

"Spiritual Warfare"



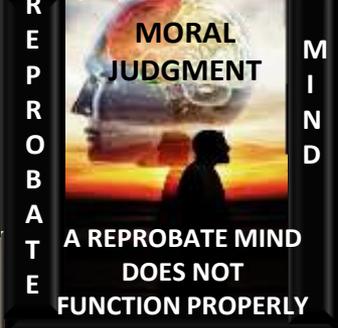
For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6:12) Satan is not just a figure of speech or the figment of the primitive, minds of the biblical authors. Rather, he is a real spirit-being. He is a created angelic being who rebelled against God and led a number of angelic hosts in his

rebellion. Paul called him "the god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4) and "the prince of the power of the air, ... the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:2). Jesus said that Satan is a murderer, a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). He deceives the whole world, accuses believers before God's throne, and persecutes them relentlessly (Rev. 12:9-10, 13).

"Our Nation Is Experiencing A Spiritual Division"

It's been said that the U.S. is becoming a "secular country," that there's a clash between "man's laws and God's laws." What is happening in America is an increasing hostility and intolerance toward Christian beliefs and values that many perceive to be an attack on religious freedom. In current American culture, you are free to be a Christian as long as you don't actually live out your faith, vote your faith, take a stand in relation to your faith, or believe others should embrace your faith. In other words, it can be privately engaging, but must remain socially irrelevant. It's not enough that your beliefs can't influence society; you must also embrace society's beliefs. Many Christians are asking what is going on in our nation? The enemy's agenda is taking a massive blow as the Christian foundation of this nation is beginning rise and break through the wickedness in high places. Perhaps most alarming blow was Trump's vow to repeal the Johnson Amendment, a federal law that prohibits non-profit organizations, including houses of worship, from endorsing or opposing political candidates. Allowing pastors to preach politics from the pulpit has become a cause to celebrate Religious Rights. The opposing leaders to this are starting to lose control of their "Secular Humanism Agenda." Secular humanism conceives that human beings are capable of being ethical and moral without religion or a god (Reprobate Mind). It does not, however, assume that humans are either inherently evil or innately good, nor does it present humans as being superior to nature. We are experiencing evidence of this spiritual war with the volatile behavior on our streets through protestors, violence on our College Campuses, through the hostility and twisting of the truths from some media sources and from the backlashes of some political leaders. The enemy screams and acts out like a spoil child but our God speaks to us in a still small voice. Let us have ears to hear His voice as He navigates us through this spiritual division.

Suppress The Truth By Their Wickedness



Romans 1:28-30 "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, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents..." The mind is man's moral judgment. It is that faculty of man by which he is able to distinguish

between good and evil. It is that faculty of man by which he can distinguish between the truth and the lie, between righteousness and unrighteousness. Not only does the mind distinguish, but also it is that faculty that counsels the will. We might say that the mind is our moral attorney. It tells us what we should do and what we should not do. This is the function of the mind. Now the text speaks of a reprobate mind. The original uses a word meaning a mind "Not Approved." It refers to a mind that has been put to the test and has failed. It is a mind that has been condemned and rejected. It is a mind that does not function properly. The proper function of the mind would be to distinguish between what is good and what is evil. Having distinguished between what is good and what is evil, it is the function of the mind to persuade the will to determine that which is good. The function of the mind is not only to distinguish between good and evil. But the mind is also to persuade the will to determine what is according to the will of God.

"A Reprobate Mind Is Rejected By God"

The phrase "Reprobate Mind" is found in Romans 1:28 in reference to those whom God has rejected as godless and wicked. They "suppress the truth by their wickedness," "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness suppress the truth." (Romans 1:18) And it is upon these people that the wrath of God rests. The Greek word translated "Reprobate" in the New Testament is *adokimos*, which means literally "unapproved, that is, rejected; by implication, worthless (literally or morally)." As we can see in the verses above, people who are classified as having a reprobate mind have some knowledge of God and perhaps know of His commandments. However, they live impure lives and have very little desire to please God. Those who have reprobate minds live corrupt and selfish lives. Sin is justified and acceptable to them. The reprobates are those whom God has rejected and has left to their own devices.

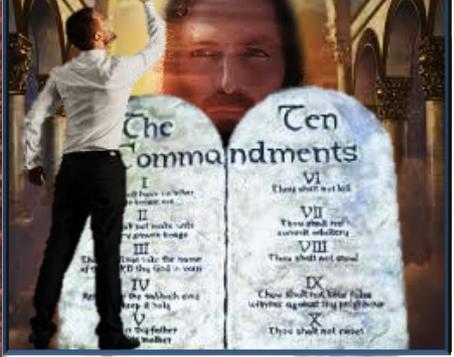
A Reprobate Mind Functions Perversely

Suppose that one must give testimony in a certain case. A reprobate mind distinguishes between what is the truth and what is the lie concerning this case. But at the same time this mind compiles all kinds of lies and persuades the will to tell that which is the lie. That is a reprobate mind. A reprobate mind is a mind that distinguishes between good and evil, but persuades one to determine that which is evil. "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Titus 1:16) Of this mind the Apostle is speaking. A reprobate has no hunger and no heart for God and His work or will in life. They do not necessarily hate the Gospel. They are simply dead to it; they are insensitive and unmoved by it. It is as if their heart is numbed with spiritual Novocain.

"A Reprobate Doesn't Want To Be Bothered By God"

"And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them over to a debased mind and to things that should not be done. They were filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, craftiness, they are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, rebellious toward parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. They know God's decree, that those who practice such things deserve to die- yet they not only do them but even applaud others who practice them." (Romans 1:28-32) A reprobate doesn't want to be bothered by God and He accommodates them by turning them over to a reprobate mind.

"God Cannot Let Things Go"

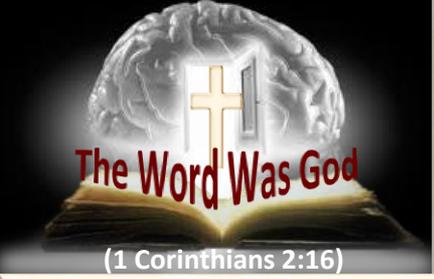


This "Giving Over" "God gave them over" is not meant in a passive sense. The word does not mean, "To Let Go." God cannot let things go. A God who lets things go, we do not fear. But the word means that God takes the sinner and delivers him up to corruption, or, to change the figure, pushes him down from corruption to corruption. God does not contend with them or force His truth on them. Instead, Paul writes, God gave them up to

uncleanness. He gave them up to vile passions. He gave them over to a debased mind. It is as if God gives them exactly what they seek, and they do not realize that it is a curse. The result is that he begins to bear every possible fruit of corruption, so that he becomes filled with every possible unrighteousness.

"The Gospel Brings Sound Mind"

"But We Have The Mind Of Christ."



"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." (2 Timothy 1:7) "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Soundness of mind and judgment was always manifested by our Lord Jesus, and we too should seek to have the mind of Christ. Perhaps Paul was blessed by the

words of the psalmist from Psalm 119:98-100 "Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is always with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Your decrees are my meditation. I understand more than the aged, for I keep Your precepts." This Psalm may have had the example set for us by Jesus in mind, when he wrote to Timothy that the Lord gives His people the 'Spirit Of A Sound Mind.' We cannot have a clean mind until first we receive the Gospel. God brings light/revelation to our mind through the Gospel. When we receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ into our life, God begins a work in our mind ~ He gives us a sound mind! He teaches us to think pure thoughts. The carnal mind is the greatest enemy in life that we will ever face. The mind affects so much of our life, but God has provided victory for us. The devil works upon our mind, and the devil speaks and works through the carnal mind. He causes us to imagine things, and he causes us to do evil things.

"The Spirit Of The Mind"



What great need there is for a change in our mind! When we open our heart to the Gospel, the Lord Jesus Christ begins to work in our mind, as well as in our heart. He begins to bring about a change the inside! The Bible tells us: "And Be Renewed In

The Spirit Of Your Mind" (Ephesians 4:23 ). God has a spiritual renewing for us in our mind. But notice that we have to be willing to do the renewing with His help. We cannot be passive about this. Today many Christians are bound in their lives because their minds are filled with the wrong things of the world. We find the solution to this dilemma in Philippians 4:6-9 "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy ~ meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you." (Philippians 4:6-9) What we fill our minds with will affect the way we think and act.