

# The Mind Muddler

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## Behind the Rhyme

### Taking A Closer Look

In the Bible, and through the work of the Holy Spirit, God shows us the reality of our lives. He shows us what we're like and most importantly what he is like, what he has done and how we can know him.

We've seen some of that truth in *The Mind Muddler*, now we'll look behind the rhyme at the very words of God.

## The Rhyme:

He pointed our thoughts down a dangerous route:  
“God’s just being mean! We’ll love this great fruit”.

## Behind the Rhyme:

Read Genesis 3:1-6

Now the snake was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’” The woman said to the snake, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’” “You will not certainly die,” the snake said to the woman. “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.\*

Adam and Eve believed Satan’s lies rather than trusting in God’s good commands.

Can you think of a time when you thought obeying God would spoil things?

Remembering that our minds have been muddled can help us if we start to think we know best!

\*Genesis is the first book in the Bible. It was written by Moses. Genesis 1-3 is amazing because God tells us what we need to know about when the world was made, and what happened with the friendship between God and man. The rest of the Bible tells us what God has done to fix that friendship.



## The Rhyme:

Like fools we live in a tunnel of lies;  
and fools without God can never be wise.

## Behind the Rhyme:

Psalm 14:1

The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."\*

What is the most important fact in the whole universe?

Being foolish in the Bible isn't the same as not being very clever. A fool in the Bible is someone who doesn't know or doesn't believe that God is God.

That's because knowing that God is God is the most important truth in the whole universe. God is God. Get that wrong and all the other answers you ever give and all the other conclusions you ever come to can never be 100% correct.

Just like the maths question below.

$$2+2=\bigcirc \quad \bigcirc+5=\triangle \quad \triangle-7=\diamond$$

You will never work out that  $\diamond=2$ , unless you know and trust that  $2+2=4$ .

If you get the first question wrong then even if you do all the other sums perfectly you will still end up with the wrong answer.

People can seem clever and sorted, but without Jesus all ideas, conclusions and decisions are based on muddle. Not everything they think and say will be completely wrong – but it will never be 100% right either. Remembering this can help us to choose to follow what God says about the way we should live even when others say something different.

\*Psalms is a book of the bible full of songs  
– it is a bit like poetry.



## The Rhyme:

On the cross Jesus paid for all of our mess,  
and gave to his people HIS righteousness.

## Behind the Rhyme:

1 Peter 3:18

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.\*

Christ is a title given to Jesus. To be righteous is to have everything straight between you and God so you can be close to him. Jesus is always righteous, and has a perfect relationship with his father God.

To be unrighteous is to be muddled up in our sin\*\* which keeps us away from God.

Who did Jesus die for?

Why did he do it?

WOW! On a scale of 1-10 how glad are you that Jesus died to bring you to God?

(Not bothered) 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 10 (I can't quite take in how wonderful it is!)





Sometimes our muddled minds forget that we need Jesus to bring us to God – we think we are fine without him – that nothing's broken and nothing needs mending. At other times we realise we have got in a muddle, but then we get muddled into thinking that the muddle is so bad it can't be forgiven.

We need Jesus to help us keep our thinking straight!

\*This comes from a letter from Jesus' friend Peter to Christians scattered around the world. He is describing the amazing thing that happened when Jesus died and rose again.

\*\*Mind muddling is just one of the many ways that sin affects us. Sin is us acting like we are God. Whenever we act like we are the most important or like we should be in charge of everything – that's sin. Whenever we act like we know best and we deserve the best – that's what the Bible calls sin. The Bible tells us that we all act like this, all the time – that we are all sinners. In other words God is showing us that we are all broken and that sin-brokenness makes a big mess – a mess that is spread all over our lives.



## The Rhyme:

And always remember – it's not up to you.  
King Jesus himself will carry us through.

## Behind the Rhyme:

Philippians 1:3-6

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

A man called Paul wrote this in a letter to some people who loved Jesus. He could see that God had started working in them and he was confident that God would finish the job.

Draw a line to show how straight you think your thinking is now.

How confident are you that God will completely forgive you, rescue you from your muddled thinking, and one day make it completely straight?

(Really worried that he won't) 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 10 (100% sure)

We need to live now knowing that we are full of muddle and so is the world we live in. Our muddle will keep trying to convince us that God is not good and his commands are not great.

But remember – when God starts to work in someone he always finishes the job. If we have started to see the muddle we're in and what Jesus has done for us then we can look forward to a perfectly happy ending. The muddle is not the end of the story. One day Jesus will come again and make a totally new creation completely free from any muddle and sin.



# What Else Can You Find Behind The Rhyme?

If you've enjoyed going behind the rhymes of The Mind Muddler a great part of the Bible to take a look at would be Romans 1:18-32. Just like the letter to the Philippians that we looked at earlier, the letter to the Christians in Rome was written by Paul. He hadn't met them, but he had lots he wanted to teach them about the amazing good news of Jesus. But first he had to make sure they realised the mess the world is in because of sin - not just because of some people - but all of us!

Once you've read the whole chunk, why not take a closer look at the following verses:

Romans 1:18

Romans 1:19-20

Romans 1:21

Romans 1:25

Romans 1:24, 26, 28

Romans 1:28-32

With each little chunk see if you can do three things:

Try to spot which rhyme the verse or verses might have inspired.

Ask yourself two questions about what you have read in the Bible:

What sort of mind-muddle is God using this part of the Bible to show me?

How does knowing about this particular mind-muddle help me untangle my thinking?

Talk to God about what you have discovered - always keeping in mind Jesus' forgiveness for all our muddle!



## For example:

Romans 1:21

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

## Spot the rhyme:

Thanking our God? Well of course that's no fun.  
We'd rather pretend it was us all along.

## Ask yourself:

What sort of mind-muddle is God using this part of the Bible to show me?

One of the results of having muddled minds is that we are not thankful to God. When we are not thankful to God it is a sign that our minds are muddled.

How does knowing about this particular mind-muddle help me untangle my thinking?

It shows me that I need God's help to be thankful. I need him to untangle the thinking that either says "I deserve it" or just doesn't think about how much I have and where it all comes from.

I need him to straighten my thinking into thinking that firstly stops and sees all that I have and then actually thanks God for it.

Seeing the mind-muddle of being unthankful also makes me glad and thankful that Jesus forgives my lack of thankfulness!

## Talk to God about it

Always keeping in mind Jesus' forgiveness for all our muddle!

Dear Father God,

Thank you for starting to show me how I can be more thankful to you. I'll start by saying thank you for forgiving me in Jesus for the many times I fail to thank you.

In Jesus' name, Amen.



## Now it's your turn:

Romans 1:18

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness.

## Spot the Rhyme:

### Ask Yourself:

What sort of mind-muddle is God using this part of the Bible to show me?

How does knowing about this particular mind-muddle (and always remembering Jesus' forgiveness!) help me to untangle my thinking?

## Talk to God about it



## Romans 1:19–20

Since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

### Spot the Rhyme:

### Ask Yourself:

What sort of mind-muddle is God using this part of the Bible to show me?

How does knowing about this particular mind-muddle (and always remembering Jesus' forgiveness!) help me to untangle my thinking?

### Talk to God about it



## Romans 1:25

They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

### Spot the Rhyme:

### Ask Yourself:

What sort of mind-muddle is God using this part of the Bible to show me?

How does knowing about this particular mind-muddle (and always remembering Jesus' forgiveness!) help me to untangle my thinking?

### Talk to God about it



Romans 1:24, 26, 28

Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another... Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones... Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done.

## Spot the Rhyme:

## Ask Yourself:

What sort of mind-muddle is God using this part of the Bible to show me?

How does knowing about this particular mind-muddle (and always remembering Jesus' forgiveness!) help me to untangle my thinking?

## Talk to God about it





## Romans 1:28-32

Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

### Spot the Rhyme:

### Ask Yourself:

What sort of mind-muddle is God using this part of the Bible to show me?

How does knowing about this particular mind-muddle (and always remembering Jesus' forgiveness!) help me to untangle my thinking?

### Talk to God about it



# Congratulations!

Well done for looking at all that muddle! Thankfully, as we've seen, Romans 1:18-32 isn't the end of the story. Paul only wants the Romans to see the bad news because he has some really, really good news for them too.

Read Romans 3:21-26.

There's lots of tricky language in there but the basic message is that we have got ourselves into a big mess that we can't fix BUT GOD can fix it and he has - through Jesus.

Romans 3:21-26

But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood - to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished - he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

On the cross Jesus paid for all of our mess,  
and gave to his people HIS righteousness.  
All his straight thinking as if it were mine,  
my knotted mind tangle considered HIS crime.



And finally, just in case you struggled to link the verses to a rhyme:

Romans 1:18

Our thinking's now done as if in the dark,  
though deep down we know; God has left his mark.

Romans 1:19-20

We close tight our eyes to what we can see  
convincing ourselves: It's all about me!

Romans 1:25

We've tied up our thinking in so many knots -  
the true and the false have done a big swap.

Romans 1:24, 26, 28

We listen to lies instead of God's voice,  
and he hands us over to live with our choice.

Romans 1:28-32

The more we tangle ourselves up in lies  
the less we follow the paths that are wise.



## The Mind Muddler

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