

IDOLATRY: A DETESTABLE PRACTICE

Written by Raul Zaldivar

Translated by Mari Zaldivar

As His word says him, idolatry is the adoration that the man performs to different idols, to which they give tribute, honor, and in some cases even their lives. Being in India, I found out that Hindus have more than 32 million gods. In almost every corner, there is a temple with many gods. They are very religious people. Being in India helps us better understand what the Old Testament talks about idolatry, the temples of Baal, and other gods; and above all, to understand the role of the rulers in relation to the fight against the idolatry. The truth is that only a ruler with political power and a great commitment with God can be an instrument to attack this detestable practice. A paradigm of this is the King Hezekiah, among others, who destroyed all the high places and even he destroyed the bronze snake that Moses had raised in the desert that the people worshipped. It is for this reason that the book of the Kings and Chronicles, respectively, are centered in the fact of if the kings promoted idolatry or not. On this theme I would like to talk about the following facts.

The first fact is that **idolatry is an abomination to God**. There is no doubt, God detests the practice of idolatry. The Bible is full of verses that speak against it. It's clear that we should have no other gods nor do we have to give glory to anyone but God. It is true that in Latin America such a grotesque form of idolatry does not exist, but it is true that in our society, there is a segment that yields honor to images of wood, stone, and above all, some of the rulers of our countries practice these things. It's not necessary to get into details at this moment nor give names, but there is one truth: *You shall honor the Lord your God, and Him alone you shall serve*.

Secondly, **being tolerant of this act is the same as being in agreement with it**. The famous saying says: *the one that silences offers*. To God, indifference is the same as consent. If you read the Bible carefully, you will find that God rewarded those rulers and prophets that directly attacked idolatry. Nothing pleased God more than to see Elijah behead those 450 prophets of Baal. In fact, God was so pleased that He transported Elijah directly to his presence in a carriage of fire without even having to pass through death. It's true that we live in a time when our political constitution, at least in the western countries, freedom of worship is recognized and in that sense, idolatry is permitted. However, there is nothing that angers God more than idolatry.

Finally, you should know that **fighting brings consequences**. Yes, you're reading right, if you fight idolatry it will bring you consequences with God and with man. God doesn't want you, in politeness, to not advise people of their sins. We must be like Micah who said: *I am full of the spirit of God to declare to Israel their sin, and to Jacob his rebellion*. It's true that fighting against idolatry brings consequences, just ask the apostle Paul when he arrived at Ephesus and preached against their god, **Diana**, which they called *the great goddess*. This proved the anger of Demetrius who led a mob to pursue the men of God. I don't have enough time nor space to name all the Biblical instances when men of God left prudence and good manners aside and spoke the word of God, the way it should have been spoken.

In conclusion, we live in a society where idolatry is present and our governors fornicate with it. If we really have a relationship with God we must be sure of three things: 1) God detests idolatry. 2) Tolerance is the same as being for it. And 3) Preaching against it brings consequences. With God we win, with man we loose, but we have to decide.

It is not our option as the Church of Jesus, we are either on God's side or not. Remember the words of Jesus: "He, who does not collect with me, scatter."