

Romans 019

“All Things to all Men”

Romans 1:21-23

Acts 17:16-34

"An atheist is a man who has no invisible means of support."

John Buchan

Paul clearly explains that those who suppress the truth in unrighteousness do so willingly, in spite of indisputable evidence and they are therefore without excuse before God.

The irony is that many on earth and many at the Great White Throne judgment, will blame God even for their rejection of Him!

It's not an issue with knowledge; it's one of the will which is so often over run by a wicked and deceitful heart.

“You have enough evidence” and His directive to us is pray for the atheist.

Heathenism is not pristine conditions which have existed practically since the beginning of time, but conditions that exist in the highest advance of western civilization and have throughout history.

Heathen are heathen not because the Gospel has never been presented in their geographical area, but because they were negative at God-consciousness or at Gospel hearing.

Paul's presentation begins where the listeners can relate and then he gives the Gospel message logically and biblically.

Paul actually has an extreme justified anger toward false doctrine and he continued to be this way, but in his anger he devised a plan.

After he had been doing this for a few days, everyone was talking about the Gospel and this strange person who brought it to them and there was immediately a reaction from the two philosophical schools in the city of Athens.

So for the Stoics, reason was the criterion instead of emotion and man must be in control of his emotions so that he can think well.

In reality, they are not going to put Paul on trial; they are going to put Christianity on trial.

To them this was a “new doctrine/teaching” entirely foreign to their thinking that man would be regarded as a sinner needing a saviour.

Their minds are literally shocked by the Gospel.

Paul is using “religion” in a negative sense of being satanic, from the devil himself.

Paul has taken the intellectual who prides himself on his mental ability, academic knowledge and cultural background and has called his attention to the fact that both Stoicism and Epicureanism, the two systems that have put Paul on trial, have no place for any supernatural being.

Paul is speaking to an intellectual and cultural audience, the most difficult type of audience outside of a religious organization.

Paul is now very forceful in saying that man is finite and imperfect and an imperfect man cannot make a house for God but perfect God can make a house or a plan for man.

Man can dwell in God's plan through grace but God cannot dwell in man's plans through legalism.

Heathenism assumed that the gods needed their offerings and sacrifices for happiness; so they concluded that man is necessary to make God happy, rather than God is necessary to make man happy.

We do not give to God;

He gives to us and this is the opposite of all Greek philosophy.

Nationalism makes it possible for the human race to be evangelized and internationalism destroys that concept.

The devil will do all that he can to obstruct the Gospel and the only possible way to fulfill his mission, is to destroy the lines of demarcation whereby the human race continues to exist.

Regardless of the wishes of mankind, God wants the human race to be perpetuated and evangelized.

Man by man's thinking does not have the ability to understand the Gospel, it must always be revealed to him.

This indicates that the Stoics recognized the fact that God made man and man did not make God.

God the Father not only provided His Son but He provided the way by which we can meet His Son and have salvation.

This is one of the most unusual approaches ever used by Paul in presenting the Gospel, because not once did he mention Jesus Christ by name.

Refusing to honor God and thank Him although they were aware of Him, is worse than if they hadn't known of Him.

Respect and appreciation are expected of the unbeliever at God-consciousness and Gospel hearing!