

# “They Suppress the Truth”

Psalm 19:1-4a; Romans 1:18-23 • July 4, 2021

By Rev. Nollie Malabuyo • September 12, 2021 (BSCC)

Dear Congregation of Christ: Richard Dawkins, a well-known evolutionist, once said, “It is absolutely safe to say that if you meet somebody who claims not to believe in evolution, that person is ignorant, stupid or insane or wicked.” In a 2015 survey of Americans, Pew Research found out that 65 percent believed that humans and other living things evolved over time. Among those who claim to be evangelicals, Catholics and other religiously affiliated Americans, 53 percent believe in evolution. And a full three-quarters of college graduates also reject creationism. Therefore, evolutionist Dawkins was speaking for majority of people in the world who believe that creationists like us are “ignorant, stupid or insane.” They reject our doctrine that God created the heavens and the earth; that God created them out of nothing in the span of six days.

Last Sunday, we started a short study of Romans Chapters 1-3. In the introductory sermon, we learned that the gospel that Paul preached was the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. His life’s mission when he lived on earth was to save his people from sin, Satan, and death. Then, Paul says that those who believe in Christ receive Christ’s perfect righteousness. Through this faith, God forgives their sins and sees them as perfectly righteous, thereby saving them from God’s wrath. And the outcome of this faith is a godly and righteous life, a life of good works. This is why Paul says—and this is the main theme of Romans—“*The righteous shall live by faith*” (1:17).

But the opposite outcome of the gospel is this: those who reject it will suffer God’s wrath. God has revealed himself as Creator in all the things he has made, so he is wrathful against those who reject this truth. So, our meditation today is **“They Suppress the Truth,”** under three headings: first, **What Truth is Suppressed?** second, **Why is the Truth Suppressed?** and third, **What is the Outcome of Suppressing the Truth?**

## What Truth is Suppressed?

In our Call to Worship, we read in Psalm 19:1, 3-4, “*The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.*” How does God reveal himself to all people? He reveals himself through his creation: the immense sun, moon and stars; the majestic mountains and green valleys; and the pristine seas and lakes. Through this created world, all mankind knows that there is an almighty, all-knowing, and all-present Creator. Though he is invisible, it is plain and clear that there is a Creator of all things.

Atheists and other unbelievers reject this doctrine of creation. Instead, they propose all kinds of theories to discredit the Biblical account of creation. Charles Darwin’s 1859 book *The Origin Species* became the foundation of the evolutionary theory, which, as the Pew Survey confirms, is the most popular anti-Christian theory of the origins of all living creatures.

But a growing number of scientists, most of them not Christians, propose theory of Intelligent Design. They suggest that the ultra-complex living world could not have evolved on its own. Rather, this world's creatures were designed by an intelligent being or beings, even aliens or some superior ancient human race. We can now trace our genealogy through DNA testing. Each single individual who ever lived has a unique DNA profile. Each DNA has four chemicals that are fed with encoded information by the DNA, much like a computer is fed with encoded information. Intelligent Design says that any information comes from an intelligence, which in turn, comes from a mind. For us Christians, whose mind is this? It is none other than the mind of the Intelligent Designer, the Creator God who designed every complex, living creature on earth.

This then is the truth: God created all things out of nothing, and all mankind knows this, since they see his creation, a creation so complex that would not exist without an almighty, all-knowing Creator.

### **Why is the Truth Suppressed?**

Last Sunday, our text ended in verse 17, which says, *“For in [the gospel], the righteousness of God is revealed.”* But here in verse 18, we read, *“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.”*

Unbelievers deny the truth that there is a Creator God in heaven because they are both ungodly and unrighteous. We can connect these two words to the Ten Commandments of God's law. The first four commandments point to man's relationship with God. We are to have no other God except God the Creator. We are to worship him alone, and not any other idol that we create. We must not say the name of God carelessly. And we must honor the Sabbath day with worship and rest. The second six commandments point to man's relationship with others. We must honor our parents and other authorities, not commit murder, adultery, stealing, lying and coveting what is not ours. Disobeying these two parts of the Ten Commandments are ungodly and unrighteous.

We violate the laws of God not only by disobedient acts, but also by our words and thoughts. Because all mankind without exception is enslaved to sin, all mankind loves to sin. Why? Because of our sinful nature, we do not want to be accountable to a God who created us and rules over us. We do not like authorities, we want to do what pleases our sinful hearts. We often hate others, lust after sinful pleasures, and covet and even steal things that are not ours. This is why unbelievers reject and hate God and his commandments.

And because of their rejection of this truth, God has revealed his wrath against them. Since God is Creator, he controls his creation. Our Lord Jesus Christ is truly God, so even the winds and the waves obey him. God sometimes sends natural disasters, pandemics, fire, drought and other calamities to warn the unbelieving world that he sees all their ungodliness and unrighteousness. For us believers, these calamities are also reminders to us to persevere in our faith, because in the end, God will pour out his wrath against all his enemies, against all who reject him as God the Creator. The Bible says that Jesus, who is now in heaven seated at God's right hand, will one day return to judge all those who reject and hate him and his people.

Therefore, when disasters and calamities like the wildfire come to us, do not despair. Do not be bitter against God. These are but wake-up calls from God, telling us, “Sinners, return to me! Acknowledge that all of us are sinners. Confess your violations of my laws. Repent of your disobedience against my commandments.” Because all sufferings, disasters and evil in the world are the results of our sins against God. If you believe in him, when he returns, he will put to an end forever your sufferings, pains, and tears and turn your mourning into joy.

So the Bible teaches that unbelievers suppress the truth of God because of their sinful nature.

### **What is the Outcome of Suppressing the Truth?**

Our text says that there are dire and deadly consequences of suppressing and rejecting the truth that God alone is the Creator God. We see several in verses 21-23.

First, *“although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him.”* As we have seen, all mankind knows that there is a Creator God from all the things he has created. But they do not want to honor him as the only eternal, Sovereign King of the universe. They do not give thanks to him who is the fountain of all good for giving them life and all provisions that are far more than sufficient for a good life in this world.

The second outcome is, *“they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”* All their thoughts are of no value to God because they come from a sinful heart. Jesus tells us, *“But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander”* (Matt 15:18-19). The hearts of unbelievers are full of these evil things because they are darkened. Only the word of God can give light and understanding. As a result, they are fools in God’s sight, as we read in Psalm 14:1, *“The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God.’”*

This brings us to the third outcome of rejecting God as Creator, “Claiming to be wise, they became fools.” All of the wisdom of the unbelieving world are foolishness to God. We see all unbelieving scientists, Hollywood celebrities, politicians, sports “heroes,” and the wealthy make fools of themselves every day on TV and social media. They are fools who deny that unborn infants are not human beings in order to kill them for convenience. They are fools when they say that all white Americans are racists by nature, but not blacks. A white American is a fool for self-identifying as a Korean. The Olympic Committee are fools for allowing a man identifying as a woman to compete against other biological women. The rest of Romans Chapter 1 deal with the foolishness and wickedness of LGBTQ and transgenderism.

Fourth and last, unbelievers, *“exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.”* Unbelievers are idolaters by nature. Those who reject God as Creator turn to idols for worship. They know that there is a Creator God, but because their minds are darkened, they invent their own gods. Their gods can be the sun, or the moon, or the mountains, or the trees, or the rocks, or the seas, or all kinds of animals. Today, most people

worship themselves, their money, career, house, car and all kinds of material things. They worship their own “heroes” such as Hollywood people and other celebrities.

These are the tragic outcomes of rejecting God as Creator.

**D**ear friends, God has revealed himself to all mankind through his creation. But seeing his creation alone and knowing that there is a Creator of all these things cannot save anyone. How then will anyone be saved? Salvation comes only through knowing Jesus Christ as the only Savior. He alone came down from heaven to save his people from all their sins. Jesus commands all people, *“Repent of your sins and believe in the gospel”* (Mark 1:15). God commands us, *“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household”* (Acts 16:31). Salvation from sin and God’s wrath will come to you *“if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead”* (Rom 10:9).

Therefore, salvation comes not only when you believe in some supreme being or in some nebulous god. Rather, you are saved when you believe in God the Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus as the Savior who was crucified on the cross for all your sins. He alone bore God’s wrath in our place because we are all sinful by nature and we can never attain God’s command to be perfect. Only his Son Jesus Christ lived a perfect life, and when we believe and trust in him alone, God will count his sinlessness as our own. Then, and only then, will you be assured of heaven where there will be no more tears, no more death, no more mourning, no more crying, and no more pain. There in your eternal heavenly house, there is only joy and peace and rest forever. Amen.