

This idea of God being the Father of all human beings in the creative sense may be found in Malachi 2:10, where we read, "Do we not all have one father? Has not one God created us?"; and in Hebrews 12:9, where we read, "Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?" And if, as in Luke 3:38, it is proper in a genealogy, to speak of Adam as the son of God, then we can say that Adam descended from God as His creation. So it appears proper to speak of human beings as the creative children or offspring of God. And Paul assumes that we can do so.

The force of the "offspring" concept as part of Paul's deduction appears to be that man, being God's offspring, is in some sense like God (this would fit with the assertion that man is made in the image and likeness of God -- *the imago dei*). The corollary seems to be that God is then in some sense like man (since if man is like God, then God is like man).

This being the case, then those ways in which man is Godlike (i.e., in which he reflects the perfections of his Creator) are also ways in which God is like man; we ought to think of Him in those ways.

Thus this passage contains a movement of thought from the limited, finite qualities that constitute the image of God in man, to the unlimited, infinite qualities of God the Creator. Paul says that men ought to think of God in this way, and not to think of God like a humanly-conceived and humanly-crafted image of gold, silver, or stone. As such, the passage provides a basis for asserting that an internal general revelation exists, one that comes to the recipient from within himself.

In verses 30 and 31 Paul speaks of the Athenians' ignorance of the living God as blameworthy, and calls on them to repent of this (willful) ignorance. This suggests that unrighteous human beings are suppressing the internal as well as the external general revelation, and that this suppression is blameworthy.

### (3) Romans 1:28-32

Translation: (from the NASB)

- 28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,  
29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips,