

Romans

Chapter 1

I. Introduction

The first seventeen verses of Romans form the introduction to the book and the statement of the main theme. The introduction follows the familiar Pauline pattern of name, office, and salutation. Verses 16 and 17 state the theme of the book of Romans, that of the gospel.

Romans 1:1

1:1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

Verse one is the introduction to the book of Romans. In this verse, we find Paul addressing the Romans as an apostle of the Lord. His use of the term "apostle", is in it's official use as a title shared by Paul and the twelve (Matthais replacing Judas of course). This is no small point. Paul places himself among the twelve as an official spokesman for God along with the privileges and responsibilities thereof.

What made Paul an apostle? The distinguishing characteristics of apostles are:

- 1) They received their commission directly from Christ (Acts 9:15-16, Luke 6:13).
- 2) They were eyewitnesses of Christ's ministry from his baptism to his crucifixion (Acts 1:21-22).
- 3) They were eyewitnesses to the resurrected Christ (Acts 9).
- 4) They were the foundation of the church (Ephesians 2:20-21).

Paul was specifically chosen by the resurrected Lord to be God's apostle to the Gentiles (Ephesians 3:1-4).

Paul also designates himself as a servant. This can be understood two ways. One, Paul meant that he was totally subject to Christ much like any slave of that day was subject to their master. Secondly, it could take on the meaning of the special privilege to serve God, much as Moses and David were called the "servants of God." It is probably best to think of it in both ways, that of total subjection to Christ, and an office of honor to God.

The last phrase in this verse, "separated unto the gospel of God", designates Paul's message and calling. The word "separated", (Greek *aphorismenos*), has the idea of "setting apart." Paul was separated from this world to the gospel. The word gospel, (Greek *euangellion*), was used of an official proclamation, usually good, by the emperor. The gospel is the "good news" of salvation in Christ.

Romans 1:2-4

(Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

These three verses are pregnant with truth concerning Christ our Lord. In verse two we find that the gospel is not something new. In fact, this was where the Jews stumbled. They considered the gospel to be a new doctrine, or at best, an aberrant sect of Judaism. Paul is saying no; the gospel was in God's plan from the beginning. From Genesis 3:15, the proto-evangelion, to the end of the Old Testament we find one picture after another of the coming Messiah and Savior. Isaiah paints a picture of this in Isaiah 61:1-2 (compare to Luke 4:18). Jesus himself said "**Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.**" (John 5:39) When Jesus spoke these words, the Scriptures were the Old Testament. How one can read the Old Testament and never see Christ is incomprehensible.

In verses 3 and 4, we see the provider of the Gospel, Jesus Christ. We need to realize that without Christ, there is no gospel. Note the following:

- 1) Jesus Christ is our Lord. Lord comes from the word *kurios*, which is someone who has absolute power and authority over someone. Christ has total control over us.
- 2) Jesus was made flesh by his birth in the lineage of David. It was common knowledge to Jews that the Messiah was to come through the line of David. This describes his humanity. Two excellent passages on the Davidic lineage of Christ are found in 2 Samuel 7:16 and Isaiah 11:1ff.
- 3) He was declared to be God by the resurrection from the dead. The word translated "declared" is *horitzo*. We get our word "horizon" from this. Jesus was unmistakably shown to be God by his resurrection. This forever separated Jesus from another false messiah. The word "according" is *kata*, and can be rendered "by virtue of." The proof of Christ's divinity is His resurrection.
- 4) His resurrection was the Father's stamp of approval on His finished work. It is probably correct to say that the Father looks forward to the day when the entire creation is brought face to face with the fact that Jesus is Lord. It pains the Father no end to have Jesus trodden under foot by ignorant men who deny His divinity and work on the cross. (Philippians 2)

Jesus is man and God. How that meshes together no one knows. The Bible teaches it, we are to believe it.

Romans 1:5-7

By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus

Christ: To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called [to be] saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

In these three verses we find the recipients of this letter and the privileges of the gospel.

First, we find the recipients of the letter, the church at Rome. Although some scholars debate this, it can almost be said for a certainty that the letter was originally written to Rome. We know that Paul had never visited Rome to this point although it was his desire to travel there.

Secondly, we find our privileges as recipients of the Gospel.

- 1) The first possible interpretation of verse 4 is that Paul is saying we have received grace and apostleship. In these two terms, we see both sides of the gospel. The first side is grace: this must come first. We have received salvation solely on the basis of God's unmerited graciousness and love, not because He got a bargain when He got us. This is God's side. Our side is seen in the word "apostleship." Because we have been saved, we have a responsibility to be an "apostle" to this dying world. We are also required to obey. Faith without works is dead. The phrase "obedience to the faith" closely connects faith with resultant action. One is invalid without the other.

An alternate interpretation of this verse is that we have received "grace" which is the gift of apostleship, that is, of being an ambassador for Christ. The word translated grace is "*charis*", and is used in other parts of the New Testament to refer to spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:1). The "gift" of being God's personal representative is an honor unmatched by any king on earth!

- 2) We are the called of Jesus Christ. The word "called" comes from the Greek word *ekaleo*. This is a compound word which means "to call out." It is very sobering to realize that we were called out by God before the foundation of the world. How that meshes with our responsibility is incomprehensible to our feeble minds. We can only accept this idea on faith. We are called! This concept of our calling is further expanded by Paul in chapters 9-11.
- 3) We are beloved of God. This is fantastic. We sometimes get the idea that "God puts up with us." That is not true. God loves us as much as he loves Christ, because when he sees us, we are "in" Christ. We are adopted as beloved sons (we will see this more in chapter 8).
- 4) We are called saints. The words "to be" are not in the text of this passage. We are saints. What a responsibility! Even the church at Corinth, full of all kinds of problems and deep sin, was full of saints. (1 Corinthians 1:2)
- 5) We have received grace and peace. Not only have we been given God's favor, we have been given peace. This peace has two aspects. First, we have peace with God. The war is over! This is hard for most people to understand since they say "I am not at war with God." That statement is irrelevant since the Bible clearly teaches that God is at war with us.

The second aspect is we have the peace of God. When all hell is breaking loose around us, we can rest assured that God is in control. (John 14:27)

Romans 1:8-10

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.

These three verses, and 11-15, give us a glimpse of the heart Paul had for these people. We find his character exposed.

- 1) Paul was thankful for them and for their faith. Sometimes we become jealous of other people who have a dynamic faith. Paul was thankful. Note that he was not thankful for their riches, or that things were going good for them, or that they were successful. He was thankful for their faith. One other church gladdened Paul's heart, that of Thessalonica. In 1 Thessalonians 1:8 he indicates that their reputation for the word of the Lord had sounded throughout their province. This is especially noteworthy when we understand that the Thessalonian church was only a few weeks, or at the most months, old.
- 2) Paul indicated that he always prayed for them. The true servant of Jesus Christ is concerned about the spiritual welfare of others. We get so hung up on the temporal and physical that we fail to focus on the eternal. It is interesting to note that we never find Paul praying for physical or material things in the New Testament. Instead we find him constantly praying for the spiritual health and well-being of others. It is a pattern we need to follow.

It is instructive to look at what Paul prayed for by examining some of his other writings. In Colossians 1:9-12a, Ephesians 3:14-19, Philippians 1:9-11, 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3, and 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12a, we find the content of Paul's prayers for the churches. Unlike many of our prayers today, there is no mention of physical or financial needs, but that God may perform His perfecting work in the lives of each believer in those churches no matter what situation they find themselves in. We can take an example from this. We spend too much time praying for financial and physical needs and too little time praying that God may spiritually strengthen and mature people. Paul's focus was spiritual, not physical. Ours should be likewise.

- 3) Paul longed to see them. His aspiration was not to meet some great athlete or personality, but to meet his fellow believers and thereby encourage himself and them.
- 4) Paul worshipped God in his service. The word translated "serve" in verse 9, is *laotreuo*. It is often translated "worship." One of the best ways we worship God is in our service to him.

- 5) Paul's life was marked by the will of God. Too often we make our plans and then go to God for approval, not Paul! He understood that his every move was planned by God and he wanted to make sure that he fulfilled that plan.

Romans 1:13-14

For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me. Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

These verses give us additional insights into Paul's attitude towards others and his servant's heart. In verses 11 and 12 we see Paul's attitude towards his interaction with the believers at Rome, and verse 13 gives us his life's goal, fruitbearing.

It is most refreshing to note that in verses 11 and 12 we find that Paul did not consider himself the "answer-man" and "spiritual know-it-all." Too often we get the idea that those who are spiritually mature do not need to interact with those less mature since they already know it all. Not so! It is insightful to realize that those who are the most spiritual never consider themselves to be that. They realize they need others to sharpen them. We cannot function properly in the body of Christ when we start to separate other Christians into little boxes before we interact with them. This was the great heresy in the Corinthian church, and one that Paul spent most of chapters 1, 2, and 12 to 14 dealing with. We all need one another. Paul realized that although he could encourage and strengthen the believers at Rome, he would likewise be encouraged and strengthened by them.

The converse of the above is also true. We need to be sensitive to the contributions others make in our lives, even if they are not "more spiritual" or "as knowledgeable" as we are. This is Christian snobbery and not something to be tolerated in our lives. Most often it is those who are more knowledgeable in the word that need the most encouragement. No one has all the answers. We all need each other.

The word translated "spiritual gift" is *pneumatikon*. It refers to something that is characterized by the spirit. Spiritual gifts are not talents, but divine empowerments for spiritual service to others in the body of Christ. This is developed further in chapter 12. The word "establish" is *sterizo*. It means "to confirm, strengthen, fix firmly." The purpose of spiritual gifts are not self edification, but other edification. They are meant to minister to others in the body of Christ. Only as we mutually minister our spiritual gifts is the body strengthened and matured.

In verse 13 we find Paul's ultimate goal, fruit. If we are Christians we are bearing fruit, even if it is a dried-up grape. Note the following passages regarding the definition of fruit:

Action Fruit

- Leading others to Christ - Romans 1:13, Proverbs 11:30, John 15:8.
- Giving - Philippians 4:17.

- Expressing thanks - Hebrews 13:15, Colossians 1:10
- Godly conduct and good works - Romans 6:21-23.

Attitude Fruit

- Fruit of the Spirit - Galatians 5:22-23

Basically, we find that fruit falls into two categories. First, we bear action fruit when we lead others to Christ, give unto the Lord, and express thanksgiving to Him. Secondly, we bear attitude fruit when we are controlled by the Holy Spirit. These are found in Galatians 5:22-23.

Romans 1:14-15

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.

Paul wraps up the introduction to his letter in these two verses. Since he had never been to Rome the introduction to Romans is longer than all of the other Pauline Epistles. He establishes his credentials and reveals his true concern regarding the spiritual welfare of the Romans.

Because Paul had not been to Rome, many of his critics would attempt to use this fact to discredit Paul. They would say that Paul was unwilling to face the philosophers and intellectuals of his day. Paul answers this very directly in these two verses. In verse 14, he says that he is a debtor to the Greeks and Barbarians, the wise and the unwise. It is probably best to interpret the two phrases as referring to the same groups of people. In other words, the Greeks are equated with the wise and the Barbarians with the unwise. (Paul uses the same terms in 1 Corinthians 1 and 2) Also, note the fact that Paul considers himself a debtor. The obligation to share the gospel is a debt. We owe it to our fellow men to share the good news of salvation. Not only is Paul a debtor, he is ready to preach.

It is important to note that Paul considered himself to be under divine orders. In 1 Corinthians 9:16-17 he says, "woe is me if I preach not the gospel." It wasn't a choice for him. In 1 Timothy 1:11 Paul saw the gospel as a divine trust given to him and for which he was answerable to God. The words used refer to a deposit that was put into a bank, and which was available for withdrawal at a later time. He is saying that God entrusted Him with a very precious commodity, and he wanted to be faithful for the way he handled that which was entrusted to him.

Romans 1:16-17

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. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

These two verses are the theme of Romans, the gospel. As noted in the section on verse 1, the gospel is the "good news" of salvation by faith alone. This was indeed "good news" since salvation any other way is unattainable.

Verse 16 follows immediately from the thoughts in verses 14 and 15. Paul is not afraid to challenge the spiritual and philosophical eggheads with the wonderful news of the gospel. This is a lesson we can take to heart. Too often we are intimidated by the intellectual fog of the day into keeping our mouths shut regarding the gospel of grace. We need to realize that the only hope for a dying world is the message of salvation and we need to be willing and always ready to share it.

Before we can understand and apply these verses, we need to answer the question, "What is the gospel?" Many times we use this word to refer to the "four spiritual laws" or the "Romans road." Although in a sense this usage of the term is correct, we need to take a closer look at the word "gospel" to see what it really means.

The word "gospel" is used 113 times in the Bible. By analyzing these occurrences, we find three major uses of this word. The following outline and comments show these uses:

A. The Gospel of the Kingdom

This is the gospel shared by Christ and John the Baptist. It is the "good news" that the Kingdom of God (or Heaven) is at hand because the King has arrived. The usage of the word "gospel" to refer to the message of the promised Kingdom is exclusive to the four gospel writers. Further analysis reveals two aspects of this gospel:

1. The Gospel of the Kingdom - Phase 1.

This usage is seen in Isaiah 61:1-2a and explained by Christ in Luke 4:16-21. We could call this "the initiation of the Kingdom." During this phase the Messiah would:

- Proclaim good tidings to the meek.
- Bind up the broken-hearted.
- Proclaim liberty to the captives.
- Proclaim the opening of the prison to them that are bound.
- Proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

Representative Gospel passages that refer to this usage in Matthew 4:23, 9:35, 11:5, Luke 4:16-21, and Mark 1:14.

2. The Gospel of the Kingdom - Phase 2.

This is the "culmination of the Kingdom" as described in Isaiah 61:2b-4. During this phase the Messiah would:

- Proclaim the day of vengeance of our God.
- Comfort all that mourn.
- Restore the blessings to those that mourn in Zion.
- Rebuild the waste places.
- Fulfill God's Kingdom promises to Israel.

Representative Gospel passages that refer to this phase are Matthew 24:14 and Mark 13:10.

B. The Gospel of Christ/God

This usage of the term "gospel" was used mostly by Paul. It is a comprehensive term which encompasses the full message of Christ and His work. Representative Pauline passages are 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 2 Corinthians 4:3, and Galatians 1:8.

1. Technically, this usage refers to all of Christ's life and ministry.

In Mark 1:1, Mark states that his book is the "beginning of the gospel of Christ" and in 14:9 uses it to refer to the entire story of Christ and His work among men.

2. Essentially, it is the fundamental facts necessary for salvation - 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.

a. The death of Christ for our sins which

- Requires a knowledge of Who Christ is
- Requires a comprehension of our sin
- Requires an understanding of the need of a personal Savior
- Requires an understanding of Christ's substitutionary sacrifice for us
- Presupposes the humanity of Christ - Romans 1:4.

b. The burial of Christ which

- Emphasizes the fact of His death.

c. The resurrection of Christ which

- Gives proof of God's approval of Christ's sacrifice
- Gives proof of the deity of Christ - Romans 1:4
- Is a guarantee of our future salvation.

3. Chronologically, it is the message of Grace as proclaimed by the New Testament.

a. In Genesis 3:15 we read of the fact of coming deliverance from sin. This verse is known as the *proto-evangelion*.

b. In the Old Testament, we see that deliverance is promised - Isaiah 61:1-4, Galatians 3:18, Isaiah 52:7.

c. In the first advent we see the proclamation of the Gospel of the Kingdom as defined above.

d. During the Church Age, we have the Gospel of Grace, the message of salvation through Christ.

C. The Everlasting Gospel - Revelation 14:6

This refers to the final proclamation by God that His Kingdom is immanent. It is a final call for repentance to men during the tribulation.

With that background, note the following points about verses 16 and 17:

- 1) The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation. The word used for power is *dunamis* from which we get our word "dynamite." The gospel is the only power strong enough to free us from the bondage of sin. This power is so strong it frees us from the penalty of sin, the power of sin, and ultimately the presence of sin.
- 2) The gospel was to be preached to the Jew first, then to the Greek. Although Romans 2:11 teaches that there is no respect of persons with God, it was God's divine plan to evangelize the world through the Jewish nation. When the Jews rejected their Messiah and had him crucified, God set them aside and began the work of evangelizing the world through the church. (This will be covered more in chapter 9, 10, and 11 of Romans) When Paul wrote the book of Romans, he found himself in the transition period between the testaments. As a result, Paul always preached the gospel to the Jews first, then to the Greeks. This was his pattern from town to town. It is important to note that although the Jews are still God's chosen people, they have been set aside during the church age. All this is said to make the point that at the time of this book, Paul still followed the divine pattern of first Jew, then Gentile.
- 3) The salvation is made accessible to those who believe. The word "believe" carries with it the idea of total trust. In fact, the Greek root of believe is the same as the word "faith." This means that it is not sufficient to have a head knowledge of God and the gospel, one must put one's total trust in God for salvation.

This brings us to an important question, and that is, "What does it mean to believe and what do we need to believe in?" Many people have a basic misunderstanding of this so it will be helpful if we look at this question and answer "How does one appropriate God's salvation."

- a). Salvation is always by grace.

In all eras of human history, God has redeemed men on the basis of His grace. Ephesians 2:8-9 says that it is "by grace." When we talk of grace, we emphasize several points.

- 1). Grace is Undeserved - no one deserves salvation.
- 2). Grace is Unearned - no one can earn salvation. Titus 3:5.
- 3). Grace is Unmerited - no one can merit salvation due to pedigree.
- 4). Grace is Unconditional - God alone determines who receives His grace and who does not. Romans 9:15-16.

- 5). Grace is Unsought - no one seeks for God's grace. Romans 3:10-17.
- 6). Grace is Unmixable - salvation is by grace, or by works, not a combination of both. Romans 11:6.
- 7). Grace precludes boasting. Ephesians 2:8-9.

b). Salvation is appropriated by faith.

This is the message of the New Testament. Since salvation is always by grace, it is something that cannot be earned. Hence, it is appropriated by believing what God says and accepting it by faith. Ultimately, this faith is grounded in the character of God in that He is completely trustworthy. Objectively, this faith is activated by believing what God says. For example, Abraham believed God when he left Ur of the Chaldees for a land God would show him and when God promised to make of him a great nation. The immediate object of Abraham's faith was God's promise, and the result was his justification. In the Old Testament, salvation was appropriated by faith in what God said and promised. Now, in the New Testament, it is by believing in Christ as our only way of salvation (John 6:40).

- 4) In the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed. It is not revealed by the law because all the law does is to expose sin (Romans 3:21-22, 7:7-14, 10:3-5) This is very important since the Jews trusted in their own righteousness, produced by their keeping of the law, as the basis for a relationship with God. Paul attacks this in Philippians 3:4-11 where he writes:

Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

Paul was not trusting in his own righteousness, he was trusting in the righteousness of God.

- 5). When one believes the message of the Gospel by faith, they are given the righteousness of God which results in a life of faith. The phrase

"revealed from faith to faith" could just as well be rendered "revealed by faith unto faith." Faith in the gospel produces a life of faith for the believer (2 Corinthians 5:8).

- 6) The just shall live by faith. We are not justified by our own merit, we are justified by Christ's merit. We receive the righteousness of God through faith alone, not works.

This phrase is taken from Habakkuk 2:4 where it originally states, "the just shall live by his faith." It appears two other times in the New Testament, once in Galatians 3:11 and once in Hebrews 10:37-38. It is interesting to note that in Galatians 3:11 the emphasis is on "the just", in Romans 1:17 on "shall live", and in Hebrews 10:37-38 on "by faith." We are justified by faith and we live by faith. Ours is a life of faith.

II. The Universal State of Man

Before Paul presents the good news of salvation by faith alone, he presents the bad news, that of the total depravity of the human race. In this particular section, Romans 1:18-32, Paul presents the case against what could be called the "heathen" races, those races that have no direct revelation of God. In this section we see the universal condemnation of the heathen, the descent of man from God to despair, the fixative judgment of God on unrepentant sin, and the ultimate depths of sin.

A. The Universal Condemnation of the Heathen - Romans 1:18-20

Paul begins his condemnation of the human race with the heathen man. This is the man who has no direct revelation of who God is and what he is like. Many would like to think that this man would not be condemned by God. They would like to think that because this man is ignorant of God and his requirements, he would never be condemned to eternal hell.

Paul takes issue with this. He does this by arguing that just because a man does not have direct revelation regarding God and his nature, he does have indirect knowledge through the wonders of the creation. The knowledge of creation and the implied existence of a creator is in and of itself enough to condemn men.

We need to make an important point at this juncture. That is, God always holds men responsible for the light that they have. It is true that men in a society such as America have more opportunities to learn about God, but it is also true that men everywhere can know something regarding God. It is the nature of God to reveal himself. Nowhere in scripture do we find God hiding himself from men except in the case of divine judgment where he gives them over to their sin (see Romans 1:28). In fact, if a man will live up to the light he has, God will give him more light. There are endless stories from the mission fields regarding heathen men who desired to know the true God and were eventually led to Christ through many supernatural circumstances. Men are responsible, everywhere.

Romans 1:18-20

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God

hath showed [it] unto them. 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:

Before explaining these two verses, we need to take note of some words. First, the wrath of God (Greek *orgay*), is a concept referred to many times in the Bible. Basically, the wrath of God is his holy reaction to sin. In other words, just as God is love, God is also wrath. It is one of his innate attributes of being. The wrath of God is grounded in His holiness, is demanded by His righteousness, is compatible with His justice, and is the opposite of His love.

Often we find the term "the wrath", that is, wrath with the definite article. In analyzing this term, we find that this refers to the ultimate reaction that God has against sin which results in the eternal condemnation of the sinner. Note the following verses:

Matthew 3:7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Romans 2:5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

Romans 5:9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from [the] wrath through him.

Colossians 3:6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

1 Thessalonians 1:10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, [even] Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

Revelation 6:16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

Revelation 14:10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

Revelation 14:19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast [it] into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

Revelation 19:15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of

iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and [the] wrath of Almighty God.

The wrath of God is "revealed." The word revealed is the Greek word *apokulypto* from which we get apocalypse. Additionally, it is in the present tense which translates to "constantly being revealed." It is not something that has been revealed, it is always in the process of being revealed. As one studies the Scriptures, we find that it is revealed in at least three ways:

1. The wrath of God is revealed passively in moral and physical laws. For example, sexually transmitted diseases is one way in which God's wrath is revealed. Lung cancer and cirrhosis of the liver are others. In the physical realm, the wrath of God is revealed in the general operation of physical laws.
2. The wrath of God is revealed actively in special acts of judgment. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha and the captivity of Israel are good examples of this aspect of God's judgment.

Psalms 7:11 God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.

3. Finally, the wrath of God was poured out on Christ at the cross. It is because of that outpouring of wrath on Christ that we will be delivered from God's wrath in the future.

The reason for this revelation of wrath is the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. The word "ungodliness" is *aseibeia* and refers to a lack of reverence for God Himself. It could be rendered impious. The word "unrighteousness" is *adikaos* and refers to a disregard for God's moral requirements, a violation of His law. Paul's point is that man is doubly deserving of God's wrath. He is deserving because of his wrong view of God, and he is deserving because of his lack of regard for God's laws.

The word "hold", *katarcho* carries the idea of "suppress." In 2 Thessalonians 4:6 it is used to express the idea of restraining. Men suppress the truth in their unrighteous activities! With this little word study we can better render verse 18 as:

For the wrath (judgment) of God is constantly being revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who are suppressing the truth in unrighteousness.

Verse 18 gives the cause of condemnation, verses 19 and 20 give the reason. Because that which may be known of God is manifest (evident) in them because God has shown it unto them. In other words, the very existence of God is a given with men. The only way around this inward-knowledge is to sear one's conscience against the idea of God.

The message of verse 20 is that God has revealed himself in creation. The word "Godhead" is *theiotes*. This is in distinction to *theotes*. *Theiotes* refers to the revelation of God's existence through His awesome power. *Theotes* refers to His nature. This is the word used in Colossians 2:9 in which Paul writes that in Christ the fullness of deity (*theotes*) dwells bodily. This

distinction is important since all we can know from nature is that God exists, to know His nature requires further revelation. God reveals His power in creation, His nature in Christ. This is the same thought David expressed in Psalm 19. In that Psalm we see the revelation of God (*theiotes*) in creation in verses 1-6, and the revelation of His character (*theotes*) in His law in verses 7-11. The writer of Hebrews completes the thought when he began his book with the following words:

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

In other words, the complete revelation of God's character is found in Christ. This thought is expressed by Christ Himself in John 14:9:

Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?

This is the primary reason the heathen are without excuse. Verse 20 states that God has revealed His eternal power (creative power) and Godhead (existence). Any man can look at creation and see that there has to be a power behind it. This fact, the existence of God as evidenced by creation, is sufficient cause to condemn men. If men will live up to the light as revealed by God in creation, then God will give men more light. However, when men actively suppress the light they have, God is under no obligation to reveal more of Himself.

B. The Descent of Man - Romans 1:21-25

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [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, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

These five verses depict the descent of man from the knowledge of the true God to the pit of despair. One of the biggest lies being taught in universities today is the evolution of religion. This theory states that religion developed over periods of time from primitive polytheism and animism to sophisticated monotheism. It teaches that religion began as a set of superstitions, developed supernatural causes for unexplained natural phenomena, theorized the existence of demons, then the gods of polytheism ultimately winding up in monotheism. This theory directly contradicts the revelation of scripture. Man started out with a perfect understanding of who God was and what God desired. Because man did not want to obey God, he descended from monotheism to polytheism to demonism to heathenism. Man is not reaching up to God, he is descending from God to darkness. Note the descent of man as described by this text.

1. Man knew God but did not glorify him as God (verse 21).

In Genesis we find that Cain knew God. In fact, God talked with Cain. However, because Cain did not glorify God, that is, obey God, Cain went out of the presence of God and begat a godless race that was ultimately destroyed by the flood. This verse directly contradicts the "evolution of religion" hypothesis. Man started out with a perfect knowledge of God and has been going downhill ever since.

The word "know" here is *ginosko* which refers to an experiential knowledge. This knowledge of God is based on His revelation in nature, as described in the preceding verses. However, even though men knew God, they did not glorify Him as God. To glorify God is to reflect His attributes, such as His eternal power and Godhead. Men did not do that, and in doing so, they violated the very purpose of their creation (Revelation 4:11).

2. Men became unthankful (verse 21).

We need to realize that everything we have and touch is a gift from God. By refusing to recognize the God that was, man became unthankful. This is especially heinous considering the fact that all things enjoyed by man have as their source God. When God is removed, man becomes ungrateful since there is no one to be grateful to for the many blessings enjoyed by men.

3. Men became vain in their imaginations (verse 21).

The word "vain", *maitaios*, carries the idea of empty, fruitless, without purpose. Imaginations is *dialogia*, inner musings or thoughts. When God is removed, men no longer have a reason for existence. The very questions posed by philosophers through the ages, "Why am I here", "Who am I", and "What is my purpose for existence" become unanswerable when God no longer exists in the mind of men. We become nothing more than a random collection of atoms, or as one man put it, a pile of protoplasm on its way to becoming manure. God is the answer for all questions regarding the existence and purposed of men, and only when men recognize the existence of God does life begin to make sense.

4. Men's hearts became darkened (verse 21).

When the true God is rejected, spiritual darkness is not far away. Paul, in Ephesians 4:17-18 writes:

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

Furthermore, this darkness is exacerbated by Satan. We read in 2 Corinthians 4:3-4:

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

In these verses we find that men without God live in the vanity (same word as verse 21) of their mind and have their understanding darkened. This is the natural consequence of a rejection of God, since we read in Proverbs 1:7 and Job 28:28 that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Without a proper fear, that is, reverential awe and respect for God because of Who He is, man cannot know any truth regarding life.

5. Men became fools even though they professed to be wise (verse 22).

A good look at any modern university campus will demonstrate this. It seems the acclaimed intelligence of modern intellectuals is directly proportional to the number of questions and the amount of mud they can raise to obscure the real issues. The greatest philosophers are those who come up with the most unanswerable questions.

The word "wise" is *sophos*, and refers to a proper understanding of God's moral requirements for life as well as the ability to abide by those requirements in daily conduct. Man without God cannot please God since He cannot know nor follow God's moral requirements. Instead he becomes a fool, *moraino*, from which we get "moron." We are reminded of what David said in Psalm 14:1:

The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.

When a man rejects the reality of God's existence, he is a fool in the purest sense of the word.

6. Men exchanged the incorruptible God for a corruptible idol (verse 23).

This list consists of some of the prevalent idols of Paul's day. Aescalapeus, the God of healing worshiped by the Greeks, was personified by a snake. The Egyptians worshiped snakes and scarab beetles. The Romans worshiped birds, most prevalently, the eagle. This exchange, that of the glory of God for idols, is seen in the following two verses (their glory is a reference to God):

Psalms 106:20 Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.

Jeremiah 2:11 Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit.

The sad truth is that men make this exchange, swapping the infinite glory of God for some idol.

7. God gave men up to uncleanness (verse 24).

The word "uncleanness" is *akatharsia*, and is used to refer to the contents of a grave (Matthew 23:27). Figuratively, it is used in the New Testament to refer to sexual immorality (Romans 6:19, 2 Corinthians 12:21, Galatians 5:19, Ephesians 4:19, 5:3, Colossians 3:5, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7). Once the true God is rejected, men need not worry about giving an account for their actions.

Without the fear of judgment, men become evil. (Paul lists specific evils in verses 29 through 31). It is interesting to note that as any civilization moves farther and farther from the truths of scripture, evil becomes more and more rampant.

The word "gave up" is an interesting word. It is *paradidomi*, and refers to the act of giving something or someone over to another's control. Note some of its uses in the following verses:

Matthew 4:12 Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;

Matthew 10:17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

Matthew 17:22 And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men:

Matthew 18:34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

Matthew 24:9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

Romans 4:25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

Romans 8:32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

The key idea here is that God gives many over to the lusts of his own heart in the sense that those lusts are men's captor. The word "lusts" is *epithumea*, and refers to a passionate desire for some forbidden pleasure. "Heart" is the word *kardias*, and refers to the inner wellspring of man's emotions, desires, and will. Proverbs 4:23 tells us to keep our hearts with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life. Christ tells us in Matthew 15:18-19 that it is from the heart that murder, adultery, and other sin comes. When a man rejects the truth of God, they are given over to their darkened heart, and become a slave to their own inner passions (Romans 6:16, 6:19).

One special result of this lust is sexual immorality. Mark it down, where God is rejected, immorality results. The dishonoring in this verse can refer to adultery and fornication, but it is probably a reference to homosexuality, which will be dealt with in a few verses.

8. Man exchanged the truth of God for the lie (verse 25).

God is truth, everything else is a lie. However, it is probably best to see "the lie" here as a reference to the first lie spoken by Satan in the Garden, "ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil." When men reject the truth of God, they are left with nothing but falsehood. Satan does not traffic in truth, but in lies since he was a liar from the beginning and is the father of liars (John 8:44). On the other hand, God is truth, and God as personified in the person of Christ is "the truth" (John 14:6).

9. Men worship the creation rather than the creator (verse 25).

The word "creature" is *ktisis*, and refers to a created thing. Every God in existence today, including man, is part of the creation of God. This is the final pit, the moral end when the truth of God is rejected.

This is especially seen in the New Age movement today, where God is rejected and creation is deified. Men need to understand that God is both immanent and transcendent. He is immanent (personally involved) in creation and transcendent (above and beyond creation). Worshiping creation is not worshiping God.

The word used for "worship" is *sebaozomai*, and refers to the attitude of reverence and adoration. "Serve" is *latreuo*, and refers to a cultic type of service to a deity. Men worship and serve creation rather than the creator of all things.

C. The Fixative Judgment of God - Romans 1:26-28

For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change 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 recompense of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

These three verses reveal what could be called "the fixative judgment of God." When men persist in a life of evil there comes a point at which God's grace ends. At that point, men are eternally doomed even though they may still be alive.

This is a terrifying concept. In the account of Moses and Pharaoh there came a time at which Pharaoh was given over to unbelief by God. Judas, who walked with the Lord for over three years, walked out of the presence of God the night of the passover and was eternally doomed even though he lived to betray the Lord. Men who know the truth and reject it time and time again one day find that they cannot accept the truth.

Romans 1:26-27

This verse continues describing the giving over of men to the results of their sin. The word for "affections" is *pathe*, and refers to an intense emotional condition. This differs from the *epithumea* of verse 24 in which the emotion itself is in view. In other words, this is a step down from verse 24. God gives

men over to their lusts, and then over to the vile condition which causes that lust.

It is interesting to see that Paul uses the little word "even" in this verse as an exclamation of just how bad men have become, "even their women!" The sexual perversion has reached such a depth that even the women became corrupted. The word "change" is our familiar *metallaso*, which literally means "to exchange." Instead of a woman becoming the natural object of sexual attraction for a man, it has become other men. We need to realize that our sexual desires are a natural and God-ordained part of our existence, and that God has designed sexuality in order to be enjoyed between a man and a woman in marriage. However, Satan always perverts what God creates, and it is that perversion that is in view here.

This perversion is intensified by the use of *arsen* (males) and *thaleias* (females). Paul is emphasizing the maleness and femaleness of men in order to highlight that the perversion is something which is against nature. Only men descend to homosexuality, it is a condition that is not found in the natural world.

In developing the concept of the fixative judgment of God, Paul uses the example of homosexuality. By denying the truth, man became subject to gross evil and immorality. Contrary to what many are saying today, homosexuality is not an "alternate lifestyle", it is a heinous sin against the Creator. Homosexuality is always connected with the deepest levels of immorality. In Genesis 19 we find the account of the destruction of Sodom. When the angels appeared to Lot, the men of the city encircled his house and demanded the release of the angels so that "we may know them." The word know refers to sexual intimacy. When they were consequently struck by blindness, they wearied themselves to find the door! It would seem they would be filled with fear and terror, but the Bible indicates their lust was so great nothing would stand in the way of it's satisfaction. Let us understand that homosexuality is a perversion of the God-given sexuality of man and is a result of the rejection of the truth and the substitute of a lie.

The depth of this perversion is seen in verse 27 by the use of the word "burned" which is *exekauthasan*, and means "to intensely burn out." Homosexual passions are some of the most intense imaginable, in fact, they go beyond the intensity of the passion between heterosexuals. Some of the most violent crimes of passion are found in the homosexual community.

What does God say about homosexuality? Is it just an alternate lifestyle or is it sin? Note the following references in addition to Genesis 19:

Leviticus 20:13 If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

"abusers of themselves with mankind" is *arsenokoitai*, "to have intercourse with a man" and refers to homosexuals.

1 Timothy 1:10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

"defile themselves with mankind" is again *arsenokoitai*.

Jude 1:7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

I think that the Scriptures are abundantly clear that homosexuality is a sin of massive proportions. It violates that natural order and is a perversion and inversion of God's original design.

Romans 1:28

Verse 28 gives the final reaction of God to those who constantly deny the truth. Because man not only denies the existence of God, denies his creation, denies his truth, and denies his existence, God gives man over to a reprobate mind.

There is an interesting word play in the Greek text of this verse. The phrase "did not retain" is *adokimos* and literally means "disapproved." It is the same word as that translated "reprobate." In other words, because man disapproved of God in his mind, God gave man over to a disapproved mind. The word "mind", *nous*, refers to the reason and conscience. In other words, a reprobate mind is one that has lost the ability to reason and has lost the capacity for moral judgment. Those who have a reprobate mind commit the most heinous sins with no thought of remorse since they have no capacity to determine right and wrong. That is why men do that which is not "convenient." The word "convenient" may be better rendered "appropriate" or "fitting." In other words, the things that man should do, he does not, and those things he should not do, he does.

D. The Ultimate Depths of Sin - Romans 1:29-32

Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: 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.

These three verses give us a vivid description of the state of men who reject the truth of God.

1. Unrighteousness (*adikia*)

Unrighteousness is the opposite of justice. Men rob God and fellow men of their rights. The word prior to this, filled, means to be completely full.

2. Fornication (*porneia*)

Fornication refers to any and all categories of sexual perversion. This is a general term used to encompass all forms of sexual perversion, fornication, adultery, bestiality, homosexuality, incest, and any others that men may dream up.

3. Wickedness (*ponaria*)

Wickedness is the evil that desires not only to be bad, but to inflict harm and injury to others. It is not content unless others suffer. Satan is often called the *ponaros*, or "wicked one." He is not content in his own wickedness. He wants to see others wicked as well.

Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Matthew 13:19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

4. Covetousness (*pleonexia*)

Covetousness is the desire to get that knows no limits. It is the kind of evil that demands fulfillment at any cost. It describes the man who rapes without thought of the injury or harm of the woman. It is the desire to have that kills anyone who poses a threat.

Ephesians 5:3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

Colossians 3:5 (Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

2 Peter 2:3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

5. Maliciousness (*kakia*)

Maliciousness is the utter lack of any good. It is used to speak of something that is utterly destitute of any good quality.

1 Peter 2:1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

Colossians 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

6. Envy (*phthonos*)

Envy is that sin which holds grudges against anyone who has something we don't.

1 Peter 2:1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

Galatians 5:21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

7. Murder (*phonos*)

Murder is the taking of life. However, we must also bear in mind that Jesus stated that hating ones brother without cause is murder.

8. Strife (*eris*)

Strife refers to a man that is contentious. This is the opposite of peacemaking.

1 Corinthians 1:11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

1 Corinthians 3:3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

Galatians 5:20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

9. Deceit (*dolos*)

Deceit refers to that sin which manifests itself in twisted motives. It describes the man who does nothing without some ulterior motive.

1 Peter 2:1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

1 Peter 2:22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

10. Malignity (*kakoetheia*) - hapax legomena

Malignity refers to the sin that always ascribes the worst possible meaning to something. It sees the good in nothing.

11. Whisperers (*psithuristes*)

Whispering is that sin of gossip which seeks to destroy the character of others.

2 Corinthians 12:20 For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

12. Backbiters (*katalalos*)

Whereas whispering is one-on-one, backbiting is done openly. It is the loud trumpeting of the faults of others without any concern for their character or dignity.

2 Corinthians 12:20 For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

1 Peter 2:1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

13. Haters of God (*theosturgies*) - *hapax legomena*

This word comes from the Greek words *theos* and *storgay*, "God" and "family love." It is the sin of one who would gladly eliminate God since God is the barrier between himself and greater sin.

14. Despiteful (*hubristes*)

This word carries two meanings. The first is that of defiance against God. It is the sin of one who not only knows he is offending God, but dares God to do anything about it. The second meaning is that of arrogance and cruelty. It is the man who hurts others for the mere pleasure of it.

1 Timothy 1:13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

15. Proud (*huperephanos*)

Pride is the sin which knows of no one else by self. It describes the man who looks with contempt on others.

2 Timothy 3:2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

16. Boasters (*alazon*)

Boasting is that sin which pretends to have does not. The Greek word *alazon* was often used to refer to wandering "quacks" who promised cures for diseases but could not heal. This is the sin of those who promise, but never deliver.

2 Timothy 3:2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

17. Inventors of Evil (*epheuretes kakon*)

This describes the man who spends time devising new forms of evil for the mere pleasure of it.

18. Disobedient to Parents (*goneusin apeitheis*)

This refers to those who disobey parental authority. It is interesting to note that the penalty for disobedience to parents was death in the Old Testament.

19. Without Understanding (*asunetos*)

This is the man who is a fool, who disregards sense and reason.

Romans 1:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

20. Covenantbreakers (*asunthetos*) - *hapax legomena*

This is the sin of those who make promises and never keep them.

21. Without natural affection (*astorges*)

This is the sin of those who disregard the love of home and family. It is the sin of men who walk out on their wives and children without looking back.

2 Timothy 3:3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

22. Implacable (*aspondous*)

This describes the man who refuses to be reconciled to others. It refers to those who hold grudges without any desire for reconciliation.

2 Timothy 3:3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

23. Unmerciful (*aneelemon*) - *hapax legomena*

This refers to the man who has not pity or concern for those less fortunate than himself.

Verse 32 is the capstone to the condemnation of men. Not only do they know that men who commit such evils are worthy of the judgment of God, they take pleasure in men who do such evil. It is not enough to commit evil, men need to urge and encourage others to sin.

Man is truly without excuse.