

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 11-1-09 PM NOTES  
"SUBSTITUTING SNAKES AND BUGS FOR THE TRUE GOD"  
ROMANS 1:21-23  
#9 in Series, "Verse by Verse through Romans"

"Research suggests that the tribes are not animistic because they have continued unchanged since the dawn of history. Rather, the evidence indicates degeneration from a true knowledge of God."

—Robert Brow

I. Deliberate Unbelief (v. 21)

"One reason the theory of evolution has such a hypnotic effect on the mind of modern man, despite its shortcomings and continued 'missing links,' is that it gives man a working hypothesis for atheism. The unbeliever can 'explain' the universe in terms of natural causes. The theory is plausible enough to convince those who wish to be convinced."

—John Phillips

"I refuse to believe in God, so what other alternative do I have but evolution?"

—An Evolutionist

A. A Failure to Glorify God (v. 21a)

B. A Failure to Thank God (v. 21b)

**James 1:17 (NKJV)** "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning."

**Matthew 5:45 (NKJV)** "that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."

**Psalms 100:4 (NKJV)** "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, *and* into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, *and* bless His name."

"Returning thanks for blessings already received increases our faith and enables us to approach God with new boldness and new assurance. Doubtless the reason so many have so little faith when they pray is because they take so little time to meditate upon and thank God for blessings already received. As one meditates upon the answers to prayer already granted, faith waxes bolder and bolder, and we come to feel in the very depths of our souls that there is nothing too hard for the Lord."

—Dr. R. A. Torrey

II. Downward Spiral (vv. 21, 22)

A. Depraved Thoughts (v. 21c)

“The problem with man is not so much a lack of knowledge of God, as it is a refusal to acknowledge God, which at the bottom line is a question of moral honesty and integrity. Paul is saying that man begins his intellectual quest by refusing to acknowledge what he knows is true. That is what provokes God to anger...it should not surprise us that brilliant thinkers compose very intricate, complex systems of philosophical thought that rise up in opposition against the character of God.”

—R. C. Sproul

B. Darkened Hearts (v. 21d)

**Romans 1:24 (NKJV)** “Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the **lusts of their hearts**, to dishonor their bodies among themselves.”

**Romans 10:6 (NKJV)** “But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, ‘Do not **say in your heart**, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*).”

**Romans 2:5 (NKJV)** “But in accordance with your hardness and your **impenitent heart** you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.”

C. Deceived Assessment (v. 22)

Wise—“sophoi”

Fool—“moraino”

“So atheism and agnosticism are not merely defective theories that need to be corrected by further study and more information. They are sin for which men are called to repent because God has made Himself known to them.”

—R. C. Sproul

**Psalms 111:10 (NKJV)** “The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do *His commandments*. His praise endures forever.”

III. Depraved Religion (v. 23)

**Genesis 3:5 (NKJV)** “For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, **and you will be like God**, knowing good and evil.”

“God created man in His own image and man returned the favor.”

—Voltaire