therefore the **goodness** and **SEVERITY** (harshness) of God: on them which **FELL**, severity; but toward thee, goodness, IF thou **CONTINUE** in his goodness: **otherwise** thou also shalt be **cut off**.

**2 Timothy 4:7**, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have **KEPT the FAITH...**

**Romans 1:18**, For the **wrath (anger, VENGEANCE)** of God is revealed from heaven against ALL ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who **hold (have) the truth IN unrighteousness...**

Vengeance, The infliction of pain on another, in return for an injury or OFFENSE. Such infliction, when it proceeds from malice or more resentment, and is not necessary for the purposes of justice, is revenge, and a most heinous crime. When such infliction proceeds from a mere LOVE of JUSTICE, and the necessity of punishing offenders for the support of the laws, it is vengeance and is warrantable (authorized by right) and JUST. In this case, vengeance is a just retribution (repayment, reward), recompense or punishment. In this latter sense the word is used in Scripture, and frequently applied to the PUNISHMENTS inflicted by God on sinners.

**NOTE: For**—“**There is NO other way of obtaining LIFE and salvation.**” Having laid down his proposition, the Apostle now enters upon the proof of it. His first argument is, “The **law condemns all men**, as being **under sin**; none therefore are justified by the works of the law.” This is treated of to chap. Romans 3:20. And hence he infers, “therefore justification is by faith.” The wrath of God signifies the **vengeance of God**, the destruction and punishment which he will inflict upon sinners. This is revealed not only by the general light of nature, (if I can use the expression, when every thing good is from grace,) and by frequent and signal interpretations of the **divine providence**, but likewise in the sacred oracles, and particularly by that same Gospel which reveals God's manner of justifying men. See Acts 17:30-31.  
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/tcc/romans-1.html>)

**Acts 17:30-31**, And the times of this ignorance God winked at; **but NOW commandeth ALL men (human being) EVERY WHERE to repent:** Because he hath appointed a DAY, in the which he will **judge the world** in righteousness by **that man** whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath **raised him** from the DEAD.

**1 John 3:22-23**, And whatsoever **we ASK, we receive** of him, because we **KEEP** his COMMANDMENTS, and DO those things that are pleasing in his sight. And THIS is **his COMMANDMENT**, That we should **BELIEVE** on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and **LOVE** one another, as he gave us commandment.

**Romans 1:19**, Because that which **may BE known OF (ABOUT) God is manifest (shining) IN them; for God hath shewed it** unto them.

**NOTE:** That which is “**knowable**” concerning God. The expression implies that there may be many things concerning God which cannot be known. But there are also MANY things which may be ascertained (find out once for all). **Such are his existence,** and many of **his attributes, his power, and wisdom, and justice,** etc. The object of the apostle was NOT to say that every thing pertaining to God could be known by them, or that they could have as clear a view of him as if they had possessed a revelation. We must interpret the expression according to the object which he had in view. That was to show that so much might be known of God as to prove that they had **no excuse** for their crimes; or that God would be JUST in punishing them for their deeds. For this, it was needful only that his existence and his justice, or his determination to punish sin, should be known; and this, the apostle affirms, **was known among them,** and had been from **the CREATION** of the **world.** This expression, therefore, is not to be pressed as implying that they **KNEW** all that could be known about God, or that they knew as much as they who had a revelation; but that they **knew enough** to prove that **they had NO excuse** for **their sins.**  
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/romans-1.html>)

**Romans 1:20**, For the **invisible things** of him from the **creation** of the world are **clearly seen,** being **UNDERSTOOD** by the things that are made, even his **eternal power** and **GODHEAD;** so that **they are without excuse...**

**Godhead defined 2305. theiotes pronounced thi-ot'-ace from 2304; divinity (1.** The state of being divine; Deity; Godhead; the nature or essence of God. Christians ascribe *divinity* to ONE Supreme (highest) Being only. **2.** God; the Deity; the Supreme Being.).

**NOTE: Things that are made** - By his works; compare Hebrews 11:3. This means, not by the original “act” of creation, but by the continual operations of God in his Providence (the care and superintendence [oversight; direction] which God exercises over his creatures), by his doings, what he is continually producing and accomplishing in the displays of **his power** and **goodness** in the **heavens** and the **earth.**

**His eternal power** - Here are TWO things implied. (1) that the universe contains an exhibition of his power, or a display of that attribute which we call “omnipotence;” and, (2) That this power has existed from eternity, and of course implies an **eternal existence** in God. It does not mean that this power has been exerted or put forth from eternity, for the very idea of creation supposes that it had NOT, but that there is **proof,** in the **works of creation,** of **power** which must have **existed from eternity,** or have belonged to an **eternal being.** The proof of this was clear, even to the pagan, with their imperfect views of creation and of astronomy; compare Psalm 19:1-14. The majesty and grandeur of the heavens would strike their eye, and be full demonstration that they were the work of an infinitely great and glorious **God** (Supreme (highest) Being, the Creator, Jehovah [Yahweh]; the ETERNAL and INFINITE SPIRIT ).  
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/romans-1.html>)

**Psalms 19:1-3**, The **heavens (the visible arch in which the clouds move, as well as to the higher ether where the celestial bodies revolve)** declare the GLORY of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night **sheweth knowledge.** There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

**Romans 1:21-22**, Because that, **WHEN they knew God**, they glorified (honour) him **NOT** as God, neither were thankful; but became VAIN in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was **darkened**. Professing themselves to be **WISE**, they became **FOOLS**...

**NOTE: When they knew God** - Greek, "knowing God." That is, they had an acquaintance with the existence and many of the **PERFECTIONS** (the infinite power, holiness, justice, benevolence and wisdom...) of one God. That many of **the philosophers** of Greece and Rome **had a knowledge of one God**, there can be no doubt. This was undoubtedly the case with Pythagoras, who had traveled extensively in Egypt, and even in Palestine; and also with Plato and his disciples. This point is clearly shown by Cudworth in his Intellectual System, and by Dr. Warburton in the *Divine Legation of Moses*. Yet the knowledge of this **great truth** was **NOT** communicated to the people. It was confined to the philosophers; and **NOT** improbably one design of the mysteries celebrated throughout Greece was to keep up the knowledge of the **ONE true God**. Gibbon has remarked that "**the philosophers** regarded all the **popular superstitions** as **equally false**: the common people as equally true; and the politicians as equally useful." This was probably a correct account of the prevalent feelings among the ancients.

**Professing themselves to be WISE** - This was the common boast of the philosophers of antiquity. The very word by which they chose to be called, "**philosophers**," means literally "**lovers of wisdom**." That it was their boast that they were wise, is well known; compare Rom. 1:14; 1 Cor. 1:19, 1 Cor. 1:20, 1 Cor. 1:22; 1 Cor. 3:19; 2 Cor. 11:19.

**Proverbs 9:10**, The **fear (reverence)** of the Lord (Yahweh) is the **beginning of wisdom**: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

**They became fools** - Compare Jer. 8:8-9. They **became really foolish** in their opinions and conduct. There is something particularly pungent (sharp) and cutting in this remark, and as true as it is pungent (sharp). In what way they evinced (proved) their folly, Paul proceeds immediately to state. Sinners of all kinds are frequently spoken of as fools in the Scriptures. In the sense in which it is thus used, the word is applied to them as **void of understanding** or **moral sense**; as idolaters, and as wicked; Ps. 14:1; Pro. 26:4; Pro. 1:17, Pro. 1:22; Pro. 14:8-9. The senses in which this word here is applied to the pagan are, (1) That their speculations and doctrines were **senseless**; and, (2) That their conduct was **corrupt**. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/romans-1.html>)

**Romans 1:23**, And **changed** (exchanged) the **GLORY** of the **incorruptible God** into (FOR) an **IMAGE** made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

**NOTE: ...an image made like to corruptible man** - that is, **they exchanged the one for the other**. The expression is taken from Psalms 106:20, (and in the words of the Septuagint) They **exchanged** God **FOR** man-the incorruptible for the corruptible; nay, Him who is the essence and fountain of all that is glorious, for a mere inanimate image, fashioned after the **likeness** of perishable man. The allusion here is doubtless to the Greek worship, and the apostle may have had in his eye those exquisite chiseling of the human forms which lay so profusely beneath and around him as he stood on Mars' hill, and "**beheld their devotions**," or 'the objects of their worship' (see the note at Acts 17:29).

**Psalms 29:2**, Give unto **the Lord** (Yahweh) the **GLORY** **DUE** unto **HIS NAME**...

**Psalms 106:19-22**, They made a CALF in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. Thus they **changed (exchanged)** their **GLORY** into the similitude of an **ox** that eateth grass. They FORGAT God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt; Wondrous works in the land of Ham, and **terrible (dreadful** [inspiring AWE or REVERENCE]) things by the Red sea.

But, as if that had not been a deep enough **degradation** of the living God, there was found

'a lower deep' still. ...birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things - referring now to the Egyptian and Oriental worship. In the face of these plain declarations of the **descent** of man's religious belief from loftier to ever lower and more **debasing** conceptions of the Supreme (Highest) Being, there are expositors of this very Epistle (as Reiche and Jowett) who, believing neither in any Fall from primeval innocence, nor in the noble traces of that innocence which lingered even after the fall, and were only by degrees obliterated by willful violence to the dictates of conscience, maintain that man's religious history has been all along a struggle to rise, from the lowest forms of **nature-worship**, suited to the childhood of our race, into that which is more rational and spiritual.  
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jfu/romans-1.html>)

**Romans 1:24-27**, Wherefore God also **gave them up** to **uncleanness** through the **LUSTS** of their own hearts, to **dishonour** their own bodies between themselves; Who **changed (exchanged)** the truth of God **into (FOR)** a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the **Creator**, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God **gave them up** unto **vile (disgrace)** affections: for even their **women** did **change (exchange)** the **natural use** into that which is **against NATURE**: And likewise also the **men**, leaving the **natural use** of the **woman**, **burned** in their **LUST** one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence (punishment) of (**FROM**) their error which was meet.

**NOTE:** And the consequence was that God gave them up, in the lusts (passionate desires for pleasure) of their hearts (MINDS, wills and emotions), to **beastliness**. They became what their gods were. And that involved them in uncleanness and dishonouring their bodies among themselves. The **filthiness** in man's nature **became unrestricted**, and it soon became apparent in their ways of life. **sexual perversion and immorality** became commonplace, and it could all be justified as 'worship' because it was regularly connected with the Temple. Sacred **prostitutes** were called 'holy ones'.  
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/pet/romans-1.html>)

**2 Peter 2:6-8**, And turning the cities of **Sodom** and **Gomorrha** into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should LIVE ungodly; And **delivered** just **Lot**, **VEXED** with the **filthy conversation (behavior)** of the **WICKED**: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, **VEXED** (irritated) his **righteous soul** from day to day with their unlawful deeds);...

**NOTE:** Not only did mankind 'know God' but **refuse to own His worth** (Romans 1:21), **turning** instead **to idols** (Romans 1:23), they also considered that to keep the true God in their knowledge (epignosis - spiritual knowledge) at all **was not worthwhile**. Thus they **not only blasphemed** against Him with their false worship (Rom. 1:21-23), but also DESPISED HIM at the same time, **by forgetting Him** in their daily lives. As a result God once again **'gave them up'** to the consequences of their sins, allowing them to develop unfit minds, minds which would be rejected after testing (adokimos).

The verb dokimazo means 'to approve, to regard as worthy, to think of as worthwhile'. Thus they did not 'approve' of having God in their knowledge, which was why God did not 'approve' of them. The choice is open to us all. Either we retain God in our knowledge and commit ourselves to His ways, or we put Him out of our minds and are given up by Him to unfitness and disapproval. **We cannot be neutral**. And the end result of God's disapproval was that their minds became unfit, and they began to do what was not fitting. Not all followed the way of **sexual perversion**. But all became involved in at least one of the sins in the long catalogue of sins that follows. Many a person has come to the **crossroads** where **they had to CHOOSE** whether they wanted to retain God in their knowledge or not, and having rejected the opportunity have sunk into **deep sin**. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/pet/romans-1.html>)

**Romans 1:28**, And even as they did **NOT like to retain** God in their knowledge, **God gave them**

over to a **reprobate (worthless, rejected) MIND**, to do those things which are not convenient...

**NOTE:** This accounts for the justness of the divine procedure in leaving them to commit such scandalous iniquities; that since they had some knowledge of God by the light of nature, and yet did NOT care **to retain God in their knowledge**; or to own and acknowledge him as God, to worship and GLORIFY HIM as such; but took every method to **erase this knowledge out** of their minds, and keep it from others:

**God gave them over to a reprobate mind;** a vain EMPTY MIND, worthless, good for nothing devoid of all true knowledge and judgment; incapable of approving what is truly good, or of disapproving that which is evil; a mind that has lost all conscience of things, and is disapproved of by God, and all good men:

**to do those things which are not convenient;** which are neither agreeably to the light of nature, nor convenient to, or becoming the honour of human nature; things which the brutes themselves, who are destitute of reason, do not do.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/romans-1.html>)

**Romans 1:29-31, Being filled** with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, **debate**, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, **HATERS of God**, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, **Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable** [incapable of being pacified, unyielding], unmerciful...

**NOTE:** From hence, to the end of the chapter, follows a large and black list and catalogue of the sad characters of the Gentiles, and of the best men they had among them; for the apostle is all along speaking, **not** of the common people, but of their **wise professors**, and **moral instructors**; than which there never was a more wicked set of men that ever lived upon the face of the earth; who under the guise of morality were guilty of the **greatest PRIDE** and covetousness, and of the most **filthy debaucheries** (habitual lewdness) imaginable: they were "filled with all unrighteousness". This word includes in it all manner of sin and wickedness in general; fitly expresses the condition of fallen men, destitute of a righteousness; designs every **violation of the law** respecting our neighbour; and is opposed to that vain conceit (idea, thought) of righteousness which these men had...

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/romans-1.html>)

**Romans 1:32, Who knowing** the **judgment** of God, that they which commit such things are **WORTHY** of death, not only do the same, but **have pleasure** in them that do them.

**NOTE:** It seems here to be strongly implied, that to look with **complacency** (calm contentment) on the **vices** of others is one of the last degrees of degeneracy. A man may be hurried by his passions to do the thing he hates; but he who **has pleasure** in those that do evil, **loves wickedness** for **wickedness' sake**. And hereby he ENCOURAGES them in sin, and heaps the guilt of others upon his own.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/tcc/romans-1.html>)

**Thought 1.** Again, I'm reminded of Lot who "LOVED the people", but HATED the behavior of the people. Seeing and hearing of their unlawful actions, "VEXED" his righteous mind daily. The point being since he reverenced God, he had "NO PLEASURE" in their behavior.

**Proverbs 8:13, The FEAR (reverence) of the LORD is to HATE evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the EVIL way, and the froward mouth, do I HATE.**

**2 Peter 2:7-8** ...just Lot, **vexed** (irritated) with the **filthy conversation** of the **wicked:** (For that **righteous man** dwelling among them, in SEEING and HEARING, **VEXED** (IRRITATED) **his righteous soul (mind)** from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)...