

Romans 1:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

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

The vice list continues: katalalous theostygeis hubristās hyperēphanous alazonas (καταλάλους θεοστυγεῖς ὕβριστὰς 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. Hubristās (ὕβριστης, 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 (ἐφευρετὴς 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

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

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

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

καταλάλους	θεοστυγεῖς	ὕβριστάς	ὕπερηφάνους	ἀλαζόνας
Backbiters	haters of God	despiteful	proud	boasters
G2637	G2319	G5197	G5244	G213
ἐφευρετὰς	κακῶν	γονεῦσιν	ἀπειθεῖς	
inventors	of evil things	to parents	disobedient	
G2182	G2556	G1118	G545	

Additional Cross-References

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!