



LET'S DO IT GOD'S WAY "Making God in Man's Image" Exodus 20:4-6

No. 5520

Stuart Briscoe

Thomas Watson, preaching in the seventeenth century said, "In the first commandment worshipping a false god is forbidden, in this (the second commandment) worshipping the true God in a false manner." God's concern is to protect His people from the repercussions of such error.

I. The Denunciations of Idolatry.

- A. What God had to say. Exodus 20:4-6
 - 1. Don't represent the Creator by the created.
 - 2. Don't render to anything that which belongs to God.
 - 3. Don't miscalculate God's reaction—jealous zeal for righteousness.
 - 4. Don't forget God's grace.
- B. What the prophets had to say.
 - 1. The powerlessness of idols. Isaiah 46:1-7; Jeremiah 10:1-5
 - 2. The meaninglessness of idols. Isaiah 44:9-20
- C. What the apostles had to say.
 - 1. Idolatry is to be studiously avoided. 1 Corinthians 10:14
 - 2. Idolatry is to be carefully evaluated. 1 Corinthians 10:19-21
 - 3. Idolatry is to be continually recognized. Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 1:9

II. The Dangers of Idolatry.

- A. Idolatry makes means into ends.
 - 1. Initially intended to aid.
 - 2. Subsequently serve to hinder.
- B. Idolatry substitutes things for the Person.
 - 1. Evil things, which He hates.
 - 2. Good things, which He made.
- C. Idolatry places imagination above revelation.
 - 1. Metal images are consequence of mental images. (Packer)
 - 2. Mental images are consequences of fallen imagination.
- D. Idolatry imposes limits on divine transcendence.
 - 1. Heaven of heavens cannot contain Him.
 - 2. Created things cannot adequately represent Him.
- E. Idolatry places man in control of God.
 - 1. God is what man makes Him.
 - 2. God is where man puts Him.
- F. Idolatry fashions God in the current style.
 - 1. Jehovah becomes Baal.
 - 2. The covenant relationship becomes a near eastern cult.
- G. Idolatry detracts from God's chosen image.
 - 1. Man made in God's image. Genesis 1:27
 - 2. Christ sent in God's image. John 14:1-7

III. The Destructiveness of Idolatry. Hosea 8:4

- A. The destruction of church life—when means matter more than ends.
- B. The destruction of ministry—when serving the Lord is superior to the Lord we serve.
- C. The destruction of reality—when fantasy takes the place of truth.
- D. The destruction of reverence—when God fits in our box.
- E. The destruction of significance—when we are the sum totality.
- F. The destruction of distinctiveness—when we are indistinguishable from secular society.