

# ACCORDING TO OUR IDOL

## Ezekiel 14:4

Sermon by Donald Townsley

### INTRODUCTION

1. In the text we have a principle given by God that challenges our attention.
  - (1) It vitally affects our study of the Word of God and every act of worship.
2. The principle in its application is: When men approach God's Word for the purpose of justifying their idols, they can expect only that as a result.
  - (1) God will NOT overrule our desire of heart that is greater than our desire for truth and a desire to please Him -- Matt. 5:6; Matt. 7:8
  - (2) He will see that such desires are the only reward received -- II Thess. 2: 10 - 12
3. Idols take hold upon the mind and blind it to the truth.
  - (1) If an idol takes hold of a man's heart, wherever he looks instead of seeing the truth that God has taught, he sees only the image he has in his heart.
  - (2) He will interpret all things in light of his idol, which deepens his regard for it.
4. Men see what they are looking for in most instances.
  - (1) Men see ghosts if they are looking for them.
5. In studying the Bible, men entertain certain ideas and images in the heart and begin to look for justification in the Word of God.
  - (1) RESULT: They are able to find them to their own satisfaction.
6. We must love the truth enough to put away idols -- II Thess. 2: 10 - 12
7. God does not force truth upon any man -- I Pet. 2:2; Matt. 7:8; Matt. 5:6

### I. THE IDOL OF PERSONAL OPINION AND DESIRE

1. This idol causes men to reject plain statements of the Word of God and cling to what they WANT to believe.
2. Some have no hesitancy in saying, "I know the Bible says that, but I believe . . . ."
  - (1) This means they are worshipping at the shrine of their own desire and opinion.
3. Man cannot save himself, so why try to fashion religion as he desires? -- Jer. 10:23; Prov. 16:25
4. One who rejects the Word of God makes a god of self and his intellect.

### II. THE IDOL OF INHERITED TRADITIONS

1. Many are determined to follow the religion of their parents regardless of what the Bible says.
  - (1) Many time they never investigate it in the light of truth -- John 8: 32
  - (2) This is "ancestor" worship -- Gal. 1: 13 - 15
2. Parents should be honored, but not above the Word of God -- Matt. 10: 34 - 37; Eph. 6:1

### III. WORLDLY WISDOM IS THE IDOL IN THE MINDS OF MANY

1. It is regarded too highly -- if some "learned man" states a thing, they accept it in spite of what the Word of God says -- I Cor. 1:21
2. It doesn't take worldly wisdom to understand the truth -- Matt. 11: 25; I Cor. 1: 25 - 29
3. It doesn't take a college degree or a PhD. to understand the Bible -- Eph. 5:17

### IV. MANY WORSHIP AT THE SHRINE OF DENOMINATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

1. Millions have been led to follow this idol blindly.
  - (1) They give their money and their lives to build them up.
  - (2) They have sworn fidelity to such, rather than to God.
  - (3) God doesn't recognize such -- Matt. 15:13; Matt. 7: 21 - 23
2. Many think Divine authority rests with the church, rather than with Christ.
  - (1) Christ has ALL authority -- Matt. 28: 18
  - (2) The church has no authority -- Eph. 1: 22 - 23
  - (3) Some think the church can change the Word of God at will -- Gal. 1: 6 - 9

### V. THE IDOL OF HUMAN CREEDS

1. Thousands are wedded to such.
2. They are drilled all their lives in these creeds until it becomes to them a god.
  - (1) Life and service directed by the human creed rather than the Word of God.
  - (2) Such is indicated by, "My church teaches . . ." or "We believe . . .".
3. Like the Pharisees of old -- Matt. 15:9

### VI. THE IDOL OF SELF JUSTIFICATION IS COMMON.

1. Some search the Bible for something that will indicate that what they are already practicing is right, rather than searching to learn the truth.
  - (1) Thus, worshipping the idol of self-justification.
2. If wrong, we should face it and correct it.
  - (1) Examples:
    1. Drunkard -- The Bible says to take wine for stomach's sake -- I Tim. 5:23
    2. Beer seller -- Says that they must provide for their family.

### VII. THE IDOL OF PUBLIC OPINION

1. Thousands fail to obey Christ because they are afraid of what friends will say.
2. Many practices are in religion to please the crowd -- Gal. 1: 10
3. If our prayers are to be heard of men, then we have our only reward -- Matt. 6: 1 -5

### CONCLUSION

1. Let us remove all our idols so that we might learn the truth.