

# Romans 3:18

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/rom/rom-3/romans-318/>

*Those who pursue sin and wickedness do not fear God.*

Paul now shifts the quote to Psalm 36:1. Psalm 36:1–4 describes the makeup of a wicked person; wickedness begins by not fearing God. Speaking of the wicked, this psalm says “*There is no fear of God before their eyes* (v 18).” The Greek word translated *fear* in this psalm is “phobos,” which is the root of our English word “phobia.” It originally meant *flight*, as in the Greek poet Homer’s characters fleeing in fear. “Phobos” is usually translated *fear* but is also translated “awe,” “reverence,” and “intimidation.”

When we *fear* another person it might come from a number of motives or attitudes. We might have great respect for a person we *fear*, or we might loathe them. But in any case, the underlying concern that leads to fear is connected to an action the person we fear can take—an action that we wish to avoid.

For someone we love and respect, *fear* might take the form of desiring not to generate disappointment. We might be desperate to live up to the expectation of a parent we adore. For a person with great wisdom, we might *fear* not following his advice, realizing that shame might come if we don’t.

When we do not *fear* God, it means we are not concerned with what God thinks. We are also not concerned about following His advice and direction. We give it no value, and only value our own opinions. These attitudes toward God are at the very heart of wickedness.

## **Biblical Text**

**18 “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”**