

ROMANS | THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD
Romans 1:21–25 | “Misplaced Worship”
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1. We suppress the truth about God (1:18-20)

- God’s wrath is revealed against all people (v. 18a).
- His wrath is revealed because we suppress the truth (v. 18b).
- We know the truth because God has revealed his eternal power and divine nature through creation (vv. 19-20a).
- As a result we have no excuse for suppressing the truth (v. 20b).

2. We refuse to worship God (1:21-22)

A. We know Him (v. 21a)

B. We do not honor Him or give thanks to Him (v. 21b)

Psalm 29:1–2 Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. 2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.

- **Are there fragments of this attitude in your life now?**

C. Our thinking becomes confused and foolish (vv. 21cd-22)

Ephesians 4:17–18 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. 18 They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.

The story in Romans 1 is not one of man's gradual evolution up the ladder of spiritual enlightenment, but of his descent into the depths of sin and rebellion. This is not an ascent but a descent, not progression but regression. In other words, non-Christian religions are not stages in the development of humanity brought about by the absence of the knowledge of God. Rather, they are the result of a deliberate denial of God and a refusal to glorify and honor him as God. Idolatry and non-Christian religions are not signs that men are searching for the truth, but evidence that they do not want it. - **Sam Storms**

3. We turn from God to worship Idols (1:23-25)

A. They exchange immortal God for mortal creatures (v. 23)

Psalm 106:19–22 They made a calf in Horeb and worshiped a metal image. 20 They exchanged the glory of God for the image of an ox that eats grass. 21 They forgot

God, their Savior, who had done great things in Egypt, 22 wondrous works in the land of Ham, and awesome deeds by the Red Sea.

- **A refusal to acknowledge God as God makes idolatry inevitable.**

1 Jn. 5:21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

B. We exchange the truth about God for a lie (v. 25)

- **What is an idol?**

It is anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give.

- **Tim Keller**

- **Is there anything you are giving loyalty and devotion to which should be directed solely to God?**

- **How can we turn from idols to worshiping God?**

- Remove through repentance.

- Force out by replacing.

But all experience proves that “loving not” is only possible through loving, the worldly affection overcome by the heavenly. **Thomas Chalmers** - "*The Expulsive Power of a New Affection.*"

- **Are you responding to the revelation of God in Christ and His Word with an “Amen?”**