



God's Solution to the World's Problems **Romans 1:16-32**

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 (Romans 1:21—KJV).

For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened (Romans 1:21—NASB).

For though they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their senseless minds were darkened (Romans 1:21—NRSV).

Paul described some of the consequences for people who refuse to glorify God as God and thank God. These consequences consist of enslavement to godless and wicked practices, which includes inventing evils, hating God, and unnatural behaviors. As unbelievers rebel against God, they become futile in their thinking; therefore, they make foolish choices. They “suppress the truth” in order to keep the truth from influencing their behaviors (Romans 1:18). When they darken their hearts, they lose the light of understanding and their actions become more destructive. Because they have destroyed their understanding, their reasoning is worthless. Unbelievers claim to be wise, but they become fools (Romans 1:22). Paul wrote that those who turn from God eventually become “foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless,” which explains the behavior of many today as we read about them in newspapers or see them on television (Romans 1:31). Many countries suffer increasingly from wicked and godless leaders

and people, from those who have no understanding and whose thinking is useless. Therefore, some search for suggestions they hope will change their situations, but they ignore the only solution that will work. The majority have turned from the solution that is the theme of Paul's Letter to the Romans. The only solution is the gospel of Jesus Christ which Paul was not ashamed to preach. The good news of Jesus' life, sacrificial death, and resurrection from the dead has redeemed people, cultures, societies, and nations, because the good news of Jesus Christ is: "the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16).

Thinking Further

1. Give Paul's reason for not being ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Can you adopt that same reason for not being ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ?
2. How did Paul prove people need the gospel?
3. Toward whom does God express His wrath?
4. What might some of the consequences be in a culture or country where almost all of the leaders are godless and wicked?
5. What might you say to someone who said, "To sin is natural"?