

Week Three: (Romans 1:18-32)

Key Verse

“For though they knew God, they did not glorify him as God or show gratitude. Instead, their thinking became worthless, and their senseless hearts were darkened.” - Romans 1:21 (CSB)

Key Principles

- God brings judgment against all unrighteousness and it is right for him to do this.
- Ignoring God prompts him to give people over to all sorts of problems and sins.
- The God of the gospel cannot be truly glorious to us without a profound understanding of our real problem.
- Those who have been forgiven much will demonstrate great love in return.

Study Guide

1. According to Romans 1:18–32, what is idolatry and how does it come about?
2. How do people “suppress the truth” (1:18) of God by what they do and what they do not do?
3. Paul repeats three times in Romans 1:18–32 that God “gave them up” or “delivered them over” (1:24, 26, 28). What do these phrases tell us about God and about ourselves? What is Paul emphasizing through this repetition?
4. What does it mean to be “without excuse” (1:20) and why is this important for how anyone understands the gospel?
5. Paul describes idolatry in terms of how it developed in ancient times, producing wooden statues and false gods. What are some of the ways that our culture expresses idolatry today? How do we worship things other than God?
6. Where are you guilty of judging and condemning others for sins that you excuse in your own life? How might the gospel influence such tendencies?

Respond in Prayer

In Romans 1–3, Paul references specific psalms in order to grow our understanding of God’s righteousness. Each week of this Study Guide will include a recommended psalm that helps us focus on the righteousness of our great God. Set aside some time this week to read through the selected psalm and use the prayer prompts below as your guide. We recommend praying through this psalm on your own at home and together with your small group. And for those looking for more passages to pray, feel free to return to Romans 1–3 and pray through those passages as well.

This Week’s Prayer Passage: Psalm 10

Read Psalm 10.

Pray through the following prompts, according to the A.C.T.S. method.

- **Adoration:** Praise the Lord for he is your King forever and ever (10:16). Praise the Lord because he is the helper of the weak (10:17–18). Praise God because he is the immovable, unchangeable I AM.
- **Confession:** Ask God for forgiveness for thinking that he is far away from you in your times of trouble (10:1). Confess to him your pride and all the ways that you have acted like he does not exist (10:4). Ask for forgiveness for the ways you have been puffed up by pride (10:3 ff.).

- **Thanksgiving:** Thank God that he does not forget the afflicted and brings justice to the oppressed (10:12–18). Thank God for his right judgment on the wicked (10:15). Thank God that he is an ever-present help in times of trouble.
- **Supplication:** Ask God that he would be near to you in the ways that you are experiencing trouble right now. Ask God to show himself in the midst of your present circumstances.