***Human Devolution, No. 2
RO09-01***

**© Berean Memorial Church of Irving, Texas, Inc. (1975)**

Please open your Bibles to Romans 1:21-23. Our subject is "Human Devolution." We are studying the movement of human beings downward from a high point of spiritual enlightenment, all the way down to a point of fantastic spiritual debasement.

**The Heathen are without Excuse**

We read in verse 21 that the heathen are without excuse for their evil. They are aware of God. They are aware that He is out there through creation. But this God-consciousness did not result in their either honoring God or being grateful to Him. This negative attitude toward God has set up an emptiness, consequently, in their mentalities.

**The Human Mind**

So verse 21 says, "Because when they knew God, they glorify Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain (empty) in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." You recall that we illustrated this by studying the layout of the human mind. The mind is divided into two parts. One part represents the perceptive mind – the function of the mind through which we learn things. This is where the problem begins. We come to an awareness of God-consciousness, or we come to an awareness of a piece of doctrine, and we go negative toward that. When we go negative toward that, the Word of God here in verse 21 tells us that an emptiness is created in the mind. That means that there is a spiritual vacuum set up. Remember that, scientifically, nature abhors a vacuum. A vacuum always seeks to be filled with something. So, it is true also of a spiritual vacuum.

**Human Viewpoint**

So, human viewpoint is drawn in from our society as it is under Satan's influence. Remember that all of society; all of our customs; all of our traditions; all of our educational institutions; and, all of our religious systems are all creations of the devil. They're all part of his world system. So, they have a point of view of human viewpoint that's drawn in. Doctrines of demons, very specific religious opinions, that come straight out of hell itself are drawn in, including religious expressions of various kinds. All of this comes in to fill what could have been spiritual enlightenment that was left as an empty vacuum. This then is fed over to the other side of the mind, the directive mind, which is the side of the mind from which decisions are made.

**Their Foolish Minds were Darkened**

However, verse 21 this has said to us that when these people became empty in their imaginations (that is, in their thinking-through capacities), their foolish (or their stupid) directive minds (that's what "heart" means) were darkened. The result was that a blanket of darkness descended on this part of the mind, so that these people are blanked out completely to divine viewpoint. That's what has been blanked out here. They just absolutely cannot think God's thoughts after him.

Well, this has its expression in various ways. It has its expression in liberalism of all kinds: political liberalism; economic liberalism; religious liberalism; and, social liberalism. All of that is the origin of a darkened mentality trying to come up with answers – functioning without God. It has its expression in collectivism, such as in socialism and communism; in anarchy (the desire to be without any rules, without any regulations, and without any governmental restrictions); in slavery of various kinds (such as to narcotics, to sex, and to actual physical slavery); and, in world government concepts where they think that the world would be better if they had had one great ruler, which, of course, is what the devil is seeking to create on the face of the earth – a world that has one ruler, and he's going to be successful. Someday, the antichrist will come along from Western Europe, and he will take over the whole world in the middle of the tribulation period.

This darkened mentality also has its expression in immorality of various kinds, and the concept of relativism, which means that there are no rights and wrongs. You cannot say that this is evil, and this is good; or, this is right, and this is wrong. There is also the expression of the whole concept of do-goodism. The social gospel is one expression of that: the concept that God is going to take a person to heaven on the basis of how many good things he has done; or, that this is the calling of the believer.

**The Emotions**

Well, that this also affects the emotions. When the mind is dark, the emotions go bad, because the emotions then dominate the soul so that this person is blind to reality. He is devoted to false objects. Instead of being true and loyal to the people and the things that he should be true and loyal to, you are occupied with false loyalties. The will is subject to every manipulation of the old sin nature. You are enslaved to the old sin nature. There was a weakness and a fear that settles upon the human heart (the human mind).

**The Will**

So, all of this is the result of the absence of divine viewpoint in the directive side of the mind.

Now, most people in the world today have this kind of a mentality. And that's the point that we have to begin with in this study. Most of the people that you deal with in life have a mind that is a vacuum on the perceptive side, and a complete blackout on the directive side. The leaders of the world have minds like this. The leaders of the United States government, at various levels, are, by and large, men who have a blanket of spiritual darkness across the director side of their minds. These are the people who are making decisions relative to our lives. The problems that we live with today are the result of men who have mentalities like this who are trying to make decisions without divine viewpoint guidance. And this has had its expression and a variety of ways that we're hearing more and more about today, and as we shall see as we go along.

In other words, what we have here is a description of the mentality of a psychotic person. In a normal person, the mentality governs the soul completely. The mind determines, for example, what the emotions are going to do. The mind determines very distinctly what the will is going to do. The mind is the dominant factor within the soul. And in a normal person, the mentality governs the emotions. Consequently, a person has feelings, and a person can examine his own feelings under the light of his mentality, and come to an evaluation as whether those feelings are right or wrong; whether they're well-taken or ill-founded; and, whether he should pursue that attitude or whether he should change it. In this way, the emotional life of a person is perfectly compatible with his intellectual life. Feelings, in other words, are subordinated to thinking. Now, that is normal. That is a normal person.

**Their Emotions Dominate their Thinking**

However, when the emotions are dominating the mentality, because the mentality has yielded itself to emotional domination, then you have a psychotic condition. Where the directive side of the mind is darkened are people who inevitably have this condition set up within the soul, where the emotions are dominating the mind, and the emotions are controlling a person's thinking. Consequently, the feelings, which in themselves have no orientation (right or wrong – this way or that way), are turned loose to go in any direction that that particular personality, or your particular old sin nature, is inclined to move.

This is the condition of darkened directive mind as the result of a vacuum in the perceptive side of the mind. The result is extreme emotional disorientation. There is no spiritual enlightenment, and no decision making capacity on the basis of God's viewpoint – just on the basis of what your emotions kick up to you.

Remember that it is the old sin nature that is there (like the villain) that is controlling the emotions, and it is kicking up all of this foul matter up into your mind. It is the old sin nature which is there, controlling the world through the emotions, because the emotions then dominate the world also. And it is the old sin nature that's kicking its villainous concepts and ideas down to your will. So, you find yourself unhappy in life. Why? Because you are having feelings that God cannot commend and that God cannot tolerate. You're having decisions from your will which God cannot commend. They are decisions that are contrary to His viewpoint.

However to you, those feelings seem perfectly right and normal. To you, that decision you make seems just the right thing. There is no question about it. You are acting in the utmost sincerity. When our political leaders operate out of this darkness in their minds, their emotions are moving them. Their emotions are moving their thinking so that they act according to emotions. Their emotions are moving their wills so that they're making decisions on the basis of empty emotions. But never forget that they are acting in utmost sincerity. These are not dishonorable men. These are the charlatans. These are not people who are trying to bring injury to humanity. They are indeed trying to do good. But they are psychopathic personalities, because of darkness on the mind.

**A Psychopathic Person**

Now, how far a psychopathic person we are going to see in these closing verses of Romans 1. But I want you to see, first of all, that what the apostle Paul is doing is establishing for us the condition of the mentality that creates the expressions which follow. There are three things that are characteristic of a psychopathic person.

1. **Imbalance**

First of all, he has an imbalance. He has distorted values, and he has distorted priorities. A psychopathic type of person has an imbalance in what is of value.

For example, people who are mentally deranged will find a little trivial trinket, like maybe a pencil or a safety pin, as something of great value. If they lose it, they'll get all upset. If you take it away from them, they'll get terribly distressed because they place great value upon a little trinket – something that they zero-in on. They have a quantity of focusing in on something, and rigidly hanging onto it.

This is a condition that may be expressed, for example, of a woman who is a fastidious housekeeper. Everything is in its place. Everything is just exactly right. You walk around with white gloves, and they always stay white despite everything that you may touch. ... Nothing is out of place. When that kind of a housekeeper is in a psychotic condition, one of the signs that it's a psychotic mentality is that keeping that house in perfect order becomes a top priority, because her thinking is out of balance. And she will bring extreme unhappiness to her family (to her children) if they disrupt her house. The house is the big thing. This is her pride; this is a priority; and, this is the thing that is the big thing with her. And this is her beautiful house, where every drawer you open, all the underwear is just in the right place, and all the handkerchiefs were over here in the right place. And it is just a wonderful house. ...

If that's your problem, get your priorities in balance. Having a perfectly ordered house is not the most important thing in the world. And that is a bunch of garbage if anybody tries to give you the impression that it is. That is a psychotic condition, and a woman who presses extremes on that is signaling an imbalance in her thinking, and thus a psychotic condition.

However, you should not make your home feel like the pigs have moved in from the farm either. I'm not trying to justify the other side of the story. I'm just talking about balance. The other would be psychotic as well. Some of you may be pretty psychotic in that way. You like to have your house looking like it's live, and that's good, but it should not look like a Texas tornado has just gone through. That's something else again.

1. **Instability**

Another characteristic of a psychotic is instability. This person is unreliable. This is the kind of person that says, "I'll do this," and you're never sure whether he's going to do it or not. This is the kind of person who is spiritually unreliable. About the time you think he can be trusted to start standing on his feet spiritually, he's going to demonstrate that he is not capable of handling his own spiritual life, and that he is unstable.

1. **Egocentricity**

A third characteristic of a psychotic personality is egocentricity: extreme preoccupation with yourself; and, extreme self-centeredness. Everything is geared to get this person, out of his darkened mind, desires to satisfy his own interests and inclinations. He is uncooperative; he is mulish; and, he is arrogant. He is resistant to the opinions of other people. He is just egocentric and self-centered.

Darkened minds are governed by these three factors: imbalance in their values and priorities; instability – in spiritual matters, they're unreliable, and they're unstable relative to their word; and, self-centeredness (egocentric). The darkened mind is characterized by these three things, and out of this kind of a character, decisions are being made by people in leadership, and other people must then suffer the consequences of their decisions. They must live as the result of decisions made by these psychopathic type of personalities.

A normal person, because his mentality governs his emotions, can judge the propriety of a feeling. He can judge the propriety of a decision that he makes. But the psychopath loses perspective on his emotions, so that, if suddenly he feels that he wants to kill somebody for something that that person has done, he cannot bring his mind to override that feeling at the moment. In an instant, murders are committed because the mind is in this darkened, psychopathic condition, and there is no control center to say, "Wait a minute." In a normal person, your feelings of hate to destroy this person are hereby canceled out by the mind, and the emotions are overridden. The emotions are declared null and void, and you do not follow then the inclination of murder.

The reaction to a stimulation will then always be in proportion. Murders are sometimes committed for trivial reasons. You're always hearing about somebody sitting in a bar in Dallas, and they begin arguing over who the most beautiful movie star is, and pretty soon, somebody takes a gun and kills the other guy because he disagreed with him. You may say, "Now, that's really nuts." That's right. That's psychopathic. That's because you have a darkened mentality which was not functioning to control the emotions. So, when the emotions rose up and said, "You disagree with me, and I'm going to kill you for it," the mind couldn't say, "No, I am canceling that out. That emotion is out of order. This anger at the moment is a reaction extreme for the stimulation."

So, the drive toward some false subject becomes very intense in the psychopathic condition, and reason simply does not govern actions at all. This kind of person loses all objectivity; he loses all reasoning capacity; and, he is moved by pseudo emotions, the worst of which is a pseudo love. The emotionally dominated soul is the kind of person that fluctuates like a pendulum. This is one of the signs of a psychopathic mind. This is the person that you meet who is very cordial; and warm; and loving; and then you cross him, and then he's cool, and reserved, and aloof, and snotty, and everything else. Why? Because he has a psychopathic mentality that cools you.

The Bible warns about this when it says, for example, that when you become angry with a person, it is forbidden to let the sun set that day without your anger being neutralized. Whatever it takes to neutralize your anger, divine viewpoint says, "It is against the laws of Almighty God to let anger go beyond sundown." Now, if you feel you have to have a good day of being mad at your spouse, then start early in the morning, so you'll have lots of time; but, come sundown, that's it. You cancel out that anger. And if you have gone around with your nose out of joint all day, be sure you check sundown for that day. And if it's 7:54, that's what you have. Come 7:54, your nose gets back into joint.

Now, this is no small thing. This is the way God (who made us) says that human beings have to function. Now, a person who is a normal person does that. The psychopath, who (be he a Christian or an unbeliever) has permitted his mind to become darkened, does not do that. He will go for days on end cooling somebody; being mulish; dragging his feet; and, being harsh and indifferent – all the while, incidentally, acting very piously, frequently with the claims of supernatural powers. These people are actually motivated by self-gratification.

**Psychopathic Types**

There are several psychopathic types that are more easily identified. There is the hysterical kind. This is the person who gets hysterical, and who uses hysterics as a means of gaining ends, is a person with a darkened directive mind.

There is the pathological liar type who simply cannot utter two sentences without lying for no reason at all. It is a darkened directive mind that causes that.

There is the amoral type. I was listening to an interview recently on television. The man they were interviewing was a criminal. His back was to the camera so that you could not see his face, and the man who was interviewing him was asking him concerning a series of robberies that he had committed. The interviewer said, "In the process of the robberies, you might kill somebody." He said, "Yes, that has happened." The interviewer said, "Well, how do you feel when you walk in and you kill the man that you're robbing?" He said, "It didn't make any difference to me. It's just one more liquor store owner or one more drive-in owner out of the way." The interviewer said, "You have any emotional reactions or feelings about that? Doesn't that bother you?" He said, "No, why should it?"

Now, that is an amoral person. He just doesn't have feelings of a moral nature one way or another. That is a darkened directive mind of the most intense kind. He is past feeling of any normal expression.

There's also the sexual psychopath type, which has a variety of expressions: homosexuality; bestiality; and, various other expressions.

There is the fanatic – often a fanatic for some trivial thing, or fanatic for some imagined grievance, or for some imagined catastrophe of one kind or another. That fanaticism signals a darkened mind. Sometimes we have people who are fans of athletic events; fans for entertainment events; fans of this; or, fans of that. They are fanatics. And they are fanatics, again, to an extreme, to where everything is dedicated to this thing that happens to be their hobby, or this thing that they are a fan of.

Well, these people can go into the psychotic category where they lose touch with reality. They can also become neurotic people, whether they are just nervous about things.

You may have had somebody who came up to you and said, "Oh, I just feel terrible today. I'm just so nervous." What they're telling me is that they're neurotic. Here's the difference: A neurotic person builds castles in the sky; but, a psychopath starts living up there in them. He loses contact with reality. That's the difference.

So, that's what's behind Romans 1:21: "Their stupid heart was darkened." And it has all these varieties of expressions that can be summarized in the word "psychopathic."

Now, here's the result of this kind of thinking. Verse 22 says, "These people, professing themselves to be wise, became fools." The word "professing" is the Greek word "phasko." "Phasko" means "to assert" or "to affirm." They're making a confident declaration about themselves. The word "professing" here means that you are listening to people who have this darkened mentality, and who are very sure of themselves. "Phasko" means, "I know what I'm talking about. I have no doubt about it. I have not one moment of hesitancy of telling you what is this way and what is that way; and, I'm confidently assured that I know what I'm talking about. It is in the present tense, which means it's constantly the claim of this darkened mind. It is active. It is their personal opinion. It is a participle. It's a statement of a principle.

It means that they are alleging something about themselves, and that is that they are professing themselves to be wise. The word "wise" is "sophos." It's an adjective. It is describing the delusion of this mind which has been darkened as a result of its negative relation to doctrine. The directive mind is completely darkened to divine viewpoint, but it believes that it is enlightened, and that it is intelligent. So, this type of deluded mind will reject the laws of government, for example, that the Bible sets up – the laws of divine establishment. It will reject the divine institutions, and it will not enforce the divine institutions (for example, in matters of sexual relationships, as we talked about in the previous session). In government leaders, this condition leads to decisions which result in national destruction. They have minds that they consider to be wise. But after all is said and done, God says, "Your mind is blackened. You are not wise."

**They Became Fools**

Because of this, it says that: "They became fools; confidently asserting themselves to be wise." To be enlightened men, they became fools – those who became negative to the Word of God. And the word is "moraino." This is the word which is used in Matthew 5:13 and in Luke 14:34 concerning salt losing savour. It loses its "moraino." It becomes tasteless, and when it becomes tasteless, the implication is that it becomes useless. It becomes worthless.

This is in the aorist tense, which means at the point where they exercise their judgment, where they try to give decisions on the basis of thinking themselves to be wise men, they become useless thinkers. It is the passive voice because these people are helpless victims of their darkened mind. They couldn't make a good decision if their life depended upon it, and sometimes, not only their lives, but the lives of a whole nation depend upon their making right decisions, and they can't do it because they have minds which are useless. They're worthless. They have lost the capacity to make decisions. It's indicative. It's a statement of fact. It's aorist – at the point where they try to make a decision. It's passive. They're helpless victims. They have to float along with what they really are. This is a statement of truth.

The sincere, confident opinions of these fools, and their solutions to problems, are worthless. They lack the right answers. As a matter of fact, if someone comes along and says, "Hey, wait a minute, Mr. Government Leader, you are acting on human viewpoint. You are acting in a darkness of your thinking. From the Word of God, here are certain things that the Bible tells us are true, and should be true in a society. Here are certain things upon which we should act." And when you tell that to a government leader, he looks at you, and he says, "You're a fool. If we do what you're saying, we'll start a war. If we do what you're saying, the nation will be poor. If we insist on making our dollar be represented by value in gold, we won't have the money to keep our economy going." And divine, to this darkened mind, comes out looking like a fool's viewpoint. That's what's fantastic.

Yet, our nation is permeated with leaders with darkened minds who think themselves wise. The Word of God tells us that they are nothing more than fools, coming up with fools' answers.

We have the National Council of churches as a religious expression with its support for communist programs and do-goodism of one kind and another. They're breaking their neck now to have our government supply humanitarian aid for the Vietnamese. Tell me how we're going to supply humanitarian aid for the Vietnamese without handing it to the communists now. It makes no difference to them. Their do-goodism has made them fools.

The corporations of this country are breaking their fool necks to trade with communist countries. And in the process of that trade, they're giving away their technological secrets. That includes such things as our computers. We just shipped over the latest, finest model of the American computer. Russian technology has never been able to come up with a computer anywhere near like what this country has produced. That's why they couldn't get a man to the moon, for one thing. Now how are they getting it, especially from a military frame of reference where computers are very critical? They're getting it from us because human viewpoint of darkened mentality says, "It's good to do business with people who want to buy things from you, even if, in the process, they're buying something that someday they will use for your destruction.

Our military inferiority is no secret. We have gone through a series of SALT talks (Strategic Arms Limitations Talks), and every time we sign an agreement with the communist world, we come out on the short end of the stick. And it is made to appear to the American public like everybody got an equal even break. But what we have done is disarm on our side, while we permit an arming on their side. We permitted North Vietnam to continue arming itself, while we forced South Vietnam to increasingly disarm itself.

Yet, because that mentality govern this country, we live now with decisions that may yet cost the lives of many of you sitting you. Communist aggression will never be stopped anyplace in the world now. This nation will back off in fear from any aggression of communism against any nation. Thailand can't wait to get Americans out, and Thailand has been our friend. But now, Thailand knows that the United States, because it is governed by men with darkened mentalities, cannot be trusted, and they want to survive. So, one of our staunchest allies have given us a year to get out.

Well, the U.S. leadership, professing itself to be wise, has shown itself to be a fool. One of the greatest ways, not the least of which this has been demonstrated, is the fact that a series of security agencies in our government, such as the House Internal Security Agency (which used to be known as the House Un-American Activities Committee) have been put out of existence. There's only one little group left now (I think it's in the Senate) that is responsible for watching what the communist world does. You know how the CIA is under attack. You know how the FBI is under attack. All of these are agencies that spy on the communist world, and keep us informed of what's going on. The House Committee on Internal Security has been a thorn in the side of communism for decades. And year-after-year, there has been a campaign to abolish it. This year, this liberal freshman Congress pulled it off, and we have been stripped of eyes and ears on the activities of the communists world under the guise of men who think they are wise. But the Bible tells us that they are fools because their darkened minds are making decisions that will lead to our destruction, and at least to great suffering.

We are denied mobility because of the gas fiasco in this country. We are losing money in inflation because of programs which the government has instigated. Even now, when inflation is so bad, does the government spend only what it takes in? No, it's spending again far more than ever before. Freedom is going with crime. Morality is going with the toleration of the pervert. Patriotism went out the window with Vietnam.

**Monopoly**

Monopoly is a very fascinating game. I don't know how many of you have ever played Monopoly, but I know for those of you who are monopoly buffs, you'll appreciate this little article that I read the other day about a man who sat down to play Monopoly. This commentator sat down to play Monopoly with his family. It's a game with a board and little pieces that go around the board. The idea is for you to come to possess all the property. So, he sat down one day and told the family to get to play Monopoly the way the government operates. So, look what he did to the game of Monopoly.

"The family was playing Monopoly the other night, and in the middle of the game, to make it more exciting, I suggested we update the rules according to 1975 economic conditions. No one was sure this was a good idea until I, as banker, offered to give each player an extra $200 to encourage them to spend more money on their properties. They thought this was great, but then I said, 'In order to pay for this, I will have to charge you all double if you land on Electric Company or the Waterworks,' which I happened to own. There were screams of protest from everyone. 'What good is $200 if we have to give it back to you for electricity and water,' my daughter wanted to know. I said, 'It would put more money into circulation, and stimulate the buying of houses and hotels. I suggest that if you raise the rent on your properties by 50%, it will cover the cost of landing on the Electric Company. When I land on one of your properties, you get the money back.'

"My wife said, 'That's true if you own Park Place or Boardwalk. But I own Baltic and Mediterranean Avenues. If I have to pay you double when I land on the Electric Company or the Waterworks, I'll be wiped out.' I pointed out, 'You can always sell your property.' She asked bitterly, 'Have you ever known anyone who wanted to buy Baltic and Mediterranean Avenues?' I retorted, 'Well, we can't all live in Marvin Gardens. There would be no Monopoly game if everyone could afford everything on the board. Now let's start playing.

My son landed on 'Go to Jail.' He didn't have the $200 to get out, so I suggested he turn state's evidence. He asked, 'Against whom?' he asked. I said, 'Against any of the other players. If you're willing to tell a district attorney what you know about what happened on Pennsylvania Avenue, I'll let you out on the next roll.' My daughter said, 'Well, that's unfair. I had to stay in jail three times because I didn't have the money to get out.' I said, 'Well, these are 1975 rules. And anyone implicate someone else in a crime does not have to stay in jail.' My son said, 'OK.'

Connie gave me $100 under the table so I would sell her North Carolina Avenue, and she would have a monopoly on that property. Connie shouted, 'You're a rat. You said you would give me North Carolina Avenue if I sold you St. Charles place.' I said, 'Let's not fight. Joel, for telling all, I give you a pardon. Now it's your mother's turn to roll.'

"My right nervously roll the dice. She had to move her shoe token to Indiana Avenue which I owned. It had a hotel on it. I announced, 'With a surcharge to 50%, you owe me $1,575 rent.' She said, 'I don't have it.' I said, I'll take Oriental Avenue; Vermont Avenue; Connecticut Avenue; and, all your money instead.' She protested, 'But then I would have nothing left but Baltic and Mediterranean Avenues. I'll have to go on welfare.' I replied, 'I'm not concerned with your problems. Hotels cost money, and besides, I'm thinking of putting up several houses on New York Avenue; Tennessee Avenue; and, St. James Place in the high rent district.' She asked, 'Could I get a loan?' I hooted, 'In you financial condition? What kind of banker do you take me for?'

"With all my property and money in front of me, I rolled the dice next and moved my top hat token to Community Chest. I picked up the top card and read out loud, 'Income tax rebate: collect $20.' My life, who had lost all the property, and had $3 left said in disgust, 'That figures.'"

Now that's a little bit of an example on the game of Monopoly of how the government plays its game of Monopoly. It is just as inane as all of those rules. And if you've really played Monopoly, you can really appreciate the humor of this, and the inanity of these economic manipulations. Yet, this is what the darkened minds of our government are coming up with. Well, we won't pursue that. I think you get the point. It takes Bible doctrine to turn the tide in the United States, particularly today, in its hour of abandonment of a people that we led down the primrose path into a war that we would not permit them or ourselves to win.

**They Changed the Glory of God**

Verse 23 gives us the conclusion: "And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." Here are these darkened minds, who envision themselves as being men of wisdom, making fools' decisions because they are really fools, and here is where these minds have taken them. The word "changed" is in the aorist tense. They transferred the glorious, divine viewpoint information about God into something that was corrupt. The aorist means they did it at the point where they were negative to doctrine. It's active voice. They did it by their deliberate choice because their minds led them to that. It's statement of fact. They were fools. These people with spiritually darkened directive minds became animals in their thinking.

Please remember that when your mind takes this position of the darkness that we have seen here, then you become, in effect, an animal. And the darkened mind means that you are an animal in your actions, so that you make animal decisions. Now, look what they did here. Here are the steps that their animal viewpoint took them to. They took the glory of the incorruptible God. That refers to the essence of God: His sovereignty; His righteousness: His justice; and, so on. They went negative to the glory of God (to what God was). So, they perverted what God was. Their darkened minds came up with a grotesque image of God. The word "incorruptible" means "imperishable." This is the Greek word "aphthartos." It describes God as imperishable and immortal – the true and living God. Instead, they changed Him into an image. The world "image" here refers to something that's made to look like something else. It's the Greek word "homoioma." "Homoioma" means that a thing is made to look like something else. The "homoioma" is simply a representation of one thing by another. In this case it was idols.

So, it says they changed the glory (the true image and essence of the incorruptible God – the immortal, imperishable God) into an image "made like." And the word "made like" is the word "eikon." "Eikon" refers to a derived likeness. In other words, it implies an original. This is like when you take a penny out, you see the icon of Abraham Lincoln on that penny. And you know that there was once a man that looked like that. He was the original. So, what these people did was, in their darkened minds, they viewed themselves as intelligent, wise people. They said, "What is God like?" So, so they started making images of what they envisioned that God was like. And in the process of making images of God, they turned the glory of God (His true essence) into a corruptible thing.

So, what we have here is a likeness consisting of an image. That is the translation. They changed the glory of incorruptible God into a likeness consisting of "an image of corruptible." This is the Greek word "phthartos." "Phthartos" means "perishable." It's the opposite of the other one: the imperishable. This is a corruptible, perishable concept that they made of God. In other words, they made Him to look like man (to look like humanity).

So, when a person's soul loses its true image of God because of the darkness in the directive mind, because there's emptiness on the perceptive side, then man makes a false image of God. So, when they began making an image of God, they made Him in the form of a dying, mortal man. Because they did not have love for God, they made Him in the image of animals. And notice what they did. They started with birds. They made Him in the form of fowl. They made Him in the form of four-footed beast (animals that run around on four legs). They even went so low as to make him in the form of snakes and reptiles (creeping things). Decadent cultures all over the world throughout history have used snakes in worship as the representation of deity.

**Idolatry**

This is the madness of idolatry, which you may read in detail in Isaiah 44:6-20. These people, who viewed themselves as being intelligent, cultured, refined people, fell into the disastrous practice of converting the incorruptible God in all of His glory into the corruptible image of men, and then of animals of all kinds.

This is what the Word of God tells us what happened historically with men who once knew about God, starting back in Eden. Although the leaders of our government do not run around worshiping idols, they come up with the same kind of conclusions. That's the point. Their darkened minds come up with the same kind of inane decisions as these people did, relative to when they envisioned what God was like. And they converted Him into images of mankind and of animals.

So, our leaders, with darkened minds, are going to make the same decisions. Worse than that, it's a matter of truth that you and I can do the same thing. If we permit the decision-making part of our mind to be dark because we do not have divine viewpoint being fed from the perceptive mind to our human spirit, and back up to our directive mind, then we will be in a condition of darkness, and we too will be fools.

We don't entirely escape this. Each of us can only pursue this in his own thinking and his own life. But each of us can put our finger on something, and say, "Here was an area where I acted with a blanket of darkness upon my mind, and I was a fool. My decisions; my reactions; and, my responses – they were that of a fool. Emotions controlled; my world was distorted; my thinking was 180 degrees off from being correct; and, I played the fool. Your results may not be as horrendous in your eyes as this, but the consequences will be just as bad. It happens on a national level, and it happens with us as individuals.

**Bible Doctrine**

The only thing that can keep this from happening with you is the intake of the Word of God, and your positive response to it. That brings in the burst of God's illuminating light into your mentality. Then you see things the way they are. Then you know how you should feel about things. Then you know the decisions that your will should be making. This is the thing that we should pursue. This is the reason it's important to stay with doctrine.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1975

[**Back to the Romans index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/romans.htm)

[**Back to the Bible Questions index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/allarticles.htm)