

**Idolatry**

*“How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise” - Deuteronomy 12:30*

We often think of idolatry as the worship of an icon—something fabricated by the hand of man. It can be as simple as worshipping a statue but throughout the Bible God warns us against compromising our faith in Him (the only living God) with the understandings and worship practices of others, *“Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them (man’s understanding)...Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods”* (Deut 12:30-31). God provides everything we need to understand salvation in His written word, yet it is human nature to search outside the Bible for more. In doing so, no matter how innocent or appealing this outside information may seem to be, we risk becoming ensnared with false doctrine without knowing it, *“They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses; they see not, nor know...”* (Isaiah 44:9).

As Isaiah wrote, man is very good at creating his own personal belief system which becomes so powerful within himself that he follows those teachings that speak to his emotions to the exclusion of the truth. If we do not diligently seek the Lord’s guidance to open His word unto us individually He will allow us to go on our way, *“And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not”* (Isaiah 6:9). Apostle Paul put it this way, *“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears”* (2 Timothy 4:3).

So how does one proceed? Our text does not tell us not to avoid the opinions of others or to avoid discussing our faith with others, but it instructs us not to *“do likewise”*. In other words, we are to freely engage all people in eternal matters but we are not to alter God’s word. It is equally as important to check the spiritual understanding of others against the Bible as it is to check

our own. One must always try the spirit (that of others and that of ourselves as well) to see that it be of God, *“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God”* (1 John 4:1-2).

Believers are not to hide their faith but to lovingly expose others to it as revealed in the Bible, *“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven”* (Matthew 5:14-16). Jesus instructed all believers to tell/show others of the need to repent and to believe the gospel of reconciliation, *“Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained”* (John 20:23)—the keys of the kingdom of heaven (Matt 16:19).

Diligently pray that you do not waver from the written word of God, *“What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it”* (Deuteronomy 12:32).

God’s Peace, Charles Korhonen

July 2	Ken Storm	Holy Communion
July 9	Chad Kuivanen	
July 16	Ken Storm	
July 23	Charles Korhonen	
July 30	Herb Jarvi	

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