

## **Heathenism (Part 2)**

This is our third study in a special entitled, **Studies from Thessalonians**. It is related to missionary evangelism from First Thessalonians in conjunction with our February Foreign Missions Emphasis.

We will begin with two definitions of heathenism.

- **World Book Dictionary:** "A heathen is a person who does not believe in the God of the Bible." This definition is too broad for biblical discussion to use with Paul's missionary evangelism
- **Doctrinal definition:** "A heathen is a person or people who volitionally reject the revealed truth about God and /or about the gospel of Jesus Christ, God's Son."

(2 Thess.1:8) "Dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel (to euagelleion / d.s.m) of our Lord Jesus."

This definition of heathenism would include religions such as Judaism and Islam. They believe in the God of the Bible but do not believe in His Only Begotten Son who is the Savior of the world (John 3:16; Gal.3:26-29; 1 John 4:9-10).

<p><b>Today's lesson on Heathenism comes from a five point homiletical study of Romans 1:16-32.</b></p>
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**Gospel conversion** (3 Greek markers "for" [gar])

(Rom.1:16-17) <sup>16</sup> **For** I am not ashamed of the gospel, **for** it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. <sup>17</sup> **For** in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

(Rom.10:13-17; 1 Cor.9:16) (dunamis) (Titus 2:11 - 1 Cor.15:3-4; 1 Thess.1:5)

### 1. **God's condemnation**

(Rom.1:18-19) <sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, <sup>19</sup> because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

God's wrath / orge (1 Thess.5:9; 2 Thess.1:7-9; John 3:36; Rom.5:8-9; 2 Pet.3:9)

### 2. **God-consciousness**

(Rom.1:20) <sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

God's creation (Bara) (Gen.1:1, 27; 5:1-2; Acts 10:35)

### 3. **Godless community**

(Rom.1:21-22) <sup>21</sup> For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. <sup>22</sup> Professing to be wise, they became fools,

Idolatry (1 Thess.1:9; 2 Cor.4:4)

### 4. **Godless culture**

(Rom.1:23-32) <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

<sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. <sup>25</sup> For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

<sup>26</sup> For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, <sup>27</sup> and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

<sup>28</sup> And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, <sup>29</sup> being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, <sup>30</sup> slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, <sup>31</sup> without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; <sup>32</sup> and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.

(Rom.1:24, 26, 28) [paradidomi] Exchange (Rom.1:23, 25, and 26)

At what point is God no longer responsible to provide additional Divine Revelation?

Heathenism results in unrestrained depravity!