

## Lies from the Pulpit II Idolatry

Fred R. Coulter

As we know, today we have so many different translations in the world, that you have to be very careful that you have the *right* Word of God and an accurate translation of it. So many are attempting to put out debauched translations of the Bible, that all it is doing is degrading the Bible and cutting people off from the knowledge of the Word of God. Therefore, that's why the Christian Biblical Church of God is here, which includes:

- Biblical Truth Ministries
- Church at Home: [churchofhome.org](http://churchofhome.org)
- Official website: [truthofgod.org](http://truthofgod.org)
- *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, a Faithful Version*: [afaithfulversion.org](http://afaithfulversion.org)

*Lies from the Pulpit #1* has to do with how that in the catechisms of the Catholic Church that they removed the second commandment from the listing of the Ten Commandments and how that has spawned idolatry and given justification for idolatry to the Catholic Church.

There is no way that idolatry of any kind can be justified. God is not going to give His honor and glory to another. God is not going to be found in the form of anything that a man can make.

When God brought the children of Israel into the 'promised land' He gave them instructions of what to do, because they were going into a land that was filled with idols, statues, images and superstition. Superstition and demonism comes along with idolatry, they go hand-in-hand.

Let's see what God say they were to do. And we saw in part one they didn't do it, and we'll see how bad it became. Then what we need to do is ask ourselves:

- How do we stand?
- How many idols do we have?
- Are we willing to get rid of them and destroy them?
- Are we willing to repent and get them out of our lives?

Some people believe that they have to have a crucifix always with them. That's why we see so many cars with crosses hanging down from the rearview mirror. They feel as though if they die without a crucifix that their going to hell or purgatory. Those are two other lies that we'll get to a little later.

Let's see the instructions that God gave to the children of Israel when they were ready to go into the land. Let's dispel another myth about God. God has not given His commandments to us to cause us harm. He has given His commandments to us to be a blessing so that we are not harmed, just the opposite of what people think.

If you want a very interesting Bible study yourself, just go through and ask: Which of the commandments of God are *not* good?

Deuteronomy 6:24: "And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes—to fear the LORD our God **for our good always** so that He might preserve us alive, as *it is* today. And **it shall be righteousness for us if...** [if you're doing what God says, it's not *your* righteousness, it's God's, which then becomes yours] ...**we observe to do all these commandments** before the LORD our God as He has commanded us" (vs 24-25).

Deuteronomy 7:1: When the LORD your God shall bring you into the land where you go to possess it and has cast out many nations before you—the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you. And the LORD your God shall deliver them up to you, you shall crush them, and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to his son, nor shall you take his daughter to your son, **for they will turn away your sons from following Me so that they may serve other gods.** Then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you and will destroy you suddenly. But you shall deal with them in this way: **you shall destroy their altars and smash in pieces their standing pillars, and cut to shards their groves and burn their graven images with fire**" (vs 1-5).

That's what God says was to be done! When they did that, God blessed them. We're going to see a little later in the New Testament that that actually happened because of the preaching of the Apostle Paul in the city of Ephesus. It was quite a thing.

Here's the reason, v 6: "For you *are* a Holy people to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a special people to Himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth."

So, today that's for His Church, those who belong to the *true* Church of God, which there are many different congregations and branches throughout the world. They will be the ones who are keeping the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus Christ. When God calls someone, He's the one Who does it.

We'll talk about how God calls and so forth later on. God sets His love upon you, and if God loves you He doesn't want anything coming between you and Him. Just like a husband and wife, when there is true love between them, they do not want anything to come between them: any other man, any other woman, any other thing. That's why the second commandment says that God is a 'jealous God'; that is for *good*.

Verse 7: "The LORD did not set His love upon you nor choose you because you were more in number than any people, for you *were* the fewest of all people." God always deals with the few. Remember this, and these are overall truths that you should never forget:

- ***If the majority are doing it, it's not from God!***
- ***The majority has never been right!***

*That especially applies to religion!*

Verse 8: "But because the LORD loved you and because He would keep the oath, which He had sworn to your fathers... [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob] ...the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of bondage from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Therefore, know that the LORD your God, He *is* God, the faithful God Who keeps covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations" (vs 8-9).

That is still true today, because we're going to see about loving God and keeping the commandments.

- Does God deal directly with people? *Yes, He does!*
- Can He punish them? *Yes, He can!*
- Does He give them space for repentance? *Yes, He does!*

That's why the wicked are not destroyed immediately! He says to the wicked, 'He has no delight in the death of the wicked, but that they repent, they changed, they return to God. However, there comes a point:

Verse 10: "And He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them..." Think about how many people are long-lived:

- who have hated God

- who have turned against God
- who have gone after satanism and devil-worship

Today a lot of people are so enthralled, as a matter of fact are mesmerized and hypnotized, with various forms of rock music, hip-hop music and rap music. How long have these—especially the debased performers and artists (so-called)—lived. They get involved in drunkenness and drugs, adultery and fornication, all the sexuality and every sin under the sun! And they reject God.

The one group called KISS is *Knights in the Service of Satan*. And there are different ones like Alice Cooper. Well, they all die at a very young age! Why? *Because they reject the commandments of God!* That needs to be a lesson for us. Ninety-nine percent of that music is *not from God!* It's from Satan the devil!

God says that he will take care of the wicked; "...He will not be slow to repay him who hates Him. He will repay him to his face. You shall, therefore, keep the commandments and the statutes and the judgments, which I command you today to do them. And it shall come to pass, if you hearken to these judgments to keep and practice them, *then* the LORD your God shall keep with you the covenant and the mercy, which He swore to your fathers. And **He will love you and bless you and multiply you.** He will also bless the fruit of your womb, and the fruit of your land, your grain, and your wine, and your oil, the increase of your cattle and the flocks of your sheep, in the land, which He swore to your fathers to give you. **You shall be blessed above all people.** There shall not be male or female barren among you or among your livestock. And **the LORD will take away from you all sickness and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt,** which you know, upon you. But He will lay them upon all who hate you" (vs 10-15). ***That's quite a blessing!***

- Why would you not want to have this kind of God on your side?
- Why would you not want to love this kind of God?
- Why is that people turn against God?

*Because they don't love Him and they don't want to keep His commandments!* Especially when people have come through—like this generation has—WWII, Korean War, Vietnam War and so forth. There has been a progressive degeneration of morals. Likewise with it, almost parallel, is a progressive degeneration of the Word of God through strange and weird translations, as they are coming now.

We saw in part one how the children of

Israel constantly went after Baal and Ashtoroth. We saw that Baal is the sun-god, and all the images to the sun, all the churches and cathedrals and so many of even so-called Christian churches have, are actually places of Baal-worship. They face the East and they meet on Sunday, which is the day of the sun, and Israel is always given itself to this.

When I talk about Israel, do not think about the 13-million people who call themselves Jews today. The children of Israel came from all 12 tribes and had become great and mighty nations in the world, of which the United States, Canada, Britain, Australia and the Northwestern democracies of Europe are the descendants. So, when I speak of the children of Israel, that's what you need to have in mind. The Jews are scattered amongst the children of Israel, wherever they are for the punishment that God brought upon them. *All Israel* went after Baal-worship!

Now, there was a conflict between King Ahab and Elijah, the prophet of God. What we are going to see is how people view things. For example, today people say, 'Why does God allow this? Why does God allow that? Why does this happen?' But they never ask:

- Why did they leave God?
- Why do they not keep His commandments?
- Why do they reject the true Word of God?
- Can you expect the blessings of God when you reject Him and follow other gods? *Of course not!*

So, this is the setting that we have here with Ahab, who went after all the pagan gods. As a matter of fact, Ahab married the daughter of the high priest of Baal in Phoenicia, and she helped bring—her name was Jezebel—pagan-worship and idol-worship to all Israel. And true to God's Word, He always sends a prophet to warn. Ahab didn't like that, because he thought that Elijah was causing the problems that they were suffering, because they were in the midst of a three and half year drought.

1-Kings 18:17: "And it came to pass when Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, 'Are you he that troubles Israel?' And he answered, 'I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have in that you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and you have followed Baalim'" (vs 17-18)—the sun-god; all the versions of it.

We have a modern day version of that, like an ex-President who has caused all kinds of debauchery to fill the land because of his conduct. He does exactly the same thing in his book *My Life*; he blames everybody but himself. It's like King Ahab, what's new in the world? Human nature is the

same!

Verse 19: "'Now, therefore, send *and* gather to me all Israel to Mount Carmel, and four hundred and fifty of the prophets of Baal, and four hundred of the prophets of Asherah... [they had 850 denominations!] ...who eat at Jezebel's table.'" That's sounds about right for today. Just looking at the listing of churches and you'll find that there are about 850 different denominations.

Verse 20: "Then Ahab sent to all the children of Israel and gathered the prophets together to Mount Carmel. And Elijah came to all the people and said, 'How long will you vacillate between two different opinions? If the LORD *is* God, follow Him. But if Baal is God, *then* follow him.' And the people did not answer him a word" (vs 20-21).

With too many people, God isn't a reality, God is an opinion. What is meant by *opinion*. Let's just take the one *you shall not commit adultery*. Or *you shall not make any graven image of any kind, of any likeness*. Ask them:

- Why do you have this?
- Why do you do this?
- Don't you know that God says you shouldn't do that?
  - ✓ *those are old fashioned laws*
  - ✓ *we don't need them those today*
  - ✓ *I believe that we can do anything we desire and God will bless us*

That is not true! That's an opinion! Remember that ***too many people believe that their opinions are true because they believe them!***

So, what we at Christian Biblical Church of God and **truthofgod.org** are trying to show people is that there is the *Truth of God* and if you don't believe the Truth of God it really doesn't matter what you believe, because it's not in accord with the Word of God.

God has given free choice so that you can believe. However, every single individual is going to judged for what he or she chooses to do. That's just the way it is. In the case of idolatry that we have seen, they're cutoff from God. In the case of sexual immorality, God has many punishments:

- many venereal diseases
- broken marriages
- broken lives
- delinquent children
- all the mental, emotional and spiritual problems

These all go with it, because they do not keep the commandments of God. God is *an opinion* to them. You ask an adulterer, 'Don't you think you ought to

quite committing adultery? The Bible says that you should.' And he will answer back and say, 'Well, I don't believe the Bible.' Then when he or she gets in trouble they want to turn to God. Unless there is true repentance, there isn't going to be any answer from God. So, they're stuck in opinion.

- What is your opinion about God?
- What is your opinion about the New Testament?
- What is your opinion about the Old Testament?
- Does it conform with the true Word of God?
- Do you actually believe God?

Not just believe that He exists, but believe Him to obey Him. What Elijah was showing here is that you cannot approach God with an opinion; ***you have to believe Him!*** They had two opinions. Some said, 'The Lord is God,' and others said, 'Baal is God.' So, Elijah is going to prove Who God is!

Verse 22: "And Elijah said to the people, 'I, I alone, remain a prophet of the LORD. But Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Now, let them give us two bulls, and let them choose one bull for themselves, and cut it in pieces and lay *it* on wood. But place no fire *under it*. And I will dress the other bull and lay it on wood, and place no fire *under it*. And you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD. And it shall be, the God that answers by fire, He is God.' And all the people answered and said, 'The word *is* good.' And Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, 'Choose one bull for yourselves, and prepare first, for you *are* many. And call on the name of your god, but place no fire *under it*.' So, they took the bull, which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, 'O Baal, hear us.' But there was no voice, nor any who answered. Then they leaped upon the altar, which was made. Now, it came to pass at noon Elijah mocked them and said, 'Cry aloud with a great voice, for he *is* a god....'" (vs 22-27).

You might try that with your idol, if you have an idol, statue or crucifix in your house, how is that dumb carved thing, by the hand of man, going to answer any of your prayers? *It won't!*

"...Either he is meditating, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey. Perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened!' And they cried with a loud voice and cut themselves with knives and lances until the blood gushed out upon them" (vs 27-28).

Quite a thing! They covered themselves with blood. You can even see that in documentaries on History Channel, that people do that today, trying to please their gods. God is not pleased with that!

We'll see later what God *is* pleased with, but not with that.

Verse 29: "So, it came to pass when midday was past, and when they prophesied until the offering of *Elijah's* oblation."

Verse 31: "And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob to whom the Word of the Lord came, saying, 'Israel shall be your name.' And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD, and he made a trench around the altar big enough to contain two measures of seed. And he arranged the wood, and cut the bull in pieces, and placed *it* on the wood, and said, 'Fill four water jars with water and pour on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood.' And he said, 'Do *it* the second time.' And they did *it* the second time. And he said, 'Do *it* the third time.' And they did *it* the third time. And the water ran all around the altar. And he filled the trench also with water. Now, it came to pass at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, 'LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that You *are* God in Israel, and that I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your Word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You *are* the LORD God, and that You have turned their heart back again.' Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the burnt sacrifice and the wood, and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that *was* in the trench. And when all the people saw, they fell on their faces...." (vs 31-39)—in humility and worship.

"...And they said, 'The LORD, He *is* the God! The LORD, He *is* the God!'" (v 39). So, they did away with all the prophets of Baal.

In the future, when Christ returns, all the prophets of Baal are going to have one chance to repent, and that will be it. What happens when you have a society given to idolatry?

Let's look at another king who reigned 55 years! His name was Manasseh. Let's see what happens, because people are inclined to follow their leaders, and when the leader says it's okay, *it's okay*.

**Example:** The young people in America today are being seduced by their leaders:

- in school
- in government
- in religion
- in politics

When the situation with Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky came up, he said that was not sexual relations. So now, there is an absolute plague and epidemic among teenagers for illicit and oral

sex. We might as well be plain, because we are living in a world that is debauched and understands nothing else but plain language. If that offends you, that's too bad! God wants it said, and there is freedom of speech.

They're even having to have, because of pornography online, which teenagers come home from school—since mommy is not there because she has to work and dad is not there, or maybe it's a single parent family, which is also a curse—and they go online and they're addicted to pornography. Then they go out to parties on Friday and Saturday and do the things that all the pornography shows them to do, and they come down with various diseases and mental upsets. ***It destroys their lives!***

Now they even have to have rehabilitation centers for teenagers who are sex addicts. That shows you something! When the leaders are corrupt, the people become corrupt. That's the lesson of Manasseh! Let's see what he did.

2-Kings 21:1: “Manasseh *was* twelve years old when he began to reign. And **he reigned fifty-five years** in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Hephzibah. And he did *that which* was evil in the sight of the LORD after the abominations of the heathen whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel. For he built up again the high places which his father Hezekiah had destroyed....” (vs 1-3).

Isn't it interesting how many times that a son from a good father will turn out to be corrupt and debauched?

“...And he erected altars for Baal and made a grove as Ahab king of Israel did. And he worshiped all the host of heaven and served them. And he built altars in the house of the LORD of which the LORD said, ‘In Jerusalem I will put My name’” (vs 3-4)—a great effrontery to the name of God.

Verse 5: “Then he built altars for all the host of the heavens in the two courts of the house of the LORD.” Made it look like St. Peter's Basilica, which is an abomination according to God.

Now it may have what people say is beautiful art, but you look at it and what I'm reading here describes exactly what it is, you can understand that that's not from God. How can it be from God when they officially remove the second commandment, so they can have their idols, their art work, their images, their statues, their crosses and crucifixes, all of these things. That's what Manasseh was doing!

Verse 6: “And he made his son pass through the fire and observed times and used witchcraft. And he dealt with familiar spirits and wizards....”—

witchcraft, satanism!

“...He worked much wickedness in the sight of the LORD to provoke *Him* to anger. And he set a graven image of the grove, which he had made in the house of which the LORD had said to David and to Solomon his son, ‘In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever. And I will not again make the feet of Israel wander any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only **if** they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the Law that My servant Moses commanded them’” (vs 6-8).

The *IF* is always on human beings! Since God is a God of truth and cannot lie, there is no condition upon God. But people put the conditions upon God, because they want God to respond to them in their sins, ***rather than repenting of their sins.***

Then God has to deal harshly. You might want to think about why God is dealing harshly with this nation right now.

Verse 9: “But they did not hearken. And Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than the nations ever did whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel”—deception, conspiracy.

Would you not say that the teaching in the government school is seducing our children? And television? MTV? commercialism? the giant corporations? Are they not seducing our children, destroying them! We'll talk about why in just a little bit.

Verse 10: “And the LORD spoke by His servants the prophets, saying...” God always sends someone to warn. All of His prophets are not what you would necessarily consider ‘religious.’ There have been many people condemning the kinds of things that are now mainstream in America. But it has forced and seduced upon the people by the politicians, by the ‘religionists.’

You're living in a wicked and an evil world, and ***God is commanding you to repent!*** God is commanding you to know the Truth! God has sent His Word to free you from all of this.

Verse 11: “Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these abominations, doing more wickedly than all that the Amorites did, who were before him, and has made Judah also to sin with his idols, therefore, thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘Behold, I *am* bringing evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, so that whoever hears of it both his ears shall tingle’” (vs 11-12).

- Did God send the Jews into captivity from

601-585<sub>B.C.</sub>? *Yes, He did!*

- Did He destroy the temple? *Yes, He did!*
- Did He destroy the people out of the land? *Yes, He did!*

Not only that, after the rejection of Jesus Christ, which we'll cover another time because that's another subject, but He also rejected the temple in Jerusalem and destroyed it absolutely completely, because of the sins of the people and the rejection of Jesus Christ. Now, God says that He will bring evil upon them. Are we having more and more evil coming upon us as a nation? *On every side!*

- we have war
- we have storms
- we have droughts
- we have floods
- we have accidents
- we have death
- we have disease

Everything that is written in Deut. 28, because we have been given the best of everything in the world, and the blessings from God, **and we have turned our backs on God!** That is the Biblical Truth of the matter!

So, here's a history lesson. You may not like it! It may sound a little 'hellfire and brimstone' and harsh to you, but nevertheless, it is true. This is the Biblical Truth of what God will do.

Verse 13: "And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria... [He sent the 10 northern tribes off into captivity because of their idolatry] ...and the measuring line of the house of Ahab. And I will wipe Jerusalem as a dish is wiped, wiping and turning *it* upside down. For I will forsake the remnant of My inheritance and deliver them into the hand of their enemies. And they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies, because they have done what is evil in My sight, and have provoked Me to anger since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt even until this day. Furthermore, Manasseh also shed very much innocent blood until he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another..." (vs 13-16).

This is what's happening in our cities with the gangs, murders, drugs sponsored and promoted by weak and insipid governments, and because mothers and fathers do not want to take care of their responsibility of rearing their children. The Churches are afraid to speak the Truth lest they lose money. We're in a serious situation here! Very serious!

Let's look at what happens when people reject God. Why do we see the things that we do today? It's terrible and miserable, but it comes

because of the choices of people.

Hosea 4:1: "Hear the Word of the LORD, children of Israel, for the LORD *has* a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, 'There is no truth...' " that's what we have today, *no truth!*

There's a network that can be accessed by cellular phones to send out messages to this network, and it's called *Lies and Alibis*, so that you can have someone make an excuse to your boss, to your girlfriend, to your wife, to your husband, to your boyfriend so that you can cheat and make it look as though you really have something going on and you don't have it going on. There are even on that *Lies and Alibis* network that is run by cellular phones where you can even have background noise. 'Oh, I had a flat tire on the freeway' and you push the button and you have the cars going by. And instead, you're sitting on the beach two-timing on your wife or your husband.

The reality of deception is so great that it pervades the whole world. Just like I wrote:

In today's world a diabolical, deceptive, guiding spirit has taken hold of every aspect of life—from the cradle to the grave. It is a universal problem affecting all nations, peoples and religions of the world! This worldwide phenomenon permeates nearly every institution of government, the electronic and printed media, nearly all schools, universities and religions on the earth. (June 2004 letter: Biblical Truth Ministries)

Understand how this is describing this nation and world:

Hosea 4:1: "... 'There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.'" God has to be removed from the government, the schools and from the home. Then they wonder why all these things come upon them. God will not hear and answer if you send Him away; *He'll oblige!*

Verse 2: "By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and the committing of adultery they break out; and blood touches blood." Does that not describe our nation today? Our nightly news? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 3: "Therefore, shall the land mourn..." Do we have droughts? floods? fires? tornadoes? hurricanes? *Yes!*

"...and everyone who dwells in it shall languish, with the beasts of the field and with the birds of the heavens. Yes, the fish of the sea shall also be taken away" (v 3). That's true, you watch the news, it's happening. They can't fish here, or there,

because the fish are no longer there.

Verse 4: “Yet, let no man strive, nor reprove another, for your people *are* as those who strive with the priest. And you shall stumble in the day, and the prophet also shall stumble with you *in the night*, and I will destroy your mother. **My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...**” (vs 4-6)—which means you go back to v 1 and he lack of the true knowledge of God.

We’re not destroyed for the sake of knowledge today, we’re destroyed for the lack of the right kind of knowledge, the knowledge of the Truth of God. As a matter of fact, we are overrun and inundated and flooded with so much knowledge and things coming in through the news, the Internet, the newspapers and books. We have a glut of knowledge, like it was prophesied: *knowledge shall increase and many shall run to and fro!* So, the lack of knowledge the lack of the knowledge of God.

- How many know God?
- How many know how to pray to God?
- How many know how to worship God?
- How many know what His commandments are?
- How many know which day that they should worship on?

“...Because you have rejected knowledge...” (v 6). If you have a Bible in your house and you don’t use it, you are rejecting knowledge. If you have a Bible on your computer and you don’t use it, and you don’t seek the Truth, you’re rejecting knowledge. There’s a penalty for that:

“...I will also reject you from being as a priest to Me. Since you have forgotten the Law of your God, I will also forget your children” (v 6). That’s why God says *to repent!*

- Sin is the transgression of the Law!
- Sin is going against the commandments of God!
- Sin is breaking the Ten Commandments of God!

Yet, what are we talking about? *Lies from the Pulpit #1, the changing and removing of the second commandment*, and that leads to everyone of the things that we are talking about here.

As I said in another sermon, God is going to judge you whether you worship Him or idols, and He’s going to judge you on your sex life. Those two things are the primary things that God is going to judge people on. It’s just that simple. I know that people don’t like to hear these words, but if you want the Truth, understand that the Truth is the sword that cuts. Isn’t it an awful thing that our children have been forgotten? *Yes!*

Verse 7: “As they were increased, so they sinned against Me. I will change their glory into shame. They eat up the sin of My people, and they set their heart on their iniquity. And it has become, like people, like priest...” (vs 7-9). And don’t we have priests and ministers who are just as sinful? *Yes, we do!*

“...and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them for their doings, for they shall eat and not have enough. They shall commit whoredom and not increase, because they have stopped taking heed to the LORD. Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart” (vs 9-11). That’s what’s happened!

That’s why people today cannot work, cannot think, cannot study, their word is no good. They’re ruining and destroying their mind with drugs, alcohol and illicit sex.

Verse 12: “My people seek advice from their wooden *idols*... [they won’t return to God, they go to their idols or gurus] ...and their rod declares to them, for the spirit of whoredoms has caused them to go astray...” That’s exactly what we have in the United States today, the spirit of whoredoms.

“...and they have gone awhoring away from under their God. They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks and poplars and elms because its shade is good...” (vs 12-13).

They don’t do that today. They go to bars and nightclubs, all of these places. Just like it says in the New Testament, men don’t come to the Light, because their deeds are evil and they don’t want them exposed.

“...So, your daughters shall commit whoredom, and your brides shall commit adultery. Will I not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom, or your wives when they commit adultery? *Even* the men themselves go aside with whores, and they sacrifice with temple prostitutes. The people *who* do not understand shall fall” (vs 13-14).

There’s a date coming upon this nation that it’s going to fall. When it falls you’re going to run around and wonder what’s happening. I’ll tell you what’s happening: ***God’s punishment has come directly in your neighborhood!***

Let’s see more about idolatry and the progression of how this takes place. Let’s see what happens when a people reject their God. There are automatic penalties.

Some people are ‘religious’ who reject God

who don't think they reject Him. They say they don't have to keep the commandments today, 'Jesus did it for us.' As Martin Luther said, 'You can commit adultery a thousand times a day, or a murder a thousand times a day, and nothing can separate you from God because His grace is stronger.' **Nonsense! A lie!**

What we have covered here is just a sampling of history. You could go into any society and see the punishments are the same. How about Pompeii, covered with all the volcanic ash. What did they find? *People whoring, and caught in all kinds of perverse positions, and their death was entombed in the dust!* It hardened so when the flesh and bones inside rotted, it was almost as if there were a casting of that person. This goes all the way back to Adam and Eve.

Romans 1:18: "Indeed, *the* wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the Truth in unrighteousness." Don't they do that?

- we don't want the Bible read
- we can't have public readings
- can't have the Ten Commandments in the courthouse
- can't teach the Bible in the school, but you can teach all kinds of perverted sex

Verse 19: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest among them, for God has manifested *it* to them." They know about God. They say they believe in evolution but they've never proved evolution one iota! They can't even find a missing link.

Verse 20: "For the invisible things of Him are perceived from *the* creation of *the* world, being understood by the things that were made—both His eternal power and Godhead—**so that they are without excuse.**"

All these 'great' intellectual professors and scientists and scholars, who reject God ***are without excuse!*** It doesn't matter what they may think they are, or who they claim to be. It matters what God says.

Verse 21: "**Because when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful;** but they became vain in their own reasonings, and their foolish hearts were darkened. While professing themselves to be *the* wise ones, **they became fools and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of an image of corruptible man,** and of birds, and four-footed creatures, and creeping things" (vs 21-23)—all idols!

When there's idolatry, what happens? *God*

*deals with them!* Didn't God say that He would deal with them face-to-face? ***Yes, He did!***

Verse 24: "For this cause, God also abandoned them..." If you don't want God in your life, He'll be obliged to leave. ***If you want Him in your life, you'd better repent!***

"...abandoned them to uncleanness through the lusts of their hearts..." (v 24). The first thing that happens is that you're given to your own lusts. That's what happens.

"...to disgrace their own bodies between themselves" (v 24). Could not be anymore manifest than same sex marriage is today, and all forms of perversion and homosexuality.

Verse 25: "Who exchanged the Truth of God for the lie; and they worshiped and served the created thing more than the One Who is Creator, Who is blessed into the ages. Amen."

Notice, we're going to see God does it again, v 26: "For this cause, God abandoned them to disgraceful passions; for even their women changed the natural use of *sex* into that which is contrary to nature; and in the same manner also the men, having left the natural use of *sex* with the woman, were inflamed in their lustful passions toward one another—men with men shamelessly committing lewd *acts*, and **receiving back within themselves a fitting penalty for their error.** And in exact proportion as they did not consent to have God in *their* knowledge..." (vs 26-28).

That says a lot. There are some people who have some knowledge of God, so God gives it in proportion. Some knowledge is better than no knowledge, but some knowledge of God is not saving knowledge of God. It may give a person a better life in their lives and in the world, but here's how precise the judgment of God is:

Verse 28: "And in exact proportion as they did not consent to have God in *their* knowledge, God abandoned them to **a reprobate mind...**"—most clearly understood in what is called today 'post modern thinking.' That is ***minds void of judgment and understanding!***

"...to practice *those* things that are immoral; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, malice; full of envy, murder, strife, guile, evil dispositions; whisperers, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things *and practices*; disobedient to parents, void of understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable *and* unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that **those who commit such things are worthy of death, not only practice**



**these things themselves, but also approve of those who commit them**” (vs 28-32).

I had an opportunity to go on Direct TV and found 400 channels, and what I found I just read. It was amazing! I have cable and there’s nothing on. Why? Because it’s given over to all this stupidity and nonsense and sin. All that does is spread more sin and multiply it and exacerbate the problem. It’s really something. There needs to come a time for repentance!

Lest anyone think I’m picking on them, let’s see what Jesus said; Luke 13:1: “Now, at the same time, *there* were present some who were telling Him about the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answered *and* said to them, ‘Do you suppose that these Galileans were sinners above all Galileans, because they suffered such things? No, I tell you; but if you do not repent, you shall all likewise perish’” (vs 1-3).

God expects repentance. Can people repent of these sins that we have mentioned? *Yes! If they go to God in true confession, on their knees and praying to God for forgiveness and blotting out their sins as the Bible shows that repentance ought to be!*

Yes, indeed, because no one is above the judgment of God, that’s what He’s saying here. So, if something happens to someone, which is awful and evil like in this case where Pilate took and killed them and had their blood mingled with their sacrifices... Some people would make a judgment, ‘God had to do that because they were evil people.’ Maybe they were, maybe they weren’t. So, He’s saying that unless you repent you’re going to likewise perish.

Verse 4: “Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them; do you suppose that these were debtors above all men who dwelt in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but if you do not repent, you shall all likewise perish” (vs 4-5). That’s what God wants!

Now let’s see what happens with real repentance. Let’s see what the Apostle Paul preached. Paul went to the pagan city of Athens—the center of pagan worship in Greece, right there at the Acropolis, where the great temples to the gods were, and all the idols and so forth were.

Acts 17:16: “But while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he saw *that* the city *was* wholly given to idolatry... [that’s what we’re talking about, the sins that come as a result of idolatry] ...*and* his spirit was sorely moved within him. Because of this, he reasoned earnestly in the synagogue with the Jews and those who worshiped *there*, and daily in the marketplace with those who met with *him*. Then

some philosophers of the Epicureans and the Stoics encountered him. And some *of them* said, ‘What will this babbler have to say?’ And some *said*, ‘He seems to be a preacher of foreign gods,’ because he was preaching to them the Gospel *of* Jesus and the resurrection” (vs 16-18)—which is also the Gospel of Repentance.

Verse 19: “And they took him and brought *him* to Mars Hill... [the greatest speaking place in all Athens] ...saying, ‘May we know what this new teaching *is* that is spoken by you? For you are bringing certain strange things to our ears. So then, we desire to know what these things mean.’ (Now, all *the* Athenians and the strangers sojourning *among them* spent their leisure in nothing other than to tell and to hear something new.)” (vs 19-21).

So, they didn’t have 400 channels of television, they had 400 different speakers.

Verse 22: “Then Paul stood in *the* center of Mars Hill *and* said, ‘Men, Athenians, I perceive *that* in all things you are very reverent to deities’”—which actually means *you are worshipping demons*.

Verse 23: “For *as* I was passing through and observing the objects of your veneration, I also found an altar on which was inscribed, ‘To an unknown God.’....”

They didn’t want to miss out on anything. If they couldn’t think of a god, or make an image of a god, or goddess or animal, they figured they better be on the safe side and make an altar to ‘the unknown god’ lest he be offended with us. There are people who are very superstitious that way today.

“...So then, He Whom you worship in ignorance *is* the One *that* I proclaim to you. He *is* the God Who made the world and all things that *are* in it. Being *the* Lord of heaven and earth, He does not dwell in temples made by hands” (vs 23-24).

You need to understand something about the Greek religion here. I’ll just give you a little synopsis of it so you understand what’s happening.

The Greek religions believe that all men were immortal souls in heaven before they came into a human body, and that they ‘one who created’ the heaven and the earth was a demigod. The ‘true god’ was the ether of heaven from whence the souls come from. So, the one that they identify as creator, they would have to say they need to go beyond the physical things to reunite with the true essence in heaven.

So, needless to say, they believed in the immortal soul. This is what they’re talking about here. Paul is right in the middle here explaining to them about the *true God* and that He’s the One Who

created heaven and earth and He was not a demigod as they claimed.

Verse 25: “Nor is He served by the hands of men, as *though* He needs anything, *for* He gives to all life and breath and all things.” Of course, Jesus said, ‘To the just and unjust He gives to everyone.’

Verse 26: “And He made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth, having determined beforehand *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their dwelling; in order that they might seek the Lord, if perhaps they might feel after Him and might find Him; though truly, He is not far from each one of us” (vs 26-27).

You need to understand that. If you feel that God is far from you, **He’s not!** Paul shows how to get in touch with the *true God* through repentance and prayer.

Verse 28: “For in Him we live and move and have our being...” You need to understand that. **God has made you through the power of procreation, and you live, move and have your being because of Him!**

The truth is that no human being has anything that he or she did not receive! You came from your father and mother and you came into the world that God has created. Everything that men have done is only to rearrange what God has previously created.

“...as some of the poets among you also have said, ‘For we are His offspring.’ Therefore, since we are the offspring of God... [notice how this gets into idolatry and Paul begins to preach against idolatry] ...we should not think that the Godhead is like that which *is made* of gold, or silver, or stone—a graven thing of art *devised by the* imagination of man; for *although* God has indeed overlooked the times of this ignorance, He now commands all men everywhere to repent” (vs 28-30).

How all encompassing is that? Now, Paul commands them to repent! Whether they will or not is another story. Whether you will or not is another story, because that’s a choice that you have to make as an individual.

- Why do you want to know about God?
- Do you want to have all the blessings without obedience?
- Do you want to get rid of the curses while you kind off snuggle up to God until they’re gone?
- What is it that you want of God?

**OR**

- Are you truly going to repent from the heart?

Then Paul gives a warning, v 31: “Because

He has set a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by a Man Whom He has appointed, having given proof to all *by* raising Him from *the* dead.”

That’s what went against all the ‘religions’ of the Greeks. They believed in the immortality of the soul, and that has been transferred into the so-called Christian-professing ‘religions.’ The Bible says that ‘the soul that sins shall die.’ **There is no immortal soul!** So, Paul is preaching the resurrection of the dead. There we have *repentance and resurrection*.

Verse 32: “And after hearing *about the* resurrection of *the* dead, some mocked; but some said, ‘We will hear you again concerning this *matter*.’ And so, Paul went out from among them. But certain ones *who* believed joined themselves to him...” (vs 32-34).

Let’s see what happens when the Truth is preached, when Paul was in Ephesus and was there pretty close to three years.

Acts 19:8: “Then he entered into the synagogue *and* spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God. But when some were hardened and refused to believe, speaking evil of the way before the multitude, he departed from them *and* separated the disciples; *and* he disputed *these things* daily in the school of a certain Tyrannus. And this took place for two years, so that all those who inhabited Asia heard the message of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks” (vs 8-10).

What is so important about Ephesus? **Ephesus was the great center for the worship of the great goddess Diana!** Let’s see what happens when Paul preaches against idolatry and the occult. This is so profound, because it fits today! How many people are involved in the occult?

Verse 11: “And God worked special works of power by the hands of Paul, so that even when handkerchiefs or cloths were brought from his body *to* those who were sick, the diseases departed from them and the wicked spirits went out from them. Then certain vagabond Jews, exorcists, took it upon themselves to pronounce over those who had wicked spirits...” (vs 11-13).

We’re dealing with a lot of this stuff and a lot of people are led away by wicked demon spirits. That has to be handled, too. This world is becoming more and more demonic. You can see it in everything, everywhere. We’re exactly in the same place that Ephesus was. These were counterfeit.

“...the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, ‘We adjure you *by* Jesus, whom Paul proclaims.’ Now,

there were certain *men*, seven sons of a Jew *named* Sceva, a high priest, who were doing this. But the wicked spirit answered *and* said, ‘Jesus I know, and Paul I have knowledge of; but you, who are you?’” (vs 13-15).

Good lesson: Don’t go out and set yourself up as a preacher, or intending to do a work of God.

Verse 16: “And the man in whom was the wicked spirit attacked them, overpowered them and prevailed against them, so that they escaped out of that house naked and wounded. Now, this became known to everyone inhabiting Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks; and fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. Then many of those who believed came *forward* to confess and declare their deeds. And many of those who practiced the occult arts brought their books *and* burned *them* before all...” (vs 16-19).

This mean not only their books, but their turret cards, what we would call today a Ouija board and the various things that they would have in tapestry and idolatry, they would bring those forward “...*and* burned *them* before all...”

This was so astounding that out in the city square—I don’t know how far this was from the temple of Diana—they were burning their books, their occult art, their idols, statues and everything—*great repentance!*

“...and they calculated the cost of them and found *it to be* fifty thousand pieces of silver” (v 19). So, now a great depression was going to happen in the idol industry in Ephesus. You can read the rest of the story: Demetrius and other silversmiths got together and started a riot against Paul and the disciples. They went into the coliseum there and were shouting “...‘Great *is* Diana of *the* Ephesians!’” (v 28)—for over two hours. Paul barely escaped with his life!

So, even though some did repent, what was the general reaction of the public? *They didn’t like it!* Some people won’t like it when Christ returns and destroys all the idols.

Let’s understand that you cannot worship God with idols! Once you forsake the second commandment, every other sin is going to follow.

2-Corinthians 6:14—Paul writes: “Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and lawlessness *have* in common?...” That’s what’s wrong with ‘Christianity’ today. ***They want the righteousness of Christ, but they want the lawless living, that you don’t have to keep the commandments!***

- that’s why it doesn’t work

- that’s why professing-Christianity today is hollow, empty and vain

“...And what fellowship *does* light *have* with darkness? And what union *does* Christ *have* with Belial? Or what part *does* a believer *have* with an unbeliever? And what agreement *is there between* a temple of God and idols? For you are a temple of *the* living God, exactly as God said: ‘I will dwell in them and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people’” (vs 14-16).

That tells you more about what God is going to do. That’s why God hates idolatry! Will any idolaters be in the Kingdom of God? Let’s see some warnings in the book of Revelation. Even against Churches of God that allowed idolatry, and fornication and adultery. Those two things go hand-in-hand.

Christ is talking to one of the seven churches and says; Revelation 2:14: “But I have a few things against you because you have there *those* who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication”—sexual immorality. See how the two go together? *Yes, they do!* There’s a warning!

Now let’s look at the Church at Thyatira, v 20: “But I have a few things against you, because you allow the woman Jezebel... [we read about Jezebel (1-Kings 18)] ...who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants into committing fornication and eating things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent of her fornication, but she did not repent” (vs 20-21).

God always gives time of repentance. But when you know knowledge and have the Truth of God, then you need to act upon it. God always gives a space of repentance. Well, they didn’t!

We’re going to see that idolaters are not going to be in the Kingdom of God; Revelation 21:8: “But *the* cowardly, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone; which is *the* second death.”

When people are burned in this Lake of Fire, they’re not suffering, they are burned up! God is not going to torture people forever and ever in an ever-burning hell. The judgment is going to be *the second death, cast into the Lake of Fire!*

Do we want to know the final word of Jesus Christ? *Here it is!*

Revelation 22:12: “And behold, I am coming quickly; and My reward is with Me, to render to each one according as his work shall be.”

When Christ returns, what will *your* work be? *You’re going to be judged on it!* If you repent, are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit of God and begin to walk in the ways of God, then to you it will be eternal life. But if you do not repent and are not baptized, and you do not keep the commandments of God, you’re not going to be in the Kingdom of God; *you will be burned up in the Lake of Fire!*

Verse 13: “I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.” There’s no getting around Jesus Christ.

Verse 14: “Blessed are those who keep His commandments... [same message that is in the Old Testament] ...that they may have the right to eat of the Tree of Life, and may enter by the gates into the city. But excluded are dogs, and sorcerers, and fornicators, and murderers, and idolaters, and everyone who loves and devises a lie” (vs 14-15).

So, the first lie that we’ve examined from the pulpit is *idolatry!* You can study your Bible even more and learn more about it. But that is the Biblical Truth: *when you get rid of God and you substitute Him for idols, then God is going to abandon you!*

All Scriptures from The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Deuteronomy 6:24-25
- 2) Deuteronomy 7:1-15
- 3) 1 Kings 18:17-29, 31-39
- 4) 2 Kings 21:1-16
- 5) Hosea 4:1-14
- 6) Romans 1:18-32
- 7) Luke 13:~5
- 8) Acts 17:16-34
- 9) Acts 19:8-19, 28
- 10) 2 Corinthians 6:14-16
- 11) Revelation 2:14, 20-21
- 12) Revelation 21:8-15
- 13) Revelation 22:12-15

Scripture referenced, not quoted: Deuteronomy 28

Also referenced: Book: *My Life My Life* by Bill Clinton

FRC: bo  
Transcribed: 5/21/17