

# Romans 1:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters,  
inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

## Analysis

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### **Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,**

The vice list continues: *katalalous theostygeis hubristas hyperēphanous alazonas* (καταλάλους θεοστυγεῖς ὑβριστὰς ὑπερηφάνους ἀλαζόνας, 'backbiters, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful'). *Katalalous* (κατάλαλος, backbiters/slanderers) are public detractors, contrasting with whisperers (v. 29). *Theostygeis* (θεοστυγεῖς, haters of God) is the culmination—active hostility toward God, not mere indifference. *Hubristas* (ὑβριστής, insolent/violent) describes arrogant brutality. *Hyperēphanous* (ὑπερήφανος, arrogant/haughty) is pride, exalting self above others and God. *Alazonas* (ἀλαζών, boasters/braggarts) are self-promoters.

Paul adds: *epheuretās kakōn goneusin apeitheis* (ἐφευρετὰς κακῶν γονεῦσιν ἀπειθεῖς, 'inventors of evil, disobedient to parents'). *Epheuretās kakōn* (ἐφευρετής κακῶν, inventors of evil) describes creative wickedness, devising new sins. *Goneusin apeitheis* (γονεῦσιν ἀπειθεῖς, disobedient to parents) violates the fifth commandment (Exodus 20:12), foundational to social order. Rebellion against parental authority reflects rebellion against God's authority. Cultures that lose respect for parents lose moral cohesion.

## Historical Context

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Roman culture valued pietas (duty to family and state), yet hypocrisy abounded—public virtue masked private vice. Emperors claimed divinity yet murdered rivals and family members. Philosophers taught virtue yet practiced vice. Jewish readers would recognize these vices as characterizing Gentile paganism, only to be confronted in chapter 2 with Jewish hypocrisy. Paul's point: all humanity is culpable before God, needing the righteousness that comes by faith.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How does 'hating God' (θεοστυγής) manifest in culture—is it overt atheism or subtle autonomy and indifference?
2. What does it mean to be 'inventors of evil' (ἐφευρετής κακῶν) in an age of technology, media, and moral innovation?
3. How does disobedience to parents (γονεῦσιν ἀπειθής) in youth lead to broader societal breakdown and disorder?

## Interlinear Text

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καταλάλους θεοστυγεῖς ὑβριστάς ὑπερηφάνους ἀλαζόνας

Backbiters

G2637

haters of God

G2319

despiteful

G5197

proud

G5244

boasters

G213

ἐφευρετὰς κακῶν γονεῦσιν ἀπειθεῖς

inventors

G2182

of evil things

G2556

to parents

G1118

disobedient

G545

## Additional Cross-References

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**2 Timothy 3:2** (Parallel theme): For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

**2 Peter 2:18** (Parallel theme): For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

**Jude 1:16** (Parallel theme): These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

**James 4:16** (Evil): But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

**James 3:5** (Parallel theme): Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!