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Idolatry

The word idolatry conjures visions of people worshipping figures of metal, stone, and wood as though these inanimate objects can hear and help them in some way. The prophet Habakkuk wrote, “*What profits the graven image? Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise! Shall this teach? Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it*” (Hab. 2:18-19). Isaiah wrote of God saying, “*To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me that we may be like? Such as lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, they hire a goldsmith, and he makes it a god; they fall down, yea, they worship. They bear it upon the shoulder, they carry it, and set it in its place, and it stands, from its place shall it not remove: yea, one may cry unto it, yet **can it not answer**, nor save him out of his trouble*” (Isa. 46:5-7). Man, in the height of ignorance, fashions wood, stone, and metal into a god and then worships it because he or she feels the need to adore, honor, and glorify some form of deity. The worshipper has needs and so they long to call upon the name of a god for help. Wood, stone, and metal; however, have no ability to give aid.

While idolatry is most often viewed as a form of image worship I would like to consider another form of idolatry in this article. Idolatry can take the form of unauthorized practices and teaching in general. The Apostle John wrote, “*My little children, guard yourselves from idols*” (I Jn. 5:21). The word “*idol*” (*edolon*) is from the root word *eido* and Latin *video*. It is defined as “a form, shape, figure; image or statue; hence, an idol, image of a god” (Moulton 117). Liddell and Scott’s Greek Lexicon define the word as “to see, perceive, behold” (LS 227). God had warned Israel against Idolatry at Exodus 20:3. Moses wrote, “*Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye **saw no manner of form** on the day that Jehovah spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire; lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female... Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye*

Local News:

Welcome to all our visitors:

We pray that you will be edified by our service and that you will ask questions if things are not as you are accustomed to seeing. Please do come back at your every opportunity!

We had a relatively **quiet week** as far as surgery and hospital visits go compared to the last two weeks.

Quincy Adams, Robert Norris, Pat Robertson and Pam Husak appear to be well and recovering after recent hospital visits and surgeries.

Please continue to keep **Nina Gray** in your prayers as she continues with her health struggles. Nina has broken her toe and is having a hard time getting around. She currently is suffering from a sinus infection and doesn't feel very well.

We will continue our series of lessons on the book of **Deuteronomy** this evening. Please read chapter 29.

Our Sunday AM Bible study is over II Peter and Wednesday evenings at 7:30 PM we are studying Ecclesiastes.

Continue to pray for our shut-ins:

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696-1030 (Home)

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forget the covenant of Jehovah your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image in the form of anything which Jehovah thy God hath forbidden thee" (see Deut. 4:12-23). Again, Moses refers to idolatry at Deuteronomy 29:25 as "**forsaking the covenant of Jehovah.**" Idolatry is associated with "**rebellion**" at I Samuel 15:23 and "**hardened hearts**" at Isaiah 46:12. To "see" things that God had not revealed and then base spirituality upon such fleshly visions is the founding principle in idolatry.

Whether one is forsaking (leaving off following), forgetting (putting it out of the mind), rebellious, or hardened against the Covenant (Law) of Jehovah God it all amounts to disobedience. Interestingly, the Apostle Paul admonished the Corinthians saying, "*Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith, not by sight); we are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and be at home with the Lord*" (II Cor. 5:6-8). The word "*sight*" is from the same Greek root word translated by others as Idol (i.e., *eidōs*). When a man or woman practice spirituality apart from God divine revelation he or she is walking by their own sight rather than faith. Such a one is "seeing" things that God never revealed. The source of such a vision is man's fleshly mind. Unauthorized religious works such as false teaching, children's church, theatrics, food fest, lock-ins, and playing games to gain a following are all forms of idolatry. We may ask those participating in such ungodliness a valid question. Where have you "seen" such events or teachings in the Word of God? If you have not seen these teachings and events and yet you practice them you are participating in idolatry!

Consider the fact that those who reject God's laws for their own religious opinions are deemed to have the spirit of the "*son of perdition*" (II Thess. 2:3) and "*antichrist*" (I Jn. 2:18-26). A **false teacher** is one who has rejected God's laws and makes up their own. The Apostle Paul explains that such a one, "*Sets himself forth as God*" (II Thess. 2:4). One who teaches another doctrine is a self proclaimed god and all who follow this false teacher are practicing idolatry. ALL are "cursed" of God. The false teacher is cursed because he has set aside truth, establishes another doctrine, and thereby puts himself forth as a god (Gal. 1:6-9; II Pet. 2:14). Those who follow a false teacher are cursed because they give heed to the erring doctrines and spare where God does not spare (Deut. 13:8; II Pet. 2:4-5, 12).

Let us forever settle within our mind God's view of false teachers and those who spare by protecting and giving way to their doctrines. They are all idolaters. God will spare no idolater!

John C. Robertson

The Nature of Man

Introduction:

Nature is “the essential characteristics and qualities of a person or a thing” (AHD 832). The word of God has somewhat to say about the nature of man. When considering man’s nature we are contemplating the origins of man’s characteristics and qualities. How does man come to be? How does man come to knowledge? How does man differ than animals? These are all valid questions from inquisitive minds. Divine revelation gives answers to such questions. Let us examine these answers this morning.

I. What Man’s Nature is Not:

- A. Man’s nature is **not sinful** (see Eccl. 7:20 and Rom. 3:23 comp. to Eccl. 7:29) (consider the NIV Bible on man’s sinful nature at Ps. 51:5; Rom. 8:3-9, 12-13).
- B. Man is **not evolutionary** in nature (study of abiogenesis / the question of the origin of life... a study of how life on earth might have emerged from non-life) (Gen. 1:26; II Cor. 4:4 / the image of God is perfection).
- C. Man is **not like animals** in nature (see Eccl. 3:16-18; II Pet. 2:12).

II. The Nature of Man

- A. Spiritual (Matt. 10:28; Jn. 4:24).
- B. Created innately good:
 - 1. God created man good (Gen. 1:31; II Pet. 1:4).
 - 2. Man has the innate ability to know good and evil (Rom. 2:14-15).
 - 3. Man is innately given the ability to know that there is an eternity for the soul (Eccl. 3:11).
 - 4. Man naturally gains knowledge by personal observation (Eccl. 3:14; Rom. 1:19-20). I can watch men treat others shamefully and KNOW that this is wrong.
 - 5. When man sins he thereby goes against his nature (see I Cor. 11:14):
 - a. False teachers go against nature (II Pet. 2:12-13).
 - b. Homosexual go against nature (Rom. 1:26-27; Jude 7).
 - c. Seeking satisfaction and fulfillment from the world goes against man’s nature (Ecclesiastes; I Jn. 2:16-17).
 - d. Idolatry and sinful conduct in general goes against man’s nature.
- C. Man ought to have faith in our nature (Jn. 1:1-4; 8:24; Heb. 11:6).

III. The Consequence of our Created Nature:

- A. Man ought to be pricked in the heart when found to be in sin (he has gone against nature and it ought to bother him) (see Eccl. 3:18; Joel 2:12-13).
- B. Sorrow will form in the heart of one who goes against his nature (Matt. 5:4; Lk. 6:25; II Cor. 7:9-10).

Conclusion:

The Greek word for “nature” (*phusis*) is defined as “the nature, natural qualities, powers, constitution, condition, of a person or thing, of the mind, one’s nature, natural bent, powers, character... nature, i.e. the order or law of nature, to be made so by nature, naturally...” (LS 876). The “natural bent” of mankind is good because God made us that way.