

Student Notes:

- **Universal Consequences of Rejecting God**

Humanity's downward spiral: 1. Humans have exchanged the rightful worship of God for the worship of man-made idols. 2. Men and women have exchanged God's original intention for sex for practices that resulted in inward consequences.

The 3rd "He Gave Them Over":

Verse 28: "Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done."

Greek wording: Humans "did not approve (Greek: "edokimasan"-- "to test," "to examine," or "to come to a conclusion based on evidence." Knowledge: Greek word, "epignōsis": "moral or religious knowledge".

- **Paul's Point:** Men and women tested the knowledge of God and concluded that he would destroy their freedom. So they made the conscious choice to dispel him from their thinking. (See: Luke 6:46)

An unanticipated issue: Because people are instinctively religious, they could not go from God to nothing ... so they created idols – gods that they could manage. These gods couldn't make any real demands on their self-wills. At the outset, these gods made no moral demands.

The Play on Words: "Unapproved": Humans "disapproved of God", so He gave them over" to a (depraved) "unapproved" mind. (Greek: depraved mind = an unapproved mind.)

- **Disapproved Thinking:**

v.28: God gave them over to an unapproved mind in order to allow them to pursue "what is not fitting". (NIV: "What ought not to be done".)

What "ought not be done" is the same idea of what is not in agreement with the will of God expressed in the created order.

- **The List of Vices:**

A list of outcomes based upon our “unapproved” thinking. Moral lists were common for Paul’s Greco-Roman world. Moral lists are very common in the New Testament as well; 2 Corinthians 12; Galatians 5; Ephesians 5; 1 Timothy 1:9; and 2 Timothy 3.

Paul’s list Romans 1 can easily be broken down into three very distinct, yet related areas.

List # 1: v.29 “They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity.” (Greek phrase, “they have become filled” – graphic way of saying that in their rejection of God and their pursuit of rejected behavior they have sunk to levels previously unknown.

- **First condition: “wickedness”.** Greek word “ponēria” -- “baseness” or “maliciousness.” (Some versions use “troublesomeness” -- someone who is bent on troubling or molesting others. Satan is sometimes called “oo pnhrov”: “the troublesome one.” Note: John 8:44; Genesis 6:5
- **Second condition: “evil”.** Greek word can be translated as “evil”, “maliciousness” or “wickedness.” It means evil in general and more specifically a person who has a malicious disposition. (See: Acts 13:10)
- **Third condition: “greed” or “covetousness”.** Greek word “pleonexia”: “avarice” or “greediness”. The implication of this word is that humans are never being satisfied with what they have. Note: An indictment against God – He cannot or does not provide for us. (Opposite attitude in Hebrews 13:5)
- **Fourth condition: “depravity”.** Greek word: “Kakia”. Use here is an expansion to say all humans who reject God are filled with the more general depravity of thought and actions.

Corollary: Greek word Kakia is that it is also the personal name of one of the Greek gods. In Greek mythology Kakia was the personified spirit of vice and immorality. She was depicted as a vain, plump and heavily made-up woman dressed in revealing clothes.

Paul’s intention: Humans (as a whole) are filled with the tendency towards vice and immorality. It may be vague, or it may be specific – but it permeates non-Christian society in its entertainment, its morals, and in its socially accepted norms.

Next time: The second section of Paul’s list of consequences for humans who have rejected God and gone their own way.