



# Hacked

## Romans 1 Small Group Plan

Good news / bad news. Moral / immoral. Right / wrong. Righteous / wicked. There are many ways to say it. Here in Romans 1 Paul's main theme is God's righteousness, but he presents it against the dark background of God's judgment.

Notice these consecutive verses:

Verse 17

*In the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed.*

Verse 18

*The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people.*

### OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...

- What did you grow up thinking when you heard about “the wrath of God?”
- Every treatment and recovery program proves that we must admit that we need help before we can be helped. Why is this true?

## LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...

### GOD IS OBVIOUS

— Humanity Began Knowing God —

Verses 18-20

<sup>18</sup> The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, <sup>19</sup> since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.

<sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

- Why is God angry at humanity's evil — “wrath ... against ... wickedness” (v. 18)?
- Does his anger contradict his nature as a loving God? Explain.
- Paul says the evil side of humanity will “suppress” truth (v. 18). How? Why?
- What “truth” are people suppressing?
- According to verse 20 how has God made himself “clearly seen” ?
- How does the created world (“what has been made” — v. 20) reveal God power and divinity? Compare Psalm 19:1.

### GOD IS DISREGARDED

— Humanity Became Foolish and Futile —

Verses 21-23

<sup>21</sup> For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

<sup>22</sup> Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

- Why is it “foolish” to “know” God and yet ignore God (v. 21)?
- How does failing to “glorify” or “thank” God naturally lead to a “darkened” heart?
- Why does God deserve both “glory” and “thanks” ?

### GOD IS FORGOTTEN

— Humanity Twisted Their View Of Truth —

Verses 24-25

<sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. <sup>25</sup> They exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator — who is forever praised. Amen.

- Many see the wrath of God as an end-time event, future judgment. But verse 18 says it is “being revealed” (present, current, now). How do verses 24-25 illustrate how God’s wrath is being revealed now?
- “Truth” and “lie” are contrasted in these verses. If God is the “truth” what is the “lie”?
- What does it mean — “God gave them over ...”?
- Throughout human history idolatry and immorality have often traveled together as companions. How? Why?

## USE IT / APPLY IT ...

- Many of our national historians have said that our culture has lost its “soul.” What do they mean? What have we lost?
- In 1986 American editorial writer and Pulitzer Prize winner Meg Greenfield (1930-1999) wrote a column entitled “Why Nothing is Wrong Anymore.” It was her analysis of the growing moral confusion in our culture. She had noticed that in the ethical equation “wrong” had been replaced. Instead of right and wrong, now there is ...

**1 — Right & Stupid.** This is when a candidate gets caught doing something wrong, but instead of admitting the wrong he/she says, it was stupid. In fact, it is so dumb or stupid we can’t understand it, so why try? Let’s just push it to the side as a stupid mistake and not talk about it anymore.

**2 — Right & Sick.** This is a favorite with public figures who, when there is no other option, they call a press conference and say they’ve been sick. Of course, there is genuine sickness. There is true emotional trauma. But I’m not talking about that. I’m talking about the well-adjusted, capable human being who because they lack courage and integrity call their wrong sick.

**3 — Right & Only To Be Expected.** This is probably the most popular dodge used to avoid accepting personal responsibility. It is popular because “everybody else is doing it.” There are several common ways to express it: “He asked for it” “She made me do it.” There is even a children’s version, “She hit me back first.”

**4 — Right & Complex.** This word finds its way into explanations when someone, once again, can’t say I did something wrong. So instead they say “Well, you know, it’s a very complex matter. In fact, it’s too complex for me to explain. So if it sounds like I’m dodging, you’re just getting caught up in the complexity of it all.”

**5 — Right & Not Necessarily Unconstitutional.** In other words if it’s legal it’s OK.

- Which of the five have you observed most often? Which do you think is the most damaging to our faith? Explain.
- Close in prayer, asking God for both clarity and courage to admit when we are wrong and to humbly take the steps towards what is right.