

WORSHIPING ON THE LORD'S DAY

July 2, 2017

Worship, as God intended, is a supernatural event. As we enter into this service of worship, we cross the threshold of the secular to the sacred, from the common to the uncommon, from the profane to the holy. Prepare yourself therefore for this most holy convocation!

Prelude

Worship Theme

Christ is Beautiful

Psalm 27:4-5: "One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to meditate in His temple. For in the day of trouble He will conceal me in His tabernacle; in the secret place of His tent He will hide me; He will lift me up on a rock."

God Calls us to Worship Before the Cross Ps. 45:1-2a

+We Adore Him

Hymn #170, "Fairest Lord Jesus"

We Confess Our Sin

Holy Father, we blush to lift up our eyes unto You, O God of all grace and love. Shame and confusion of face humble us to the very dust. Wherever You have been boundless in mercy, we have been abundant in sin! We cannot measure our ingratitude. We cannot estimate our vileness. Each day has added to our guilt. Each scene has witnessed our wicked hearts, our straying feet, and our offending tongues.

But time has also witnessed the blood-soaked cross of Christ. It has beheld the groan of hell, as our Lord hung upon the tree. Open widely the eyes of our faith, that we may see all our justly merited curse, expended on the faultless head of our precious sin-atoning Savior, and the sword of Divine justice buried in His sinless heart! We come to You clinging to His cross, sheltered by His side, hidden in His wounds, cleansed in His blood, covered by His spotless robe, and beautified in His salvation! Thank you for such a gift. We rest ourselves in grace. Amen!

We Thank Him For His Forgiveness

Hymn #175, "A Wonderful Savior"

God Calls us to Worship Thru Dedication

Ps. 45:10-11

We Give Him Our Offering & Concerns

We Give Him Ourselves

Hymn #25, "O Light That Knew No Dawn"

God Calls us to Worship Thru Fellowship Ps. 119:129-136

We Read His Word

Sermon

*We Partake Of The Lord's Supper

Hymn #263, "Lift High The Cross"

God Blesses us in the Benediction

Welcome and Announcements

Postlude

(Containers have been placed at the front for communion cups and small trash)

+You are invited to raise your hands during the prayer of adoration.

*Visitors, please see note below on the Lord's Supper.

An Exposé of Idolatry, Pt. 2b

Ezekiel 14:1-11

Study Notes for July 2, 2017

I. Introduction: Diagnosis vs. Prognosis

II. An Exposé of Idolatry, Ezk. 14:1-11.

A. The Essence of Idolatry, v. 3.

B. The Fruit of Idolatry, vv. 3c, 5b, 1.

1. It Results in Gross Religious Selfishness, v. 1. ~ Jn. 6:27
2. It Results in Sinful Behavior, v. 3b. ~ Prov. 27:19

3. It Results in Estrangement from God, v. 5b.

The word for “estranged” is a perfect expression to denote what we saw in our last series on the loss of the Covenant Presence of God. When we dive into idolatry as believers, we do not lose...

What do we lose? The sense of His presence in our lives! A deep and abiding relationship with the Lord!

That is the idea behind the word, “estranged.” It comes from the Hebrew, **זָרָה** (*zur*), which refers to any and all relational estrangement.

***Point:** This is a third consequence of Idolatry in the life of the Christian when it comes to their walks with God! Idolatry doesn't settle into the heart of a believer unless first that believer has entertained and accepted false notions about God!... How can we entertain such thoughts about God and NOT have our relationship with Him suffer? How could we entertain these thoughts about God and NOT offend the Lord? Think of Ps. 55:12-14; Eph. 4:30...

***Where We Live**

1. Relationally speaking, what do we have in Christ (cf. Prov. 18:14; Heb. 4:16 Eph. 5:29; Ps. 45; 42:1-2; Phil. 3:10)?
2. When we act upon a false image of God that we have set up in our heart, what happens to these Redemptive graces and privileges?
3. Consider the example of David. What is it that David lost when he acted upon the idolatry of his heart? Consider Ps. 51:12a; 32:3-4...
4. Speaking about the sin of lust, is the following quote applicable to any idol of the heart? If so, how?

“In the fall of 1982, *Leadership* magazine carried an unsigned article by a pastor who confessed to years of bondage to pornography of the grossest kind. He tells the *story* of what finally released him... The author ran across a book by Francois Mauriac, the Catholic French novelist, *What I Believe*. In it Mauriac admitted how the plague of guilt had not freed him from lust. He concludes that there is one powerful reason to seek purity, the one Christ gave in the Beatitudes: ‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God’ (Matthew 5:8). It is the ‘precious and magnificent’ promise that the pure see God that empowers our escape from lust. The lust-bound pastor wrote, ‘The thought hit me like a bell rung in a dark, silent hall. So far, none of the scary, negative arguments against lust had succeeded in keeping me from it... But here was a description of what I was missing by continuing to harbor lust: I was limiting my own intimacy with God.’” (*Future Grace*, Revised Edition, chapter 27, Kindle Edition)

4. It Results in the Hardening of One's Heart Toward the Lord and the Things of the Lord, vv. 9-10.

A Controversial Passage

It is not controversial that the false prophet is culpable when he aids the idolater by issuing a promise of peace when the message should have been a rebuke. What is controversial is that the text here says that God ordained the false prophet's transgression...

In the words of D. I. Block, "While the form of the statement is familiar by now, its substance is shocking, and the questions it raises about Yahweh's integrity are as serious as the insincerity of the officials whom Ezekiel is challenging. First Yahweh claims to have deceived the prophets with false messages of hope, and then he destroys them for having delivered the messages to the people. But how can God mislead people and then punish them for following his lead?" (*The Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 1-24*, NICOT, p. 432)

...the answer to this question emerges when we understand that at this time in Redemptive History, there was no concept of secondary means...

Our Sovereign Lord: There is something to be said about this when it comes to the one and only true God! The Lord is in control of all things (cf. 1 Pet. 2:8b; 1 Sam. 2:25b; Prov. 16:4; 1 Sam. 2:6; Is. 45:6b-7)...

The Law of Secondary Means: Yes, God ordains all things. Yet how does God bring about His will? Cf. Ex. 4:21 & 9:34; Gen. 50:20; Prov. 16:33; Acts 4:27-28...

Putting it Together: In the case of the false prophet, yes, God ordained their fall. However, because this world is governed by secondary means, the false prophet is fully culpable as God did not force him to sin. They did what they desired from their inner-most being!

A Final, Culminating Observation

Our passage indicates that the more these false prophets manipulated the people of God for their own gain, the more they were darkened by their sin. And the more they were darkened by their sin, the more they engaged in their false-prophesies!

From this we see the horrible progression of Idolatry: Rebellious choices compromise perception which results in further rebellious choices (cf. Rom. 1:21-23; 1 Tim. 1:3b, 6; 2 Sam. 12:9)...

WCF III.1, "God, from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely, and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass: yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures; nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established."

J. B. Taylor wrote speaking of the doomed prophets of our passage, "This does not mean that the prophet who acts wrongly is not a free agent and bears no responsibility. He is deceived because he has lost his spiritual perception." (*Ezekiel, TOTC*, emphasis added, pp. 127-128)

*Where We Live

1. How serious is the sin of Idolatry?
2. How ought we to respond if we think we have an idol of the heart? Thus far we have discussed a couple of important responses. This morning, let's add another... with integrity, we must be long in the word that it might transform your thinking/desiring!

Recall the words of Alexander Pope, "Vice is a monster of so frightful mien as to be hated needs but to be seen; yet seen too oft, familiar with her face, we first endure, then pity, then embrace."