

MAN'S PATH TO WRATH
PART 1-THE FIRST STEP
ROMANS 1:18-23

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Introduction

Man's history **does not** indicate any degree of evolution, but it does declare a **sordid record of revolution!** Revolution against God and His Authority!

Adam and Eve's partaking of the fruit of the forbidden tree in Genesis 3 was a revolution against God and His Authority in Genesis 2:16-17!

Genesis 2:16-17 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

They spurned the grace of God that allowed them to eat of all the other trees in the garden to partake of the one thing that God said don't eat! They spurned the tree of life for the tree of knowledge of good and evil!

That revolution against God and His Authority was passed down to Adam's seed! Their firstborn "*Cain*" ignored God's requirement of a blood sacrifice and then wanted to get mad at his brother and God for his rebellious attitude!

By the time of Noah things had spiraled downward into darkness such "*that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually!*"

God destroyed the whole world except Noah and the members of his family. Eight souls saved by God's grace! **But the revolution against God and His Authority did not cease and it continued until the time that the Lord Jesus Christ, the very Son of God came to this earth!**

Even then mankind did not change, but in rebellion against God and His Authority rejected God's Son and nailed the only perfect, sinless human being to ever be born into this world to a tree! **And so the revolution against God and His Authority has continued until this time as both the Bible and history so vividly records! And the revolution will continue until that time when the Lord Jesus Christ comes back to stamp it out!**

The Bible shows here in our text what I'll call, **Man's Path To Wrath!**

A downward spiral of sin that leads from the rejection of God's revelation of Himself, to a step by step descent into further darkness and further wrath from God and eventually to destruction!

Unfortunately, we can trace this downward spiral and its effects in our own dear country! We have seen and are seeing more and more of the awful results of a downward spiral of apostasy in our land!

These steps are the cause of God's wrath being revealed from Heaven!
(Let's read our Text—Romans 1:18-23)

I. THE BEGINNING POINT—MAN'S KNOWLEDGE OF GOD!
(Vs 21a) "Because that, when they knew God..."

Now this does not mean that man had a **personal or intimate knowledge of God!** It means that **they knew God in ways that God has revealed Himself and they have witnessed God's power!**

Scripture everywhere teaches that **man had a primitive revelation of God and departed from it.** The fall of man in the Garden of Eden was a **fall away from a knowledge of God!** It was also a **fall away from fellowship with God!**

(Vs 18) Paul contends here that **all men**, including the heathen **have had some knowledge of God revealed to them** and yet **they hold or suppress the truth of His righteousness!** They are and remain ungodly and unrighteous!

Furthermore, God is justified in revealing His wrath against these ungodly and unrighteous because **they hold or suppress the truth revealed to them!**

Some may say, **well how has God revealed Himself to man?**

A. God Has Revealed Himself In The Conscience Of Man!
(Vs 19a) Man intuitively knows of God's existence, for "*that which may be known of God is manifest in them.*"
Being made in God's image, man universally has **innate awareness of the Creator's existence—i.e. A God**

**MAN'S PATH TO WRATH
PART 1-THE FIRST STEP
ROMANS 1:18-23**

consciousness, if you will! But this does not give a personal knowledge of the Creator!

Many missionaries have pointed out that even the heathen know more than we might think they know:

1. They know that there is a God!
2. There are no atheists among heathen tribes!
Isn't it strange how man gets all educated in the humanistic educational institutions and comes up with a foolish idea that there is no God! He denies what God has put in Him! That's why the Bible calls him a fool!
3. There has never been discovered upon earth a tribe of people, however small or depraved, which has not believed in some kind of god or had some system of worship!
4. Furthermore, the heathen who are found in these so-called primitive tribes know that they have sinned! When a Christian comes to them and talks about sin, he often finds ready acknowledgment that this is true!
5. And also, the heathen seem to know that their sins must be punished! They seem afraid of punishment, and afraid of death (as are most men everywhere)!

They know that sin must be atoned for, and so they seek for ways of appeasing their angry god or gods!

God Has Revealed Himself In The Conscience Of Man!

B. God Has Revealed Himself In The Creation Of The Universe! (Vs 20)

**MAN'S PATH TO WRATH
PART 1-THE FIRST STEP
ROMANS 1:18-23**

(e.g.: The series "Unlocking The Mysteries Of Genesis" by The Institute For Creation Research.)

Job 12:7-9- "But ask the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee. Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?"

The psalmist wrote in *Psalms 19:1-3- "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard"*

Although God is invisible, the qualities of His nature *"are clearly seen."* **Everything in the universe that people can perceive with their senses has the mark of God upon it and bears witness to His power and Deity!**

The whole of Creation brings forth a sense of wonder and awe, as well as a basic idea of God and His righteousness.

That's why the Bible says, *Psalms 14:1- "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."*

Understand that **God's revelation of Himself was for the purpose of removing from man all possible excuse for ignorance of God!**

A Conscience and the Creation...are something all men have!
Therefore MAN IS WITHOUT EXCUSE!

C. God Has Revealed Himself In The Christ Of Glory! (Vs 16)
Both the Bible and History tell us of the historical person of Jesus Christ!

**MAN'S PATH TO WRATH
PART 1-THE FIRST STEP
ROMANS 1:18-23**

The Bible teaches that Jesus was God in the flesh!

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John 5:18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

John 8:58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

Hebrews 1:1-3 1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 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; 3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

John 1:18 "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (i.e. "made Him known" or "revealed Him.")

John 14:9 ...he that hath seen me hath seen the Father..."

John 3:19—"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

**MAN'S PATH TO WRATH
PART 1-THE FIRST STEP
ROMANS 1:18-23**

D. God Has Revealed Himself In The Canon Of Scripture!
The whole of Scripture is now at our disposal for us **to know God's problem with man and man's sin and for a man to know his destiny because of his sin! And how Christ can change His destiny by grace through faith!**

We can know God's purposes and His plans throughout history because God has given it to us in Redemption's story recorded in the pages of Scripture!

And we can learn of the Christ of Glory Whom God revealed Himself in! (We can find out **ALL** that we need to know about **ALL** that God wants us to know!)

2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

*THE BEGINNING POINT—MAN'S KNOWLEDGE OF GOD!
(Vs 21a) "Because that, when they knew God..."*

II. THE FIRST STEP DOWNWARD—TO FAIL TO GLORIFY GOD! "...they glorified him not as God..."

To have a knowledge of God, and yet to fail to give Him the proper place in our thinking and our lives is the first step downward in the **PATH TO WRATH!**

So what does it mean to fail to glorify God?

A. No Proper Acknowledgment Of God!

Psalms 86:9-10 9 All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name. 10 For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone.

What was Adam and Eve's problem? They didn't properly acknowledge God!

B. No Proper Praise Of God!

MAN'S PATH TO WRATH
PART 1-THE FIRST STEP
ROMANS 1:18-23

Psalm 50:23--“Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God.”

C. No Proper Worship Of God!

John 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

D. No Proper Fear Of God!

Revelation 15:4--“Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.”

To fail to glorify God is to assume a negative attitude toward God!
(Example: Eve took Satan's side when she disobeyed God!)

Conclusion

We've only just begun with man's first step downward and already he is plunged into the darkness of sin...and the wrath of God is already revealed from heaven because of it! (He's already under the condemnation of God! The very wrath of God abides on him!)

Are you under God's wrath in your life and soul as an individual?

John 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

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.

GET OFF OF THE PATH TO WRATH!