



THE RISE OF LAWLESSNESS, PART 1

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Background:

- Every now and then - as the teacher of Solid Bread Community - I feel I need to interrupt our routines.
- This week, considering the events of the past few days, I felt that I needed to do that. In fact - - I felt like I'd be doing the wrong thing if I DIDN'T.
- After visiting with a few of you, I confirmed my intuitions. That was Thursday.
- My usual lesson preparation time was significantly shortened; I've been scrambling as a result.
- But with the troubling and tragic news of this past week, I couldn't pretend everything was as it HAD been. It didn't feel proper to mechanically take the next step in our **Jonah** series.
- I already knew what was on **your** minds - I've had SO many texts, calls, and emails. And you probably suspected what was on **my** mind.
- So, this lesson is a pivot moment. We're adjusting today. But I think it's best if we change things up.
- I'm calling today's lesson, "**The Rise of Lawlessness, Part 1,**" and you can tell from this that there's going to be a Part 2. I came to that conclusion as I've worked my way through this.
- I'm hoping to fit the main points we need to wrestle with - under this title and these two lessons.

NOTE: Now - - I understand that tensions, passions, and opinions are bright and unyielding right now. I know that some of you feel *exceedingly passionate* about certain issues.

- Some of you feel very strongly that you have the proper view. You feel even stronger that you have a right to express that view - even if you may lack some tact as you do so.
- But this is not a time for any of us to blurt and regret. This is not an occasion to carelessly dump on others. This is a time to be patient, prudent, and wise instead.
- You see - we're all at different places in life and perspectives. I assume there is some diversity of opinion in this room, and certainly there is within our online listeners.
- And so....I need to say upfront....

- Some of us are more emotional in our views rather than rational.
- Some of us have been kicked around a bit in life more than others. We hide our scars, but our pain comes out in what we say and how we say it.
- Some of us have faced the raw side of sin and depravity more than our friends. It's made us cynical, opinionated, and generally unable to listen well.
- Some of us have allowed our friends and our choices, over time, to convince us of ideas that possess 'partial' truth - - but we forget that partial truth is the same as full deception.
- Some of us have certain views that we've personally coddled and defended for so long that we don't really know – or we don't really WANT - any way out from them.
- Those views have become our security blanket, and they have also become quite firm. They are no longer flexible.
- Some of us have put those rigid views into little boxes, and we've set them high up on a shelf where nobody can reach them or challenge them.
- We want those views to stay just as they are because they are now our identity.
- The bottom line is so many of us – LIKE Jonah – have cultivated prejudices, attitudes, and resentments that ultimately poison US more than they pose any danger to anyone else.
- And again – like Jonah – many of us avoid going INTO places, or INTO ideas, discussions, relationships, and situations that threaten the things we most want to believe.

NOTE: So, all of that said - I need to set some ground rules for this lesson, and especially for the Q&A time at the end:

1. **First**, this is NOT an occasion for partisan-bashing. I don't want today's proceedings to descend into political rants and raised voices.
2. Some of you may feel at various points in this lesson that this is *what I am doing: partisan-bashing*. But I am not. That is not my intent.
3. There may be those "if the shoe fits" moments in some things I have to share, and we all just need to let those things be what they are and land as they land.
4. If you can hang with me through this entire lesson, and if you choose to exercise some discernment, I believe you will see I am trying to make much larger points.
5. As we will learn today, there are causes and there are symptoms. And causes and symptoms are two different issues.
6. Chances are that many of us are much more obsessed with the symptoms of the problem rather than the cause of it. I'm going to be addressing that today.
7. If, at the end of our lesson, you want to make a point, then please show your maturity. You really don't want to add to the problem that you feel you see in others. Choose your words and thoughts carefully.
8. **Second**, I encourage you to listen rather than to speak. You learn more that way. If you are feeling a lot of pent-up frustration, it might be wise to stay silent.
9. God gave you two ears and one mouth. As Will Rogers famously said, "*Never miss a good opportunity to shut up.*"

10. **Third – and this is most important** – the Word of God reigns supreme here. The Bible is our standard.
- God’s Word is our ultimate authority in Solid Bread Community, not just today, but ALWAYS.
 - We will not take any position that is contrary to Scripture. It doesn’t matter how anyone feels about that. We’re not here to score popularity points.
11. Our website makes three things very clear about how Solid Bread Community approaches God’s Word:
- First, we teach what IS there. We don’t pretend the Bible is not saying what it is saying.
 - Second, we don’t teach what is NOT there. We don’t force passages to mean something they don’t.
 - And – number three (and this is a big one for today) if the Bible states it plainly, we will too. Political correctness has seldom been an ally of truth or of any sound doctrine.
12. And so, all said, I will say some direct things today, but that’s because they are based on divine truth. They are from the Bible.
13. Now, you don’t have to LIKE it - - but it’ STILL the truth. WE change – we are constantly changing, growing, and even sliding sideways and backwards - but the truth doesn’t change.
14. If you don’t like the truth, if you think it’s inappropriate or ‘politically incorrect,’ or if you choose to believe it is ‘hate speech,’ well - - you’re wrong, so deal with it!
15. I’m going to stand on the truth of Scripture, and – honestly! - that’s where YOU need to be standing too. We’re going to go to the Bible - to what God says.
16. If you struggle with what God says, then take the issue up with Him. But that’s a senseless battle that you WILL lose.

NOTE: I want to divide the outline for these two lessons into three main points. Each of these points is marked by a question:

1. WHY are things the way they are?
2. WHERE is all this ultimately going?
3. WHAT should be our response as Christians?

A. Let’s look at the first question: “WHY are things the way they are?” (We are only going to get through this question today. We’ll deal with the other two next time).

1. By asking this question, **“WHY are things the way they are?”** I am directing us to identify the CAUSE behind all the problems we see taking place around us.
 - Symptoms are important, but I don’t want to focus on those. There are many symptoms, and that’s usually all that most people see.
 - That’s what they dwell on and rant over. That’s what they vote on. That’s what they get violent about.

- They talk about the symptoms, debate the symptoms, and write posts about the symptoms.
 - But I want to identify the CAUSE – or the ‘disease’ behind these symptoms. That’s what the main issue is.
2. In other words, I am asking, “What is the REAL reason for the depraved way some people are behaving today?” “Why is our nation – and other nations too, for that matter - becoming so divided, violent, and corrupt?”
- Is it really a matter of free speech, censored speech, or hate speech? Is it REALLY racism?
 - Is it REALLY an issue of education, class disparity, gender dysphoria, or any of the other cliché things we typically hear?
 - Is it REALLY our political clashes, or who goes to what bathroom, or any of the myriad things that get lumped under differences between the left and right?
 - What does the Bible have to say? How does the infallible and eternal TRUTH of God’s Word weigh in on this issue?
3. I want you to turn to **Romans Ch. 1:18-32**. I’m going to be reading this passage to you from the New Living Translation today, but I encourage you to turn there and follow along. I’ll be referring to this passage a lot.
- The New Living Translation is not one I normally lean on since I don’t find it to be as scholarly as other translations.
 - But I think – for today’s purposes - it reads with more normal everyday language that helps us to grasp the points it’s making.
 - IMPORTANT: This passage is more than a general commentary about sinners – it provides insights on a certain GROUP of sinners.

*“But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people **who suppress the truth by their wickedness**. They **know the truth about God** because he has **made it obvious** to them. For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can **clearly see** his invisible qualities—**his eternal power and divine nature**. So, they have **no excuse** for not knowing God. Yes, **they knew God**, but **they wouldn’t** worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to **think up foolish ideas** of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused. Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools. And instead of worshiping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshiped idols made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles. So God abandoned them to do whatever shameful things their hearts desired. As a result, they did vile and degrading things with each other’s bodies. They traded the truth about God for a lie. So they worshiped and served the things God created instead of the Creator himself, who is worthy of eternal praise! Amen. That is why God abandoned them to their shameful desires. Even the women turned against the natural way to have sex and instead indulged in sex with each other. And the men, instead of having*

normal sexual relations with women, burned with lust for each other. Men did shameful things with other men, and as a result of this sin, they suffered within themselves the penalty they deserved. Since they thought it foolish to acknowledge God, he abandoned them to their foolish thinking and let them do things that should never be done. Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, quarreling, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip. They are backstabbers, haters of God, insolent, proud, and boastful. They invent new ways of sinning, and they disobey their parents. They refuse to understand, break their promises, are heartless, and have no mercy. They know God's justice requires that those who do these things deserve to die, yet they do them anyway. Worse yet, they encourage others to do them, too."

4. This is a pithy part of God's Word. Every word and phrase is pregnant with implications; it's chock-full of truth.
 - This passage in **Romans** reads like it was ripped out of today's headlines, and in it, a well-defined population of people is described.
5. This group of people – this specific group of individuals - is called out for how they behave and how they can be recognized.
 - The patterns of their depraved choices and passions are systematically outlined.
 - This group is marked – again, it is 'recognized' - by their mindset, their belief systems, their responses, and their deeds. They are not hard to spot.
 - As I said before, this passage does more than offer a general assessment of everyone who is a sinner.
 - Plenty of people who are sinners and who are unsaved are not described in this passage.
 - This passage gives a well-defined description of a particular group of sinners who have chosen to behave according to THESE criteria.

VERY IMPORTANT: The Bible teaches in **Romans 3:23**, just three chapters later, that we "...have ALL sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." So, the playing field is level in that larger respect.

- We all have a universal problem. The Bible teaches we are ALL guilty of sin.
- We are ALL destined for the eternal flames of Hell if we have not fully trusted in Jesus Christ for our salvation.
- But here in **Romans 1:18-32**, we see that WITHIN that level playing field of sinners, there IS a group that has earned a certain distinction, and this passage says that this group of people earns the anger or wrath of God.
- God's wrath is displayed because their lives follow a pattern. That pattern starts a certain way, and because it starts the way it does – their lives manifest certain habits and choices.

- There is cause and effect here. And so, **Romans Ch. 1** outlines a sequence that we need to take note of.
6. Let's look at this group and what God's Word has to say about HOW things start for them, and WHAT shows up in their habits and patterns as a result.
- **In vs. 18, we see that these people are truth suppressors.** It is very important that we see this. It's the topical assessment here. It's the key point that kicks off this passage I read.
 - The over-arching quality of these folks that saturates everything else we then read about them in this passage is **they are truth suppressors**.
 - Their target is all forms of truth and common sense. But, as we will see, this group is mainly opposed to Biblical truth – and values, virtues, and laws that find their origin in God's Word.
 - Things like nations and borders, national sovereignty, the nuclear family, TWO genders (male and female ONLY), **hetero**sexuality, law and order, capital punishment, fair and equal justice, the value of human life, being masculine and feminine - - and so on.
 - These are just some of the values that emerge from the Bible. These are just some of the things which possess and display inherent truth BY GOD'S DESIGN.
 - But...this group we're talking about cannot stand the truth – especially if it finds source in God's Word!
 - They rally around the banners of opposite and lawless positions instead.
 - This group defined in **Romans 1:18-32** wants no borders and no border security. They openly attack the nuclear family and try to define 'family' as being anything BUT God's design.
 - In more recent years, this specific group of people believes in multiple genders (some so-called 'scientific' sources claim as many as 72 genders). This is ridiculous! The Bible is very clear, and so is common sense.
 - Because they don't want two genders, and because they don't want to believe in the Biblical view that men and women are made different, this group promotes men in women's sports, and tampons in boy's bathrooms.
 - This group advances the fairy tale that men can get pregnant, and they will even fine you and fire you if you say otherwise.
 - It doesn't stop there. This group of people is radically PRO homosexuality, PRO LGBTQ, PRO transgender, and so on.
 - This group of people is absolutely obsessed with everything sexual. Perversions of every sort dominate their lives, but none of their obsessions and passions conform to Biblical values. All of them run against Scripture.

- Law and order is something they fight against continually. These folks want to defund the police, permit shoplifting up to \$900 per incident, let criminals out of jail, and even reward illegal aliens with cellphones, hotel rooms, and credit cards - - and so on and so on. Law and order is under severe attack by this bunch.
- The fact is law and order contribute to a strong society. It's part of defining a nation which is consistent with God's design, and strong law and order is upheld in God's Word. So, naturally, eroding law and order is this group's opposite goal instead.
- Because God values life from before birth, and because the Bible makes that point very clear, this group is wholly and radically devoted to ending the lives of the unborn.
- I could continue here, but I think you get the point. There is a pattern for this group; they always radically support the absolute opposite position of Scripture.
- That's because **Romans Ch. 1** is clear: this group is all about the suppression of truth.
- They don't want the truth; they HATE the truth. Because this group routinely *projects* their own hatreds, animosities, and dysfunctions onto others, they even call Biblical truth 'hate speech.'
- These people are frankly delusional – we can see that in **Romans Ch. 1**, and we can see it in real life.
- They've come to believe their own lies, they fight against the truth, they argue with the truth, they elevate deception, and they embrace anything BUT the truth.
- These are their personal choices. It is their habit and pattern.
- This specific population – this particular subset of sinners - uses all forms of wickedness to put DOWN the truth. This passage in **Romans** is clear.
- They'll do whatever it takes to silence the truth, alter the truth, conceal the truth, mock the truth, and - - - censor the truth.
- They hate and attack anyone and anything – even violently! – that speaks and promotes the truth.
- They don't want civil discourse. They don't want free speech. When they gain sufficient power, they even penalize and imprison those who exercise free speech (i.e. UK) because they don't want truth to have any voice at all.
- The Bible is crystal clear – they are NOT tolerant. They will resort to any means, including violence and murder (**Cf. vs. 29**), to achieve their goal.
- This is all because they are truth suppressors. That's WHO they are, and they're absolutely sold out to that cause.
- This specific group of people - this well-defined subset of sinners in **Romans Ch. 1** - has become SO hostile to truth in ALL its forms that

its depravity, its violence, and its senselessness has now become its brand and belief system.

NOTE: I read a post this week from Stephen Miller, White House Deputy Chief of Staff. He makes the same points in a different way. What he says is very close to **Romans 1:18-32**:

“There is an ideology that has steadily been growing in this country which hates everything that is good, righteous, and beautiful – and celebrates everything that is warped, twisted, and depraved. It is an ideology at war with family and nature. It is envious, malicious, and soulless. It is an ideology that looks upon the perfect family with bitter rage while embracing the serial criminal with tender warmth. Its adherents organize constantly to tear down and destroy every mark of grace and beauty while lifting up everything monstrous and foul. It is an ideology that leads, always, inevitably, and willfully to violence – violence against those who uphold order, who uphold faith, who uphold family, and who uphold all that is noble and virtuous in this world. It is an ideology whose one unifying thread is the insatiable thirst for destruction.”

NOTE: Now, that’s a lot to absorb, but we need to go another layer down.

- ✓ There is a REASON these people are truth suppressors.
- ✓ There’s a REASON they hate God’s Word, and they call it ‘hate speech.’
- ✓ There’s a REASON they’re on a mission to suppress truth and destroy anyone or anything that makes truth plain.

- **The reason is they have CHOSEN to reject God.**
- They’ve chosen to reject the greatest truth of all. That sets a high bar for everything else. You can see this clearly in **Romans 1:19-21**.
- Jesus said in **John 14:6**, “*I am the way, and the TRUTH, and the life. No one comes to the father except through me.*”
- This rejection of God is a conscious, willful, and deliberate choice that they have made.
 - That’s why this passage in **Rom. Ch. 1** says there are no ‘excuses.’
 - This rejection of God is not any sort of an ignorance issue. These people have not somehow overlooked or missed something.
 - It is the highest truth of all that they have been personally CONFRONTED with. It is made ‘obvious’ to them as **Rom. 1:19** says, and yet - they’ve STILL rejected it.
 - They ‘know God’ **Romans** says, and that means they know He’s real. They know they are accountable to God. In fact, **Romans 1:20** says they recognize His ‘eternal power and divine nature.’
 - They owe God the respect He deserves. They ought to subordinate themselves to God and seek him earnestly. But **Romans 1:21** says they refuse to respond to God properly.
 - In fact, that same verse says they instead try to diminish God. Once again, they choose to go down the opposite path.

- They cannot handle a right view of God, and they don't WANT a right view of God. So - they conjure up and imagine foolish ideas about Him instead.
- They don't want to humble themselves before God, comply with any of his laws or values, or admit their own sinful condition.
- What they didn't realize is their conscience is sovereignly wired to know what's right and wrong – to know what truth is – but they want their own way instead.
- This creates an enduring conflict within them. This group of people is always upset, always seething, always unhappy, and always prone to snap, rage, and lose their cool.
- As **John 3:19** says, they '*LOVE darkness instead of light because their deeds are evil.*'
- It's an issue of misplaced devotion. These people desperately want to BE, DO, and BELIEVE what **they** want to BE, DO, and BELIEVE. But - - - the reality (the truth!) of God is in their way.
- They cannot '*love darkness*' and give thanks to God too. It doesn't work like that.
- And so, the result is they consciously and willfully CHOOSE to reject God. He's the roadblock to their dark choices and depraved selfish desires.
- Having rejected God, they are now highly motivated to reject His laws, His values, His followers, His truth, and any derivatives of those things.
- These things are all reminders to this group of their wrong choices.
- Rejecting God, and rejecting a right view of God, is a prerequisite to these folks becoming '*truth suppressors.*'
- Rejecting God is the REASON these people turn out as they do.

NOTE: What else can we know about this specific depraved group from **Romans Ch. 1**? Let's quickly sum up what we've learned.

- ✓ We've learned they have willfully rejected God. That's a personal choice.
- ✓ We've also learned THAT'S the reason they are actively invested into suppressing all forms of truth.
- ✓ That rejection of God, and that suppression of truth - - these things are closely linked. These are the causes of everything else we subsequently read in that passage from **Rom. Ch. 1**.
- ✓ But these latter things are the effects. We have the disease or the cause, and we have the symptoms.
- ✓ And so, we also see there are other qualities – other behaviors - from this group that we should take note of.
- ✓ Keep in mind, we're still under that first point, and the operative question, "**Why are things the way they are?**"

NOTE: So, what are the symptoms that directly result from the ‘cause’ of rejecting God and suppressing truth?

- This passage in *Romans Ch. 1* spells out those symptoms clearly, and we will see they are a GRADUATING menu of effects.
- These things don’t stay static; they get worse. Sin is like that. It always has been that way, and it will always remain that way.
- As we learned from Cain’s example in **Gen. 4:7** in our study in **Jude**, sin ‘*desires us.*’
- Sin never plateaus – it always takes more and more of who we are. We don’t stay in one place with sin.
- If we give sin an inch – it takes a mile. Sin ‘*desires us,*’ and it wants to destroy us. We see that here in this passage, so let’s take a look...

1. First, we read in **vs. 21** that this depraved group of sinners goes through a mental change. This passage says, ‘*their minds became dark and confused.*’

- In straightforward terms here, these folks become rationally challenged.
- THEY don’t see this happening, but everyone else around them does.
- Their choices and beliefs become ridiculous – and this is patently obvious.
- They think men can become pregnant; that men can have periods and so tampon dispensers belong in boy’s bathrooms; that burning, looting, killing, and destroying businesses is ‘peaceful protesting;’ that men should be allowed to compete in women’s sports; that criminals should be released from prison while their victims are put in jail; that they should wear masks while driving alone in their own car, and so on and so on.
- It’s a LONG list of evidence for how this group shows their minds to be ‘*dark and confused,*’ but the summary is they have willfully abandoned common sense and reason.
- Their only other option is to embrace things and ideas that make no sense. But they’d rather do that than conform to baseline sensibilities which are the foundation of God’s laws and values.
- Remember – they have rejected God. **That is their pre-eminent passion.** That is their all-consuming drive.
- They want nothing to do with God or anything about Him, and so it becomes their entire goal to support ideas that go in the opposite direction.

2. Second, and this is related to that last point, it says in **vs. 22** that these people ‘*claim to be wise but they become utter fools.*’

- So, here we see the next step down this ladder is these folks become deluded.
- They’ve completely lost their grasp of reality – not just about the world they live in, but also about themselves.

- For these folks - not only do they believe down is up, right is wrong, good is bad, men are women, black is white, and so on - - but they ALSO believe they are wise when instead they are fools.
 - They no longer see themselves accurately. They're out of touch with themselves. They are deluded.
 - You cannot convince these folks otherwise. There must be a vestige of reason still left to have any honest debate, and these folks lack that. They have thrown all self-awareness out the window.
 - They are incapable of looking in a mirror honestly and seeing what rational and wise people see. These folks have become completely deluded.
3. The third thing we read about this subset of folks is how they choose to view creation and the world in which they live. That's in **vs. 23**.
- These people refuse to acknowledge that this world was created by God in an '*ex nihilo*' (Latin: 'out of nothing') supernatural display of omnipotence.
 - They'd rather believe in evolution. They've shoved God out of the equation, so they believe you and I and everything else ultimately came from a gob of goo.
 - In fact, they'd rather believe 'aliens from another galaxy' made us and put us here than believe God did what He said He did.
 - As a result, their entire view of this planet and all of creation is warped. They devalue human life even as they greatly value animal life.
 - I love animals too – a lot! - but I don't put them on the same plane as humans.
 - These folks practically worship creation, snail darters, prairie dogs, Mother Earth, and so on. Their whole focus is an imbalanced, earth-centered, climate-focused obsession.
 - They are true 'earth dwellers.' This is a term used in **Revelations** which we will explore in our next lesson.
 - Science and facts have zero impact on these guys' passions.
 - They have an earth-centered belief system. It is, in fact, their religion, and they are sold out to it.
 - Because they have rejected God, they have also rejected heaven and hell.
 - They've tossed out any Biblical concept of an afterlife. So, this planet – this is IT for them, and they are obsessed with controlling it and worshipping it.
4. Fourth (and this is a very BIG issue), this specific group of unsaved people embrace, pursue, promote, and defend every form of sexual depravity that is possible.
- This element continues the downward descent of these folks. It's their next step downwards in their evolution of rejecting God and suppressing truth.
 - And we can see by the rapid rise in sexual perversions in our culture, that this descent is widening and accelerating.
 - Look at **vss. 24-27**. Many liberal theologians and pastors claim the Bible has no language or standards *against* same sex relationships.

- The fact is, the Bible has a LOT to say about these sexual depravities, and others like them. That includes issues of transgenderism, transvestitism, etc.
- Such so-called ‘theologians and pastors’ are flat wrong, and this passage in **Romans** is one of many in Scripture which show these things as great sins.
- But for today’s purposes, understand this important principle: when one rejects God and chooses to suppress truth – they are going to pursue and defend ALL things that go against God’s design.
- God created TWO genders only – and the Bible makes it clear that there are to be distinct roles and identities for each.
- These God-based roles and identities – including sexual relationships – are called ‘*natural*’ here in **Romans**. That means they are normal and right.
- Anything outside of these sexual roles and identities is clearly prohibited in God’s Word. They are not within God’s design.
- Wherever you find homosexual / lesbian / transgender (etc.) lifestyles, you will find within that community an increase in rage, activism, violence, mental disorders, and a hatred of God, His Word, and His true followers.
- (Maybe someday we’ll do a deep dive into these issues – including the statistics and studies concerning them. But I don’t have time for that in this two-part lesson series).
- Suffice it to say that God has severely judged these lifestyles before and He will continue to do that. They are flagrant violations of God’s created design and order of things.
- Even the last part of **vs. 27** makes it clear that those who engage in a homosexual lifestyle risk diseases and physical conditions that are the direct result of their choices.
- These so-called ‘alternative lifestyles’ are not normal, not right, not loving, not tolerant, and not healthy. No PR or media spin, and no amount of ‘politically correct’ language changes the fundamental truth.
- As I said in the beginning of this lesson, you don’t have to agree with what God says, but He’s God and you’re not. That’s a battle you will lose. Deal with it!

5. Finally, I just want to make a few quick comments about everything we read in **vss. 28-32**. There’s a lot there, but let me hit some high points from this section:

- **#1**, these people have a ‘*depraved mind*’ in **vs. 28**. The original Greek behind this phrase literally means ‘*a mind that doesn’t work like it’s supposed to.*’
- In other words, these people are completely falling apart. They have come apart at the seams spiritually, emotionally, physically, and mentally.
- Their minds literally don’t function normally anymore. They’ve lost their moorings because they have rejected God and actively suppressed the truth.
- **#2**, read through the list of character qualities these folks develop in **vss. 29-32**. Read through the things they ARE and the things they ARE NOT.
- I want to point out a few of the things in this list:
 - These people are ‘*wicked and evil*’ – they are not just deluded, senseless, and foolish, but they are heinous and bad to their very core.

- These people are prone to be ‘murderers’ – that should not be surprising to us; the facts bear this out. They are angry people and murder is an evolution of anger.
 - They are ‘deceitful, God-haters, and slanderers’ – this all goes together with rejecting God and trying to suppress the truth.
 - And then, pick up on this interesting quality in **vs. 30**: ‘they invent ways of doing evil’ – it’s not enough for these folks to reject God and suppress truth; they are motivated to find new ways to express their depravity. Again – none of this should surprise us; we see it all the time.
- **I’ll conclude with a very sobering observation about these folks from vs. 32**: “they encourage others to do these things too” (other translations say this specific group APPROVES OF THOSE WHO PRACTICE all these depraved things). Why?
- **First, misery loves company.** These people are angry, violent, filled with strife, and plagued in their conscience. The Bible is clear.
 - They don’t want to be alone in distress. It’s easier to cope with your poor choices and values if others have the same ones.
 - We’ve seen this dynamic on full and repeated display this past week. There are many who have openly approved of doing the wrong thing.
 - **And second, they subscribe to that ‘safety in numbers’ fallacy.**
 - Just because many others do it too, doesn’t mean you’re OK or you are in the right.
 - It says in **Matt. 7:13** ‘the way is broad that leads to destruction.’
 - The truth is more people are in the wrong than are in the right. There is no ‘safety in numbers’ – if anything, there is caution in popular opinion.

NEXT TIME: “The Rise of Lawlessness, Part 2” (We’ll deal with the next two questions: WHERE is all this ultimately going? (and) WHAT should be our response as Christians?)



**SOLID
BREAD**

Solid Bread Community was started with a passion to teach the truth of God’s Word – every part of it, as it was divinely inspired to be understood.

The rules are simple. First, teach what IS there. Don’t pretend the Bible is not saying what it is saying.

Second, don’t teach what is NOT there. Don’t force a passage to mean something it really doesn’t.

And – number three, if the Bible states it plainly, we should too.

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Please follow us on our You Tube channel at www.youtube.com/@SolidBreadCommunity