

# POWER HOUR

3/15/2026

Lesson Text:  
Romans 1:18-23

Background Scripture:  
Psalms 19:1-6, 106:6-23

Devotional Reading:  
Acts 14:15-17, Ephesians 4:17-24,  
2 Kings 17:6-20

“GOD’S WRATH REVEALED”

NLT TRANSLATION

**Golden Text:** But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who suppress the truth by their wickedness. Romans 1:18 NLT

**Time:** A.D. 57

**Place:** from Corinth

## Romans 1:18-23 NLT

**18** But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who suppress the truth by their wickedness. **19** They know the truth about God because he has made it obvious to them. **20** For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God. **21** Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn’t worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused. **22** Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools. **23** And instead of worshiping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshiped idols made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles.

## INTRODUCTION

Think of the most beautiful thing you have ever seen in creation. Now consider the most powerful thing you have seen in creation. Creation displays the character and power of God. However, people often attribute these things to anything other than God. In Paul’s day, many Gentiles saw aspects of nature as the domains of varying gods. Today, people are more likely to view nature as a god in its own

right—an ultimate, unalterable force. When Paul wrote to the Romans, however, he struck at the truth of the matter: we are without excuse when we ignore God, because all of creation points to who He is.

- 1. The wrath of God revealed (Romans 1:18).** Paul did not mince words when he wrote to the Romans. In verses 16-17, he had written of the gospel and how it reveals God's righteousness. He contrasted the revelation of God's righteousness with the revelation of God's wrath—the reason we need the gospel in the first place. Now that Jesus has come and God has revealed salvation (Ephesians 3:3-6), there is no excuse for rejecting God. Those who reject God do so because they turn to unrighteousness and ignore the truth. This is important for us to consider when we approach the topic of God's wrath. Those who sin apart from Christ do so because they want to sin. This goes far beyond mere action. It is part of human nature after the Fall (Romans 5:12). The more people choose to sin, the more they suppress the truth about God.
- 2. The nature of God displayed (Romans 1:19-20).** Some would read Paul's words that people suppress the truth, and push back. We like to excuse our sin, and the lines blur when we think about someone who does not know God but seems “good.” Paul made it clear, that God has revealed His nature through His creation, and He has manifested to us what can be known about Him. Creation stands as a witness against anyone who rejects God, because it points to a Creator (Acts 14:15-17). Even without God's Word we stand condemned when we reject God (Romans 2:12-16). There is no excuse for ignoring God since He has displayed His nature to us.
- 3. The nature of God ignored (Romans 1:21-23).** The glory of God should be obvious to all people. Since the Fall, the minds of humanity have been darkened, and we reject God. We turn away from Him and look to idols for fulfillment. For much of the ancient world, idol worship meant bowing down to physical idols. However, we should not let ourselves off the hook if we do not worship a physical idol. Everyone has sinned against God (Romans 3:9-18). People will either worship God or something else. There is no in-between.

Apart from the mercy of God in Christ, everyone deserves the wrath of God.

## **PRACTICAL POINTS**

Believers should acknowledge truth because suppressing it is unjust and merits God's wrath (Romans 1:18).

Believers should recognize the character of God in the Person of Christ (Romans 1:19; Hebrews 1:3).

God's hand is evident in creation, and the wonder of His work should move believers to worship (Romans 1:20; Psalms. 19:1).

Because believers know God, they worship Him with a sound mind (Romans 1:21; 2 Tim. 1:7).

True wisdom is found only in Christ (Romans 1:22; 1 Corinthians 1:30).

Believers should avoid idols and worship God alone (Romans 1:23).

## **CONCLUSION**

Every human being in history (Christ excepted) is spiritually depraved, enslaved to sin, under the wrath of God, and with a propensity to reject the knowledge of God. Paul alerted his readers to the anger of God on the human race, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness (Romans 1:18). God has graciously granted the knowledge of His existence and holy character to every person, both intuitively and extensively (vs. 19). This knowledge of God is emphatically not limited to His existence; it communicates particular attributes that display His divine nature (vs. 20). Humans have no excuse for not giving God glory or thanks (vss. 20-21). Because of their sinful, foolish, darkened hearts, they are deceived and persuaded of their own wisdom and greatness (vs. 22). The tragic result is a horrific exchange in which humans trade the all-glorious God for lifeless things created by their own idle hands, worshiping them instead of God (vs. 23). The human race needs the gospel, which has the power to save all who believe. In the remainder of this letter, Paul unfolded the gospel in great depth and specificity. Our lesson text especially focuses on idolatry. Christians in Rome would have recognized this was a sin typically committed by Gentiles. Jews often condemned Gentiles for idolatry. Yet, Paul's discussion of idolatry is framed in such a way that includes Jews. Moreover,

since he argued that both Jews and Gentiles are guilty and under God's wrath, Paul concludes this chapter (vss. 29-31) with a list of sins easily applicable to both Jews and Gentiles: wickedness, covetousness, malice; envy, eagerness for debate, deceit, malignity, whisperings, backbiting, spitefulness, pride, boastfulness, inventiveness of evil things, parental disobedience, covenant breaking, lack of natural affection, implacableness, and mercilessness. So if both Jews and Gentiles are sinful and condemned in the same way, Paul was then able to argue the Jews and Gentiles are both saved in the same way, through faith in Christ.

### **QUESTION(S)**

1. What is Paul's thesis statement for the whole book of Romans?
2. Why were the earliest Christian churches predominately Jewish?
3. What event brought Priscilla and Aquila from Rome to Ephesus?
4. Why do people need the good news of the gospel?
5. What does it mean that humans suppress the truth?
6. On what basis do all people know the truth about God?
7. Why do humans have no excuse for not knowing God?
8. What reason might have been offered to excuse Gentiles?
9. What makes idolatry humanity's deepest problem?
10. Why was Paul motivated to show that both Jews and Gentiles deserve the wrath of God?

**Next week**, we will examine God's wrath poured out. Mark 14 shows how Jesus prepared to face the wrath of God before going to the cross.

**“Jesus Prepares for Death” Mark 14:32-52**

*Union Gospel Press, LifeStone*