

No other gods

February 9, 2020

Ezekiel 8-11

Grace Bible Church

Introduction: The first of the Ten Commandments, “You will have no other gods before me,” is the _____ of all the rest. When God is at the center of our heart and affections we will not: _____ his name/ Reduce him to the image of a _____/ Dishonor our parents/ steal/ _____/ lie/ practice immorality/ refuse to be _____ with what God has provided.

- Behind every act of disobedience you will find an _____ or one form or another. ““If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” (John 14:15) Every act of disobedience is rooted in a _____ of supreme love for God or neighbor.
- In last weeks sermon we saw an _____ of a devastating act of judgment upon the nation of Israel. In this week’s passage we learn why the judgment was so severe: in the place God’s glory was supposed to dwell, Ezekiel is given a vision of the _____ of idols in the temple.
- Idolatry is not just an OT thing. It is a New Testament teaching “Little children, keep yourselves from idols.” (1 John 5:21). It is also a _____ thing for societies as well as individuals.
- God will not _____ with idols. This is the message of Ezekiel 8-11.

Overview of the passage (Christopher Wright)

- Glory of God _____ (8:1-18) In his vision Ezekiel sees what he is supposed to see- the glory of God in the temple. However, he everything else he will see will contradict, challenge and repel the glory of God. The whole account in chapters 8–11 is connected together by the theme of the slow departure of the glory of Yahweh from the temple and the city that bore his name (see 9:3; 10:4, 18; 11:23).
 - Idols of Jealousy (8:5-6)- We are not told what the idol was, but we are told God’s attitude toward it. ‘Jealousy’ means the anger that is caused by the rejection or betrayal of love. It is the proper response of a betrayed spouse. (8:6) (Hebrews 10:28–29)
 - Prayers to animal deities (8:7-13) The *animals* portrayed are disgusting, revolting, and the *idols* are (lit.) ‘droppings of excrement’. (Deuteronomy 4:17–18)
 - Mourning Cults (8:14-15). the cult of mourning for Tammuz seems to have been a popular Babylonian custom among women especially. It is a worship of nature.
 - Sun Worship (8:16-18) The last scene of Ezekiel’s temple tour is taking place closest of all to the inner shrine. Apart from actually entering the building itself, this was as close as you could get to the very presence of God. To repent is (lit.) ‘to turn to’ the Lord. But these men have *their backs toward the temple of the Lord*. The description is surely both physical and metaphorical.
 - Note: The wrath of God’s offended glory in Ezekiel’s vision is aroused not by other nations worshipping such gods, it is the spectacle of Yahweh’s own people, engaging in such blatant religious promiscuity that finally breaks God’s patience and calls down his judgment. Why evangelism is so key.
- Glory of God _____ (9:1-11) Chapter 9 is something more akin to the apocalyptic vision of Daniel or of John in Revelation, in which heavenly angelic beings are seen to carry out the divine will on earth in relation to events which, on the stage of human history, would actually be carried out by human beings.
 - Glory of God defended by the protection of repentant (9:1-4) How God’s faithful are recognized: their hearts are broken over what breaks the heart of God. *Grieve and lament* are strong, rhyming words which portray a very real, physical grief being expressed loudly and emotionally.
 - Glory of God defended by the destruction of the wicked (9:5-7) The historical slaughter is interpreted in advance as divine judgment, in the same way as Israel’s military attack upon the Canaanites in the previous millennium was interpreted as divine judgment upon them. The tragedy is that Israel had in fact effectively ‘Canaanized’ themselves and would now be treated as the enemies of God, in line with God’s warning at that time that if Israel were to behave like the Canaanites, God would treat Israel in the same consistent way.
 - Glory of God defended by the intercession of the prophet. How God’s judgement should move the believer. Intercession. (Romans 9:1–3)
- Glory of God _____ (10:1-22; 11:1-23)
 - Suspended for judgment (10:1-22; 11:22,23; 1-13) Now Ezekiel further discovers the purpose for the fiery, flaming heart of the throne chariot; it is to provide fire for the final destruction of the city after the killing of the inhabitants (10:2, 6–7) God’s glory begins to depart: 10:18, 11:22-23
 - Suspended for hope (11:14-21) If the exiles were *far away from the Lord*, then they had also lost their stake in his land. So this was yet another factor in the opportunistic profiteering that was going on in the

troubled times. People were hardly out of the city before others were muscling in on their property and land. Meanwhile, the glory had departed from the city (22–23). But Ezekiel has just heard that the people will eventually return. Will the glory return?

- Key thought: God will not _____ idolatry. He will act to remove it.
- I. Idolatry is a great _____ to the people of God because it replaces God the creator with a value of a created thing. (Mark 7:20–23)
 - II. Idolatry must be _____. How is idolatry revealed today: (1 John 2:15–17)
 - A. What we long for “then I coveted them and took them.”
 - B. What we look at “when I saw among the spoil a beautiful cloak from Shinar, and 200 shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing 50 shekels,
 - C. What we take pride in, they are hidden in the earth inside my tent, with the silver underneath.”” (Joshua 7:21)
 - III. Idolatry must be _____: “For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12)
 - A. I am hurting, in a problem; only then do I feel worthy of love or able to deal with guilt. (Suffering idolatry) My political or social cause is making progress and ascending in influence or power. (Ideology) I have a particular kind of look or body image. (Image)
 - B. Life only has meaning/I only have worth if... I am able to get mastery over my life in THIS area. (Control idolatry)
 - C. People are dependent and need me (Helping)
 - D. Someone is there to protect and keep me safe.(Dependence)
 - E. I am free from obligations or responsibilities (Independence)
 - F. My race and culture is ascendant and recognized as superior. (Racial/cultural idolatry)
 - G. A particular social or professional grouping lets me in. (Inner ring)
 - H. My children and/or my parents are happy and happy with me. (Family)
 - I. Mr. or Ms. “Right” is in love with me.” (Relationship)
 - J. I am adhering to my religion’s moral codes and accomplished in its activities. (Religion)
 - K. I feel I am totally independent of organized religion and am living by a self-made morality. (Irreligion idolatry)
 - L. This one person is in my life and/or is happy with me. (Individual person)
 - IV. Idolatry must be _____. “We picture idolatry as the worship of something evil. However, most of our idols are good servants that we have made lords Michael Horton
 - A. God committed to do His part. “For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.” (Romans 8:29)
 - B. Are we willing to do ours? “And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?” (Luke 9:23–25)

Conclusion: Ask yourself this simple question: _____ do I not want to obey? Paul Tripp

- Does unforgiveness preach to you a false gospel of judgment that refuses to give to others the same grace that you've been given?
- Does self-sovereignty preach to you a false gospel that craves control rather than resting in the control of your wise and loving Father?
- Does bitterness preach to you a false gospel that carries more concern over the sin of others than it does your own?
- Does covetousness preach to you a false gospel of need that causes you to question the goodness and faithfulness of God?
- Does fear of man preach to you a false gospel identity causing you to seek from people what you have already been given in Christ?
- Does lust preach to you a false gospel of pleasure that causes you to seek fulfillment where it cannot be found?
- Does discontent preach to a false gospel of want causing you to focus more on your "needs" than on the rich blessings you've been given?