

The Way of the Reprobate Mind

Romans 1:28-32: 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; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

Have you ever wondered what a reprobate mind is? Have you ever researched the word “reprobate” to get a better understanding of it? I did. I'd come across Romans 1:28-32 many times, and I often wondered what it meant to have a reprobate mind, so I looked it up. Merriam Webster's Online Dictionary defines “reprobate” as:

1. to condemn strongly as unworthy, unacceptable, or evil
2. to foreordain to damnation

Now, when I first read the definition of reprobate, like yourself, I questioned why God would sentence someone to eternal damnation before they'd even sinned against Him. After all, Jesus Christ came so that the sinners would become saints, and as many of us who are willing would be reconciled to God. Another scripture that I questioned was Proverbs 16:4, which reads, “The Lord hath made all *things* for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.” Why would God create someone to be judged? Of course, to the natural mind, this comes off as cruel, but we all know that God is a great God, and therefore, there is an explanation.

When God sent Jesus into this earth, He knew that some people would not accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior; after all, it was the very people He'd once reserved for Himself who'd hung Jesus on the cross. Many of the Jews hated Jesus because He represented something they did not want; He represented the undiluted Word of God. He was God's Word manifested in the flesh; therefore, He was and is the Truth. When Jesus walked the earth preaching the gospel, He taught a different doctrine than the Jews were accustomed to. They'd become masters of the law, and they'd come to love the very laws that condemned them. Jesus came and became a light amongst them, and this light revealed the hidden counsels of their hearts. They didn't love the Lord. They were religious hypocrites who followed the law because the law was what they'd been taught. If they'd truly loved God, they would have accepted His Word, not only in Rhema (written) form, but they would have accepted the manifested Word in the flesh. When He approached them in the flesh, they could not accept Him because they hadn't truly accepted the written Word of God; they were simply practicing the law because it was what they'd been taught to do. Think of it this way. Let's say for example's sake that you are a single man. One day, you meet a woman and she appears to be mutually interested in you. The two of you begin courting, and

you find yourself loving her as you love yourself. You want the best for her. You want to protect her, and you are willing to die for her, so you decide to marry her.

After the wedding, you begin to notice how distant she is from you. She doesn't reciprocate your kisses, she avoids eye contact with you, and anytime you hug her, her embrace feels cold. One day, you decide to sit down and talk with your wife because you saw her outside kissing the neighbor. When you saw her kissing him, her kisses were passionate and her embrace was affectionate. You'd seen her looking in his eyes and her gaze was warm, inviting, and full of love. You've never seen her look at you like that. With her mouth, she said that she loves you, but her actions said otherwise. It is clear that not only has she been telling you lies, but she's been living a lie. She is in love with your neighbor, and it's obvious that the only reason she's with you is because you are a good provider, plus, her family pushed her into entering a relationship with you. She didn't enter that relationship because she was mutually interested in you; she married you out of obligation. That's the best description of the relationship many of the Jews had with God. They didn't love Him, and they served Him because they'd been told by their parents that they had to serve Him, nevertheless, their hearts belonged to Satan. They were in love with him and his ways, so they played the harlot. They entered the synagogues, performed the acts of worship, and the songs in their mouths did not match the rhythm of their hearts. Nevertheless, they thought that God would see their religious works and accept them, seeing as it was that they had no real love to share with Him. In other words, they gave their hearts to Satan, but their bodies to God. Many people in the church today still have this love-hate relationship with God whereby they serve Him with their mouths, but Satan has their hearts.

Matthew 15:8: These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

When God foreordained some to damnation, He didn't do this because He didn't love them; He did this because God sees and knows all. He knew they would never serve Him. He knew that they'd come against Him, but He also knew that they could still be beneficial to His kingdom. You see, He could use them as living lessons to warn believers and unbelievers alike.

When you and I were formed in our mother's wombs, God knew who we were, what we'd do, whether we'd choose Him, or whether we'd choose the god of this world. Even though we went through some pretty excruciating trials and tribulations, God never allowed us to endure more than we could bear, meaning, He allowed the enemy to brush up against us, but He didn't allow him to push us down. He allowed us to go through the hardships we went through because He knew what He'd placed on the inside of us. He knew we'd survive it all, and then, He could use us mightily to help others who don't have the strength to stand when the enemy comes against them. We are manifestations of mercy, showing our scars and testifying of how God saved us from the very attacks that we'd gotten our scars in. The enemy likes to line people up, and use one person to start a domino effect of pain, rejection, and hatred, but what God does is allows us to survive the darts the enemy throws at us so that we can be that one domino that doesn't fall when someone leans on us. Instead, we have the power to catch our falling brothers and sisters in the Lord, causing them to catch the falling people closest to them.

We didn't fall when the enemy came at us with force, but instead, God allowed Jesus to be the shoulder that we would end up leaning on, and then, from there, we began to catch our brethren. We've been saved by the Lamb of God, the Cornerstone and the Rock of Salvation, and now, God wants us to save others.

But what about those with the reprobate minds? How do we approach such a character, and should we evangelize to them? One of the problems that many in today's church has is not being able to identify people with reprobate minds. How do we know when someone has a reprobate mind? They will unrepentantly, coldly and unapologetically speak against the living God and against His Holy Spirit. They have no fear of Him, and they hate Him so much that they will ridicule anyone who speaks of Him. They will mock, slander, persecute, and even attempt to kill His children. They are passionate about their war against Him to the point where many people with reprobate minds seek out religious conversations so they can spew their doctrines and ridicule anyone who dares confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Mark 3:29: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.

Some people with reprobate minds do claim to love and fear the Lord, but their choices reflect that they are not serving the true and living God, but instead, are serving a false representation of Him. They are serving idols: their own versions of who they think God should be as opposed to who He really is. The god they serve accepts sin in all forms, and the death of his son was his way of giving them a license to sin against him. Instead of being transformed by the renewing of their minds, they deform the true Word and try to force other believers to change their minds about serving the true and uncompromising God...the God who will not accept the sexually immoral, idolaters, or the proud into His kingdom. They change the doctrine of truth, editing and revising it to allow themselves the space to sin against God, and still have an eternity in Heaven to look forward to. They've made up their minds and settled it within their hearts that they are not going to change for God, and if He truly requires the change so many leaders say He requires, they will not follow Him. So, the devil sends out false leaders who promise them a seat amongst the righteous without having to make the sacrifices God has called us to make.

Romans 12:1-2: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

A person with a reprobate mind has no fear of God whatsoever because they've managed to convince themselves that He doesn't exist, or He is powerless against them. It's amazing how some people attempt to use Jesus as a weapon against God, believing that Jesus's death gave them the right to sin against God, and, at the same time, holds God back from delivering His judgment to them. Jesus is the

living Word of God, and this means, He can never operate against Himself.

Examples of people who have or had reprobate minds include, but are not limited to:

1. Saul
2. Ahab
3. Judas Iscariot
4. Many of the Pharisees

One thing you'll notice about the aforementioned list is all of the men mentioned were Jews. Even though they knew the bible, they still chose to walk against God. Saul was king of Israel, and he'd witnessed the power of God many times, nevertheless, he continued to exalt and serve himself at the expense of God's people. You see, with Saul being king, his rebellion would become a blanket, covering everyone who he lorded himself over. When God left Saul, what He'd done was given him over to a reprobate mind, meaning, he could no longer tell right from wrong. Basically, God allowed Saul's sin to have him, and in the time preceding his death, he continued to go further and further into darkness. He kept trying to kill David, and he'd eventually went to the witch of Endor in his attempts to conjure up the spirit of Solomon.

Ahab's reprobate mind came about because, like Saul, he was a king leading God's people, but instead of leading them in the Lord, he led them away from God. He even allowed his wife to have many of the prophets of God killed, and like Saul, he began to consult with workers of iniquity. He turned to the prophets of Baal, and as he reigned, he became even more wicked.

Judas, on the other hand, walked with Jesus; he served the living Word of God made manifest in the flesh, but even though he served Him with his actions, his heart was far from Him. Judas was like many believers today. He accepted an office within the church, and even though he didn't have a true heart for God, he wanted to tap into the treasures of heaven. Nevertheless, when what appeared to be a better opportunity was presented to him, Judas allowed Satan to enter his heart, meaning, his heart wasn't guarded. Instead, Judas was a man given to sin, a man who followed whatever he thought was right at any given moment. Judas looked out for himself, but the amazing thing is Jesus knew Judas would betray Him.

John 6:64: But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

Why did Jesus allow Judas to walk with Him, knowing that Judas would one day betray Him? It all goes back to Proverbs 16:4, which reads, "The Lord hath made all *things* for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Every one who is positioned by God to do a work for His kingdom has to have opposition, or, in other words, someone who opposes their position. For example, we know that in order for us to be honored in the presence of our enemies, we must first have enemies. This isn't to taunt the people who hate us; God allows this so that He can be glorified and demonstrate the favor, love, and mercy He extends to the righteous. Believe it or not, honoring us in the presence of our

enemies is God's way of showing love to our enemies. Please understand that a lot of people who don't truly believe or fear God will turn away from their sinful ways once they see God blessing you; after all, many of the people who hate you believe in God. They just don't believe God, meaning, they believe God exists, but they don't believe He can or will do what He says He will do in His Word, so they test Him repeatedly.

Many of the Pharisees (and Sadducees) had reprobate minds, and that's why Jesus said in John 8:44 that they belonged to their father, the devil. He didn't say the devil was using them; He said they belonged to their father, the devil. Why was this? Their hearts were hardened against God, and they had no intentions or plans to change their minds and serve the Lord. They were religious, bible-thumping leaders who loved sin, but hated God. They caused many of God's people to err, and they were unrepentant sinners who saw hope and rejected Him. Their works bore witness to the god they served. They wanted to kill the Word and serve religion. They were religious Gentiles who hid behind priestly robes and scriptures. They were wolves mimicking shepherds so they could continue to devour the sheep. They wanted to kill any man or woman who threatened the doctrines they taught because they enjoyed their religious feasts and the praise of man. Of course, the Pharisee spirit is very much alive and still leading many of the churches today.

A person with a reprobate mind is someone who has known God or been introduced to His Word, but chose, instead, to reject Him. God continued to reach out for them while covering them with His grace and mercy, and trying to demonstrate His love to them, but they continued to reject Him. Many decided to take their rejection of Him a step further by creating or promoting doctrines that go against His Word in their attempts to get others to turn away from Him. They mocked and pursued God's people because they weren't just against the doctrine of truth, but they hated God so much that they wanted to stop as many people as they could from serving Him. They continued to be unrepentant, march against the Lord and would not accept His Son, and because of this, He gave them over to their sins. If you don't know what sin does to a person, it uses and abuses them until it's finished with them. The bible tells us that when sin is finished, it brings forth death. In order for something to finish, it must first start, and then, continue until it has finished. Sin gets in the members of a person's body, perverts their mind, and uses them to hurt, contaminate and confuse others, but once sin is finished, it discards the body it was using. They are empty vessels who have abandoned the love of God to follow the ways and cultures of this world. The religious reprobates despise the holy elect of God. They sing songs of praise, they worship the graven images of who they think God is, and they visit religious establishments in their attempts to serve the god they've erected in their hearts. Nevertheless, when a vessel of holiness is amongst them, they pursue that vessel and attempt to shatter it with their persecutions, rumors, and unmerciful words. They did not retain God in their knowledge, therefore, they've submitted themselves to the doctrines of demons, and they justify their ways by attempting to cover themselves with the very Word they refuse to submit to.

Whenever you come across someone with a reprobate mind, you've got to understand that they are unreachable. Once a person makes it clear that they do not serve the living God and have no desire to serve Him, the only thing you can do is demonstrate the love of God to them through your life. But once a person starts marching against God and spreading demonic doctrine, it is never wise to engage in an argument with them or try to convince them of the truth. You can't convince someone to serve the Lord; He has to draw their hearts. If He hasn't drawn their hearts to Him, your words will be nothing more than empty missiles that carry no power to them. It's not uncommon to see believers arguing with reprobates, and by doing so, they enter fights that God is not in. Please understand that Christ has already won the war; we don't have to fight anymore. All we have to do is be fishermen of men and draw, encourage, sharpen God's people, and walk in unity with the souls God has reserved for Himself. The sad, but unpopular truth is there are some souls who won't be won. They've made up their minds that they don't want any part of God, and they'll use many justifications as to why they won't serve Him. You can't keep pursuing such a soul, but instead, you have to be the light of Christ so that if their minds aren't reprobate, they will turn and follow the God in you. Please know that Christ did not chase men; He is the living Word of God, so He went about the earth preaching the gospel and accepting the people who accepted Him. All the same, anyone who does not accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior will not be accepted by Him.

Proverbs 26:4-5 (NIV): Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you yourself will be just like him. Answer a fool according to his folly, or he will be wise in his own eyes.

Luke 9:26 (NIV): Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

Mark 10:32-33 (NIV): Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.