

Chapter 8

A Reprobate Mind

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Once again, turn to Romans 1:28, where it says, “*And even as they did not like to retain God in [their] knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;*” In this series of lessons, we have been following this cycle of sin and the cycle of God's wrath, throughout Romans 1. In verse 28, we have come to “*a reprobate mind*”. God gave those discussed in the previous verses over to a reprobate mind. The root cause is they did not like to retain God in their knowledge. In verse 21 it says, “*Because that, when they knew God.*” I believe everyone is born with an innate knowledge of God, they know there is a higher being, they know that God exists. What we do with that is we glorify him not as God. This leads to unthankfulness. “*... neither were thankful.*”

Then it says they became vain in their imaginations, which is referring to the “thoughts”, to the mind. Next, their foolish heart was darkened. Their heart is foolish because when they know God, they glorify him not as God, the result is God allowed them to go their way, and they become vain, they become empty in their imaginations. That brings us to verse 28, which is the result of a continual, ongoing oblivion of God, a rejection of the general revelation of God. It is a further degree of, “*but became vain in their imaginations,*” and leads to a reprobate mind.

The reprobate in mind is a much further degree of vain imaginations, telling us something about the nature of sin. Sin does not get better, because the nature of sin is to get worse. The degree of sin gets greater. That's what is happening here. By the time you get to verse 28, they're reprobate in mind.

They became vain in their imaginations in verse 21, which simply means they became futile, they became wasteful in their thought process. The result of that was their foolish heart was darkened. They became undiscerning, senseless. Vain imaginations cause one to be undiscerning and senseless. This resulted in self-deception. In verse 22, you read, “*Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,*” Vain imaginations and self-deception, leads to verse

23, which says, “*And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.*” They bring God down to the level of creation. That results in verse 24, “*Wherefore God also gave them up [That is he lets them go their way.] to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:*” They’ve gone from vain imaginations to sexual immorality. Things are getting worse. In verse 25, it says, “*Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.*” They put the temporal in place of God. What you have here is a picture of disorder. A picture of chaos. In verses 26 and 27 there is the degradation to homosexuality and lesbianism. It all goes back to verse 21, “*Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations*”. Everything to this point is a consequence of the previous. When we come to verse 28, we see the consequence of all of it as it grows, and more directly, the consequence of the last thing mentioned, homosexuality. God gave them over and their mind became reprobate. God basically said, “Go ahead. Follow your reprobate mind.”

The word reprobate is a very strong unpleasant word. It is a word of hopelessness. The Greek word for reprobate is *adokimos* [ad-ok’-ee-mos]. It means rejected, abandoned. God gave them over to a rejected mind, to an abandoned mind. The scriptures use that term to say that God has rejected them, abandoned them, left them. *Adokimos* [ad-ok’-ee-mos] is translated as *reprobate* in our text. It’s translated differently in various scriptures, which gives a better idea, a better understanding of what the word *reprobate* entails.

Beginning in 1st Corinthians 9:27, Paul is doing the writing and pens, “*But I keep under my body, and bring [it] into subjection: lest [The word lest means a danger is going to be introduced.] that by any means, when I have preached*

to others, I myself should be a castaway.” *Castaway* is the same Greek word that was translated as reprobate in Romans 1:28. A reprobate mind is a mind that has been cast away by God. That's very serious.

2nd Timothy 3:7-8 says, *“Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”* If that doesn't describe today, I don't know what does. *“Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.”* Jannes and Jambres are *reprobate* concerning the faith, *reprobate* concerning the truth, meaning they've been cast away as far as truth is concerned. They're not going to come to truth, to the faith because they have been cast away.

In Titus 1:16, *“They profess that they know God; but in works they deny [him], being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”* Here the word reprobate is connected with good work. They're unable to do a good work. They've been cast away.

Hebrews 6:8, *“But that which beareth thorns and briers [is] rejected, [‘Rejected’ is the same Greek word translated reprobate.] and [is] nigh unto cursing; [Here we see a rejection that's going to lead to a curse or condemnation.] whose end [is] to be burned.”* There's not much hope for the reprobate. God has already given them over to a reprobate mind.

What is a reprobate mind? It is a mind destitute of judgment, that has been abandoned by God. There are individuals who do not know the Lord, but they think along biblical principles and they would be considered moral people. You would say of such an individual, “He's a good man. He's a good person.” We know by strict Bible terms, no man is good. We know that's not the point. You look at these individuals and they try to live their life by biblical principles. That makes them good citizens. They think they have some compass in their thought process. In fact, if you sat down and talked with them about some things, not necessarily biblical things, but you would find that they have wisdom in certain areas. However, a reprobate mind is a

mind that has been abandoned by God. God is not in that mind and we are witnessing everyday what comes from that mind. Politicians get up and talk and they give evidence that they are of a reprobate mind. It is a mind devoid of God.

That which is reprobate, again, is rejected. It's something that's useless. A reprobate mind is a useless mind. Whatever is produced in that mind has no use. It is a mind that has lost its ability to think. Try to use logic, just basic logic with someone who is of a reprobate mind. It doesn't work. Their mind does not work that way. When God gives a people over to a reprobate mind, they've lost their ability to think, to reason, to comprehend. Sadly, it's to the point where God has given many, including our nation's leaders over to a reprobate mind. They no longer have the ability to think logically, morally, or to reason. Try to reason with somebody who's of a reprobate mind and it doesn't work. Their "natural mind" is reprobate. This is a progression of God's Wrath.

Who are those given over to a reprobate mind? It refers back to verse 21, "... *they ... became vain in their imaginations*", and verse 22, "*Professing themselves to be wise they became fools.*" A reprobate mind is a further degree of the mind that is devoid of true knowledge. One can be ignorant of truth and not be of a reprobate mind. A reprobate mind is the farthest degree of ignorance. It is a mind with a greater degree of being incapable of approving what is good and disapproving what is evil, because the reprobate mind doesn't know the difference between good and evil.

A reprobate mind is condemned. The word reprobate conveys the idea of condemnation. The reprobate mind cannot find its way back. It's in this cycle. (I believe you could make a point scripturally for those who would say there is absolutely no hope for one who was reprobate. I don't know if I'll go that far yet. It depends on how you look at it.) They can't find the way back. Everything that they do only causes them to sink further into the depths. Everything they do is a step downward in that pit. If you get enough

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people in a society of a reprobate mind, and these people are elected to office, everything they do just brings you further into the pit. That explains how we got where we are in this nation. Everything they do is just another step away from God. They have a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient, which are not proper but rather, shameful. God gave them over to a reprobate mind.