

In step with Jesus 161

July 20, 2025

KEY TEXT: The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. ² Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. (Psalm 19: 1-2)

Introduction

Last week we started reading Romans chapter one. Being the first chapter of Romans, Paul set the stage for his upcoming discussions. He introduced himself as a preacher of the old-time gospel which had come alive in Jesus Christ. He declared the richness of the grace of God and the power of the gospel. He explained that the gospel is received by faith, and that faith works by love and leads to obedience. He affirmed that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes, whether they be Jews and Greek. Paul also mentioned that the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel and that those who receive the gospel grow from faith to faith and that the just shall live by faith. Having established the richness of God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ, Paul also wanted his audience to understand the wrath of God against unrighteousness and what God had saved them from. His message to the Romans is also a message for us today. If we understand his message, we shall live in continual praise to God for what He has done for us. Let us read Romans 1: 18-32 and see what great deliverance we have received in Jesus Christ.

Romans 1:18 – 32

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

26 For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; 27 and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due

penalty for their error. 28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. 29 They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. 32 Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

REFLECTIONS

In the text we read, Paul reveals the depraved human condition which is a result of rejecting God. He points out that God has revealed the truth about Himself as the creator in the works of nature, not just to the Jews but to the whole world. Even without the scriptures, creation reveals God's divinity, infinite wisdom, great power, and legitimate right to our worship and obedience. Thus, ignorance of the scriptures is not an excuse for not acknowledging God or not giving thanks to Him as the creator. Humanity's rejection and disobedience to God is by choice, and every choice to disobey the law of God as revealed in nature suppresses the truth about God and debases humanity. By disobedience to God's revealed will in nature, humans separate themselves from the source of their identity as sons and daughters of God. Thus, they degenerate from self-conceit to self-destruction.

Refusing to worship God, human beings worship worthless idols, and they eventually become as worthless as the idols they worship. Psalm 115:4 -8 gives us an insight into the condition of idol worshippers. The Psalmist says "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. 5 They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see. 6 They have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell. 7 They have hands, but do not feel; feet, but do not walk; and they do not make a sound in their throat. 8 Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them." In other words, spiritually, those who reject God to worship idols of any form, whether it be images of silver and gold or money, jobs, sports or fame, will become like idols. They will be spiritually dumb, blind, deaf, paralyzed and lame; a condition of total helplessness and dependence on someone else. In the case of those who reject God, they become totally dependent and controlled by Satan who leads them to all kinds of vices against God and fellow humans and eventually leads them to destroy themselves. It is from this depraved human nature, this state of total spiritual paralysis, blindness, deafness, dumbness and total dependence on Satan's control that the grace of God, through the gospel has saved us. Praise God! Hallelujah! Christ has lifted us above the control of Satan, now we are free in Christ. Our eyes, ears, and mouth are open. We can perceive and discern spiritual things, and we can walk with Jesus. This is the truth of the gospel. We must believe this, and it shall be well with us and the generations that will come after us. Amen.