

HOW GOD IS KNOWN

Romans 1:18-20 ... "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world his invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse."

We use The New King James Version of the Bible in our devotionals. But, perhaps verse 19 of today's passage will be more helpful from the New International Version: "since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them." Today's reading concerns a question many believers have asked through the ages: "What happens to people who die without ever hearing about God?"

This question is part of what motivates us to share Christ with others (the other part being God's command for us to do so). It should be your goal to usher as many people into heaven as possible before you die. That includes not only your loved ones and closest friends, but people you do not like and complete strangers. Do you really want to face Jesus and have him remind you of the people he sent to you who you, in turn, turned away or ignored?

But what about remote tribes and people groups who have never been visited by missionaries – or believers like you; ordinary Christians who have as much responsibility to share Christ with others, as do pastors and missionaries? What will become of people who never heard? The clue is found in verse 19 that I quoted above: "...what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them." God has made himself known to every person who ever lived; he has made his existence and his presence "plain to them." Verse 20 goes on to tell us that God has also demonstrated his existence and sovereignty in creation and nature. Only a fool would look at creation and the order that keeps everything under control, and declare that God does not exist, and that he does not deserve to be praised and worshipped. But foolishness is an acquired behavior that comes from ignoring the obvious and suppressing the "plain" knowledge of God that every person is born with.

Do not be too comfortable with this passage and conclude that you do not have to witness to the unsaved. The people around you who have not been born again, are there because God put you on their path. It is your obligation to share Christ with them. Even though each person is given a supernatural knowledge about God, the culture we are born into, the social environment we live in, the people we associate with, and dedicated enemies of God work to persuade us to turn away from God. The unsaved people around you need to hear about Jesus from your own lips because other voices are drawing them away from God. Our passage today closes with a warning that people who only know about God because of what "God has made plain to them," plus the testimony of creation, still have no excuse for rejecting God, just like those who heard about him and rejected him. And, you have no excuse for failing to share Christ with them.

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