

## Connection to Romans 1

The apostle Paul explained the sinfulness of humanity (the Gentiles) and the great need for the gospel.

### Introduction/Opening

Jim Lovell, Fred Haise, and Jack Swigert were the crew of Apollo 13. Ken Mattingly was a member of the initial crew but was replaced by Swigert after Mattingly was exposed to the measles. They were scheduled to fly Apollo 14 but were moved up. Since a lunar landing had already taken place, interest in this flight was not nearly the same level as previous flights. That changed when a tank onboard exploded and the prospects of returning faded. One of the more popular quotes heard on that flight came from the mouth of Swigert, when he stated, “Houston, we’ve had a problem.” That phrase captures our attention since most of us know what it is like to face a problem that we can do little to change.

In Romans 1, the Apostle Paul cried out, “We have a problem.” It’s the problem of our own guilt—our own sin. Evil is real, and evil is the problem.

### Outline

1. Evil Causes a Weakening of the Truth (vv. 18-20).  
Evil causes people to repress and hinder the truth. They attempt to make truth inoperative. People know the truth about God, but they do not allow His truth to work in their lives. They push truth away to live their own lives and not be convicted by God’s truth. Once a person refuses the truth and moves to turning truth into a lie, he or she will eventually abandon all truth.

Evil, the sinfulness of humanity, will always bring about a weakening of the truth.

2. Evil Leads Us to Worship Other Gods (vv. 21-23).  
Even though humanity knows that God is real, evil will lead us to not admit it or worship God. We then exchange the glory of the true God for substitute gods. We exchange glory for shame, incorruption for corruption, truth for lies.

Evil leads the way in holding down God’s truth and refusing to acknowledge God’s glory. Humanity left without God will make something up to worship. If we do not worship the true God, we will worship other gods.

3. Evil Causes Us to Go the Wrong Way (vv. 24-27).  
Evil leads humanity from idolatry to immorality. Because people choose evil, God allows them to go into every sort of sin and do whatever they want. God reveals His wrath by allowing people to go the wrong way and reap the consequences of their sin.
4. Evil Encourages Us to Wallow in Our Sin (vv. 28-32).  
Evil led us to give up on God and not even acknowledge Him. As a result, God gives us over to do all the things our evil minds can imagine. We are left wallowing in our sin helpless and hopeless to change our circumstance or situation.

## Conclusion

Verse 18 starts with the word “for” pointing back to verse 17. The reason that the righteousness of God is being revealed is that the wrath of God is coming against evil and sinfulness. Since the wrath of God rests on humanity by nature, we cannot save ourselves. Apart from faith in Jesus, there is no way that we may have a status of righteousness before God. The reality of God’s wrath and His holiness makes the gospel necessary. The gospel of salvation by faith in Christ alone is the only deliverance from our evil and sinfulness.

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