

No Excuses

Harmony M.B.C., April 14, 2019

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Rom. 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Rom. 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Rom. 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

Rom. 1:19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them.

Rom. 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that **they are without excuse:**

Rom. 1:21 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.

Rom. 1:22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

Scripture teaches us to seek peace with all people, to love our enemies, to act in such a way as to represent the Lord Jesus Christ in conduct, to do good to all men, especially those of the household of faith. We are also taught by scripture that people who have only the natural faculties (call the natural man), do not receive the things of the Spirit of God, and that they cannot know them because they are spiritually discerned.

All these truths from the Lord's word tend to cause the people of God to begin to make excuses for the ignorance and blindness of unsaved people. If we go down that road far enough, we can become guilty of siding with lost people against the just judgment of God and the severity of that judgment. If we become too involved in taking the side of unregenerate people we can get caught up in the whirlwind of imagining that God is unfair for not doing something for the pitiful condition of lost people.

This kind of attitude among Christians can actually lead to a kind of resentment against God, and has led in the past to the fabrication of a house of cards about doctrine. What is that house of cards? It is the doctrine of Arminianism, in which God is cast as a fretting Savior who walks about wringing His hands waiting for men to accept His offer of salvation through Jesus Christ. If those men don't accept Christ through their own free moral agency (so-called), then God is powerless to provide any more evidence or action to support His begging them to accept and trust His offer. He is portrayed in Arminianism as

being without further means to bring people to salvation if they do not act by their own volition, their own human decision-making, to **let** Jesus come into their hearts.

Those who fall into this quicksand of error have created in their own faulty thinking a God who has less power than men, and they create a Savior who daily fails to be a total and all-powerful Savior because He has to let some people die and go to hell that He "wanted" to save, but just couldn't persuade them to believe.

Now, when we consider this kind of thinking among humans...even some supposedly true believers, we find that service to, and worship of, God can get mired down in the quicksand of doctrinal error and even deep heresy. That is why this part of the Word of God that we are looking at this morning is so important for believers to know and understand. When we comprehend what is taught in our text verses, there is one thing that should be a starting point for a sound understanding of where unregenerate men stand in relation to a righteous and sovereign God. That is, that all human creatures are "without excuse" for their unbelief.

We want now to examine a few facts about this divine rule. May the Holy Spirit open our understanding so that we can comprehend the word of God about this subject.

I. The simple fact that mankind is without excuse before God, concerning unbelief. (v. 20 - "so that they are without excuse")

- ❖ It makes no difference what the depth of ignorance in mentally functional human beings is, they are without excuse.
 - There are aborigines in the jungles of some nations who have never seen a car, never seen a camera, never seen a computer, never seen a book, never seen a bible, never seen a missionary, never heard the first word from the mouth of a witness about Jesus Christ, yet they are without excuse for unbelief.
 - There may be people living down the road from you who, because of their belligerent attitude about anybody speaking to them about the Lord, or because of their care-less attitude about the things of God, will never hear the gospel message. They are without excuse for their unbelief.

II. Humanity is without excuse because the invisible things of the Godhead have been shown to them, and God has given every mentally functional human a mental understanding

- ❖ vv. 19-20) - "**Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them. 20** For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, **being understood by the things that are made**, *even* his eternal power and Godhead;
 - Notice: **that the presence and reality of God is manifest...or evident, that is, clearly revealed in the creature (i.e. the created thing), because God has shown that which may be known of Him to them.**
 - Humanity is without excuse because every time a human looks at something in this world that is created, he is looking right at the evidence and reality of God.
 - **Notice also, that while we can rightly argue "no man hath seen God at any time" (Jn. 1:18) as the spirit deity He is, here we are told that the **invisible things of God are clearly seen in the created world around us, and that they are understood by the creature (man) that was made as part of that creation.****
 - While God remains invisible to all men, His created things plainly expose him to the human eyesight.

III. Let's now consider why it is that God declares them to be without an excuse:

Rom. 1:21-22 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. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,**

- ❖ When they knew of God:
 - They do not glorify Him as who He is
 - They are not thankful
 - They use their minds and thinking ability to feed their own egos (became vain in their imagination)
 - By their own devices they wander further into darkness (their foolish heart was darkened)
 - And declare themselves to have wisdom and by that become fools

IV. I want to close by making one last observation about how this truth should be handled by us when talking to people about the Gospel

- ❖ However in-depth we get to talk to people about Jesus Christ and salvation through Him, we need to be sure to tell the receptive sinner that he/she is without excuse before God concerning unbelief.
- ❖ In doing this, it will be helpful if we can either read or quote our text about it to the lost person.
- ❖ That reading or quoting needs to include the information that God has revealed Himself to them through His creation and by giving them the intellectual ability to recognize Him in those things of creation.