

Chapter Fifteen  
Studies in the Epistle of Paul to the Romans  
Three Responses of Lost Mankind to God's Two Witnesses

<sup>21</sup> 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. <sup>22</sup> Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> 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. <sup>24</sup> Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: <sup>25</sup> 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” (Romans 1:21-25).

When individuals deny the existence of the God of the Bible (this does not mean they deny the existence of *a* god), God will begin to give them over into His wrath even in this life. When a society begins to deny the existence of the God of the Bible (absolute and righteous), the things listed in these verses will be more and more prevalent in that society until they dominate it.

In the mid 1960's, Romans 1:21-32 began to happen in the U.S.A. Today we live in the period of history commonly referred to as the Post Christian Era. Christianity is no longer the positive restraining force it once was. Every few years a new generation of liberals graduates into our society. Generation after generation has been over-run by the lumbering bandwagon of pseudo- intellectualism called secular humanism. Across it sides (scribbled in crayon) is a banner proclaiming “God is dead.”

That is not a true statement. God is not dead. However, it does accurately state their goal. The goal of secular humanism is to kill the very idea of God. The goal of secular humanism is to totally eradicate every moral absolute from the face of the earth and replace them with their own (political correctness). This is the religion of the Antichrist which will ultimately become the Satanocracy that will govern the whole world. This is a broad movement touching all religions, governments and the economics of every nation in the world. In religion it is Ecumenicism especially the union of Roman Catholicism and Islam. In government it is Marxist Re-constructionism (Fabian socialism). In economics it is John Maynard Keynes' Economic Socialism. Put them all together and we have the Satanocracy.

<sup>7</sup> For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. <sup>8</sup> Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. <sup>9</sup> Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. <sup>10</sup> If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: <sup>11</sup> For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (II John 1:7-11).

**The first major step into apostasy is to deny God's existence. The result is, “There foolish heart was darkened” (Romans 1:21).**

“The fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: *there is* none that doeth good” (Psalm 53:1).

God says the person who denies His existence is a fool. Mark that person down as a fool. Regardless of how many degrees he has or how important he is. Mark it down. He is a fool. What is the cause of their hearts being darkened? “When they knew God, (through the two witnesses of verse 19-20) they glorified Him not as God.”

“Glorified” is from the Greek word *doxazo* (dox-ad'-zo), which means to cause the dignity and worth of some person or thing to become manifest and acknowledged. Even though there are these two overwhelming internal and external witnesses to the existence of God, the first step toward apostasy (reprobation) is to deny these witnesses and refuse to acknowledge God’s existence.

Therefore (because God’s existence is denied) “neither were they thankful.” Obviously, when people deny God’s existence they will not be grateful for Who God is or what He does to give them life and its provisions. When people deny God’s existence, they reduce themselves to just another animal. However, even some animals are more grateful to their masters than a human who denies the existence of God.

Another step toward apostasy is “they became vain in their imaginations.” Before God can be explained away, alternatives to Creation must be established. The word “vain” is translated from the Greek word *mataioo* (mat-ah-yo'-o) meaning foolish or empty of truth. “Imaginations” is from the Greek word *dialogismos* (dee-al-og-is-mos'), which refers to the inward reasoning of a person as he deliberates and questions what is true.

**The second major step toward apostasy by those who deny God’s existence is, “Professing themselves to be wise, they become fools” (Romans 1:22).** “Professing” is from the Greek word *phasko* (fas'-ko) meaning to affirm or allege something. This refers to their opinion of themselves. “Wise” is from the Greek word *sophos* (sof-os'), which is the basis for our English word sophisticated. It means to be wise, skilled in letters, cultivated and learned. To them, anyone disagreeing with them is ignorant. “Fools” is from the Greek word *moraino* (mo-rah'-ee-no) from which we get our English word *moron*. It means to prove one’s self a fool.

**The third major step toward apostasy by those who deny God’s existence is they changed God’s glory into images (Romans 1:23).** “Change” is from the Greek word *allasso* (al-las'-so) meaning to exchange one thing for another. “Glory” is from the Greek word *doxa* (dox'-ah), which in this context means the reality of what something is. The intent is that they exchanged the real God for a made up God. They made up a God.

Every step away from the God of the Bible is a step into the human imagination and idolatry. Any deviation from the God of the Bible creates a deviant and false god. *Close enough* is never good enough when it comes to theology. God has revealed Himself for mankind to know Him accurately and personally. Unless we know Him accurately, our relationship with Him and worship of Him will be not be what it should be.

“<sup>23</sup> But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. <sup>24</sup> God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23-24).

God is often accused of inactivity. People, trying to live for Him, frequently question and wonder why He does not act upon the evil that continues to grow in the world. It is a question that is not unique to any one period of history. The prophet Habakkuk was similarly perplexed by God’s apparent inactivity in dealing with the apathy and corruption within the nation of Israel. However, he did not like God’s answer once God replied to his questioning.

God is not inactive when it comes to those who reject Him and His absolutes. However, His purpose is to bring lost souls to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. When man is pre-occupied with the carnal things of this world and his own selfish desires for them, his tendency is to reject the inner witness of his conscience. God is working in that person’s life by allowing him to be filled with unrighteousness to the place where he can finally see the end of such a way of life. Romans 1:24-32 gives us man’s digression into the depths of sin when God’s existence and absolutes are rejected.

One thing all Christians need to caution themselves about regarding people who have denied the existence of God and are given over to lives of sin as described in Romans 1:24-32 is that of self-righteous contempt for these people. Apart from the grace of God, this would describe every person in the world. The Christian has one responsibility regarding these people.

“<sup>17</sup> But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; <sup>18</sup> How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. <sup>19</sup> These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. <sup>20</sup> But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, <sup>21</sup> Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. <sup>22</sup> And of some have compassion, making a difference: <sup>23</sup> And others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh” (Jude 1:17-23).

**Man is a tricotumus being. He exists as body, soul and spirit. (see chart)**

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Thessalonians 5:23).

In response to man’s rejecting Him and the absolutes of His Word, God begins to give man over to the corruption of his fallen nature in each of these three areas of his being. The human body is that part of man’s trichotomous being which executes the soul’s desires as controlled by the spirit (either man’s spirit or God’s).

Man’s body (*soma*) refers to the five senses: sight, touch, hearing, taste and smell. The man who rejects God’s absolutes will be given over to these senses and this will be evident by addiction to one or more things which will carnally satisfy these senses.

Man’s soul (*psyche*) refers to five elements of the mind: imagination, reason, memory, conscience and affections. The man who rejects God’s absolutes will be given over to progressive corruption of these five elements of the soul.

Man’s spirit (*pneuma*) is made up of one element, the will. The human spirit is a composite of what the five gates of the body bring to the soul and the five gates of the soul bring to the spirit. The spirit acts upon those 10 gates with the will. The will of the spirit accepts or rejects that which comes to it through these 10 gates. That which is accepted becomes part of the spirit (making up the person you are and become).

If God’s absolutes are accepted, the believing individual moves his soul and body to be Christ-like. If God’s absolutes are rejected, the unbelieving individual moves his soul and body deeper and deeper into the darkness of sin until he is finally and completely reprobate. The digression of all of this is that God gives man up to what ever he won’t give up to God.

**Those who deny God’s existence are given up to uncleanness (1:24-25).** The first area God gives man over to are the senses (desires) of the body. “Gave” is from the Greek word *paradidomi* (par-ad-id'-o-mee) meaning to give into the hands of another or to give something over into someone’s power or use. What we find here is the doctrine of the *free will*. God tells man what is right or wrong for him, meaning what is good for him or harmful to him. When a man accepts the absolutes of God’s Word, he brings his will into subjection to God’s will. When a man rejects the absolutes of God’s Word (or any one of them), he is given over to govern his life according to the dictates of his own carnal senses (desires).

“<sup>13</sup> Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: <sup>14</sup> But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. <sup>15</sup> Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. <sup>16</sup> Do not err, my beloved brethren. <sup>17</sup> Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. <sup>18</sup> Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures” (James 1:13-18).

That which is not in God's control is in your own control. That which is in your own control is headed for progressively increasing misery. "Uncleaness" is translated from the Greek word *akatharsia* (ak-ath-ar-see'-ah) meaning in a moral sense, the impurity of lustful, luxurious, shameless and unrestrained living.

"Through" is from the Greek word *en* (en) and should literally be translated "in." The area in which this dishonoring of their bodies begins is in their own hearts (the seat of the will). The human body was created to bring God glory. The degree to which it is given over to carnal senses (desires) is the degree to which it will distort the image of God in that person's life (even more then it is distorted in the fall).

"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" (Romans 1:25).

Those that God gives over to uncleanness in their own hearts are those who have "changed the truth of God into a lie" by denying the inner testimony of their conscience and the outward testimony of creation to the existence of an absolute God (not the existence of a god). Having denied the truth, they embrace a lie. The lie they embrace is the god of their minds (imagination). That is the god they worship (honor and adore) and the god they serve (submit their will to). If this god they worship and serve is a figment of their imagination, they are actually worshipping their imagination regardless of what avenue that is expressed through (idols, animals, humanism, etc., etc.) in that this god is really non-existent.

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**Three Responses of Lost Mankind to God's Two Witnesses**

1. Discuss the difference between denying the existence of the God of the Bible and denying the existence of God. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. Read Romans 1:21-32. Do you think this portion of Scripture is becoming a reality in the U.S.A? If so, why do you think that is so? \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. Discuss the meaning of the phrase Post Christian Era and how it came to be. \_\_\_\_\_  
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4. Discuss the goal of secular humanism and its part in the development of the Satanocracy. \_\_\_\_\_  
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5. Read 2 John 1:7-11. Discuss what it means to abide in the doctrine of Christ. \_\_\_\_\_  
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6. List the three major steps into apostasy in Romans 1:21-23. Discuss each in detail.
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  - B. \_\_\_\_\_  
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  - C. \_\_\_\_\_  
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7. How does the world of secular humanism “become vain in their imaginations”? \_\_\_\_\_  
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8. According to Romans 1:22, if you were in a high school or college where a teacher denied the existence of God, what is that person proclaiming himself to be according to God? \_\_\_\_\_  
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9. Discuss why God is often accused of inactivity when it comes to dealing with sinners. \_\_\_\_\_  
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10. What is God's ultimate purpose in the lives of lost people, even in His three responses to lost mankind's denial of His existence? \_\_\_\_\_  
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11. Read Habakkuk 1:1-9. What should saved people learn from this text regarding God's apparent inactivity .in dealing with a society that rejects His truth and denies His existence? \_\_\_\_\_

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12. Read Jude 1:17-23. Discuss the believer's responsibility to a society which has rejected God's truths and denied His existence. \_\_\_\_\_

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13. Discuss the trichotomy of man and the make-up of each aspect of this trichotomy from the chart in this lesson and how this helps us understand how God is working in the lives of lost people to bring them to seek Him. \_\_\_\_\_

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14. Discuss the first response of God to man's denial of His existence given in Romans 1:24-25 and explain thoroughly what God is doing in this phase. \_\_\_\_\_

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15. Discuss the doctrine of the *free will* from the context of God giving various aspects of a person's life into that person's control. \_\_\_\_\_

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16. Read James 1:13-18 and discuss the doctrine of the *free will* and the exercise of the *will gate* to the Spirit in allowing input from the five gates of the body and the five gates of the soul from the chart on the next page. \_\_\_\_\_

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17. Discuss the meaning of the word "uncleanness" from the context of Romans 1:24-25. \_\_\_\_\_

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