

VI. Revelation 13: “Earth Dwellers”

⁸ and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain. ⁹ If anyone has an ear, let him hear...” Revelation 13:8–9 (Cf. Rev. 8:13; 13:8, 14; 14:6-9; 17:2, 8)

VII. Idolaters Transformed

Isaiah 29:9–16, 18; Isaiah 32:1, 3-4; Isaiah 52:15

Matthew 13:16: ¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.

It is in Christ that people, formerly conformed to the world’s image (Rom. 1:18-32), begin to be transformed into God’s image (Rom 8:28-30; 12:2; 2 Cor 3:18; 4:4)

¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. ...⁴ In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 2 Corinthians 3:18, 4:4 (ESV)

VII. So What?

We need to preach the Gospel to idolaters

Watch your life and who you image: What are your idols?

Discipling means imitating one another as we imitate Christ



Biblical Theology Core Seminar

Class 9: The Story of Idolatry

Introduction

“Our contemporary society is not fundamentally different from these ancient ones. Each culture is dominated by its own set of idols. Each has its “priesthoods,” its totems and rituals. Each one has its shrines--whether office towers, spas and gyms, studios, or stadiums--where sacrifices must be made in order to procure the blessings of the good life and ward off disaster. What are the gods of beauty, power, money, and achievement but these same things that have assumed mythic proportions in our individual lives and in our society?” – Tim Keller

Idolatry: Worshipping anything other than God, visible or invisible. This means idolatry can be both external and internal.

I. Isaiah 6:9-10: The Pattern Becoming What We Worship

⁹ And he said, “Go, and say to this people: “‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’” ¹⁰ Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.” Isaiah 6:9–10 (ESV) (cf. Isaiah 42:17–20; Isaiah 43:8, 10; Isaiah 44:8-19)

Key Principle: If we worship idols, we will become like the idols, and their likeness will ruin us.

¹⁴ Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. ⁵ They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see. ⁶ They have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell. ⁷ They have hands, but do not feel; feet,

but do not walk; and they do not make a sound in their throat. ⁸ *Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them.*” Psalm 115:4–8 (ESV)

II. Exodus 32: The Main Event

A “stiff-necked” people (Ex. 32:9; 33:3, 5; 34:9; Deut. 9:6, 13; 10:16; 31:27)

This event would define the people of Israel for generations to come:

¹⁹ *They made a calf in Horeb and worshiped a metal image.* ²⁰ *They exchanged the glory of God for the image of an ox that eats grass.* Psalm 106:19–20

¹⁴ *But they would not listen, but were stubborn, as their fathers had been, who did not believe in the Lord their God.* ¹⁵ *They despised his statutes and his covenant that he made with their fathers and the warnings that he gave them. They went after false idols and became false, and they followed the nations that were around them, concerning whom the Lord had commanded them that they should not do like them.* 2 Kings 17:14–15 (cf. 1 Kings 12:25–33)

⁷ *The more they increased, the more they sinned against me; I will change their glory into shame.* Hosea 4:7 (cf. Hosea 4:16–17)

⁵ *Thus says the Lord: “What wrong did your fathers find in me that they went far from me, and went after worthlessness, and became worthless?...¹¹ Has a nation changed its gods, even though they are no gods? But my people have changed their glory for that which does not profit.”* Jeremiah 2:5, 11

III. Genesis 1-3: Created to Image and Reflect

IV. From Old to New: Bridging the Gap

Matthew 13:13-15; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10; John 12:39-40

Biblical Theology Tool Alert! (Can you spot it?)

V. Romans 1 and 1 Corinthians 10: Gentiles are Idolaters Too!

Romans 1:18-28	Romans 12:1-2
Wrath Refusing to glorify or thank God Dishonoring the body Misunderstood, idolatrous service of worship Reprobate mind Rejecting the righteousness of God	Mercy Sacrificing to God Offering the body Reasonable service of worship Renewed mind Approving the will of God