



Romans 1:28

(28) And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;

New King James Version

Romans 1 provides a brief overview of the horrific effects of mankind turning its collective back on the Creator [God](#). Verse 28 from the *Revised English Bible* reads, "Thus, because they have not seen fit to acknowledge God, he has given them up to their own depraved way of thinking [*reprobate mind*, King James Version] and this leads them to break all rules of conduct." The term "reprobate mind" indicates a mind devoid of proper judgment. When God's judgment against [Adam and Eve](#) went into effect, mankind's choices in daily life became based almost entirely upon human experience.

This passage shows specifically what happens when people leave the Source of true values out of their lives. They become like a pinball, wandering aimlessly and bouncing from one jolting experience to another. Perhaps humanity can be described as a bull in a china shop, breaking things at every turn and causing an incredible amount of destruction and pain without ever being able to compose itself to create a lasting, peaceful lifestyle. Put another way, people become like animals in a jungle, competing viciously to survive and to eat before they are eaten.

Paul exposes the consequences of a purely secular mind. When God is removed or removes Himself, mankind not only loses godliness, but also true humanity. This degeneration occurs because man is not [seeking God](#). Christ, however, did not seek His own will: "And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him" ([John 8:29](#)). This is what made the difference between Christ and the rest of mankind, resulting in His judgment being completely unclouded.

This leaves us with the question, "How can a person discern [truth](#) in moral and spiritual areas if he already has the wrong source and is not consistently seeking the right One?"

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He cannot! [John 7:15-17](#), 24 offers a biblical example of this truth:

And the Jews marveled, saying, "How does this Man know letters, having never studied?" [Jesus](#) answered them, and said, "My [doctrine](#) is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. . . . Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."

The people could not perceive their murderous intentions. It is hoped that this confrontation helps us see the vast gap in understanding between the people, whose main source for values was human experience, and Jesus, whose source was God. Those confronting Jesus did not realize that they were being misled by their [idolatry](#), as Paul reveals in Romans 1.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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