

## **The gospel vs. heathenism**

**"But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; ... that no flesh should glory in His presence" (1 Corinthians 1:27, 29),**

The most unreasonable thing in the universe is human reason. It is utter foolishness with God.

Paul says those who do the things described in Romans 1:23-32 know that they are worthy of death. The heathenism Paul was speaking of, as represented at Athens and elsewhere, was not ignorance of things of this world. It embraced people whose work in the arts and sciences is studied today. A person may know without God, just as the beast may know. But there is no wisdom apart from God. This is what Paul means when he says, "Beware lest anyone cheat you through

philosophy ... according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ" (Col. 2:8).

We hear a good deal of "natural morality" and "scientific morality" morality common to all men. This is what Paul is describing--heathenism. The popular idea of heathenism is incorrect. The heathen doesn't know God. He may be religious, but God is not the source of his wisdom.

In Mark 7:22, 23, Christ describes the source of "natural morality." The hearts of all are alike; we are made of one blood to dwell upon the earth. The heathen are the people who do the things spoken of in Paul's first chapter of Romans, wherever they live.

Compare 2 Timothy 3:1-7 with the latter part of Romans 1. They are almost identical. It means that men in the last days shall be open heathen--giving themselves up to the works of the flesh. It means that all who will be destroyed will be heathen. Who are the heathen? "You who judge practice the same things" (Rom. 2:1).

Did we ever do anything we would be ashamed to speak of? Wherein were we different from the heathen? Here is broad enough ground for the gospel. It is a shame to speak of those things that have been done by us all in secret, but "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes" (Rom. 1:16). [1]

**Note:**

1. Bible Studies on the Book of Romans, pp. 2, 3.