

The Lure of a Progressive

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Preacher: William Philip

[0 : 00] Good. Well, let's turn now to our Bible readings for this morning. And we're beginning in Deuteronomy, and then we'll turn to 1 Corinthians in a moment.! So Deuteronomy chapter 13 is our first reading this morning.

Deuteronomy 13, that's page 157, if you have one of the visitor Bibles.

So Deuteronomy chapter 13, and reading from verse 12. So beginning there, verse 12.

If you hear in one of your cities, which the Lord your God is giving you to dwell there, that certain worthless fellows have gone out among you and have drawn away the inhabitants of their city, saying, let us go and serve other gods, which you have not known, then you shall inquire and make search and ask diligently.

And behold, if it be true and certain that such an abomination has been done among you, you shall surely put the inhabitants of that city to the sword, devoting it to destruction, all who are in it, and its cattle with the edge of the sword.

[1 : 34] You shall gather all its spoil in the midst of its open square, and burn the city, and all its spoil with fire, as a whole burnt offering to the Lord your God. It shall be a heap forever.

It shall not be built again. None of the devoted things shall stick to your hand, that the Lord may turn from the fierceness of his anger, and show you mercy, and have compassion on you, and multiply you, as he swore to your fathers.

If you obey the voice of the Lord your God, keeping all his commandments that I am commanding you today, and doing what is right in the sight of the Lord your God.

All turn with me to the New Testament, to 1 Corinthians, you'll find it on page 954, if you have one of the visitor Bibles.

So 1 Corinthians, and chapter 5, and we're reading the first eight verses. So 1 Corinthians, chapter 5, verse 1.

[2 : 43] Hear the Apostle Paul. It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among the pagans, for a man has his father's wife, and you are arrogant.

Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you, for though absent in body, I am present in spirit, and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing.

When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus, and my spirit is present with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan, for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord.

Your boasting is not good. Do you know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened.

For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sanctified, sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

[4 : 08] Well, amen. May God bless to us his word this morning. Deuteronomy 13 This is our final study of a short series of three studies in this chapter, which illustrates to us, very starkly, some of the powerful lures that there are to spiritual adultery, the kind of things that the Apostle James was so focused on in his letter, which we studied together just recently.

Lures to idolatry, to false worship, to abandoning loyalty to the one true God, the God the Scriptures make known so clearly, the God who is revealed, ultimately and above all, in one place, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And of course, this is an ancient chapter. It was written to the people of God in Moses' day. But our text, in a way, throughout these three studies, has been one from the New Testament, from the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 10, verse 14, where he bids the Christian church to flee from idolatry. So the Apostles of Christ are just as concerned with this theme as Moses was. And Paul, in writing to the Corinthians there, in 1 Corinthians 10, directs them back to Moses, to Moses' time, and indeed to Moses' words.

So that Christians, including us today, so that we will learn from them and not fall into the same kind of adulterous sins as they did.

[6 : 07] And of course, Paul's point to the believers in Corinth is that they are just as vulnerable as the people of old under Moses. Now, we don't like to think that, of course, but you just read 1 Corinthians 10, according to Paul, we are exactly the same.

The things we face are common to all. And so we need the warnings that he graciously gives to us, the warning to flee from idolatry. And again, remember that idolatry and the lures to idolatry are often very subtle.

That's the whole point. We don't see them coming. It doesn't come along with a big billboard saying, this way to apostasy and abandoning your faith. Of course not.

It's subtle, isn't it? And it's deceptive because that is the nature of sin. That was what James was saying repeatedly to us. Remember, don't be deceived. Don't be deceived. Because deception is a form of the author, that ancient serpent himself, the devil or Satan.

He's the inventor of idolatry. He peddles his wares with consummate skill. And we hardly notice what's going on when we're being drawn into idolatry.

[7 : 23] And yet, actually, it turns the whole world upside down when we are lured that way. Idolatry is the reversal of the entire pattern of God's creation.

Remember how Paul puts it in Romans chapter 1. We read it last time, I think. That they, that is, human beings, exchange the truth of God for a lie and worshipped and served the created thing rather than the creator.

Absolutely upside down. Total reversal of life, of the universe, everything. And we don't realize it. You see, the whole, the whole human race has utterly reversed the entire natural order of creation so often.

And I haven't noticed it. It's extraordinary, really. It is as absurd as if we all started walking upside down and nobody noticed. Paul says, they became futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Claiming to be wise, they became fools. But I don't realize it. Fools because we've deceived ourselves into thinking that we can live by ourselves and we can live for ourselves.

[8 : 40] And so we reject God and instead of loving Him and worshipping Him, who is the one true and only source of all our life and our joy and real satisfaction, we seek all of that.

We seek what is ultimate in things that are merely passing. Things that are just part of this created universe. But we're utterly foolish.

We've just deceived ourselves into thinking that there's any hope that way and into thinking that in mere created things we can find our fulfillment, our salvation instead of in God.

And so people have enslaved themselves. We find that these things that we worship, things that we seek fulfillment from, seek salvation, seek significance from, whether it's relationships, whether it's careers, whether it's possessions or wealth, whatever it is, these things become our masters.

In fact, these things actually become our gods. But the truth is that they are gods who will never, ever, ever be able to offer salvation that we seek. But what they can do is enslave us.

[10 : 02] Make us dependent, make our whole lives dependent on them because we've staked everything on these things. Well, that's just absolute folly, isn't it?

To look at a mere created thing, just like you, as your savior and your future instead of looking to the only God and Lord, the creator of heaven and earth, the only savior.

And yet, that is what human beings do all the time. There is an endemic propensity to idolatry deep, deep within the human heart.

And therefore, that idolatry permeates every human culture. And because of that, it is a real danger to every Christian church and to every Christian believer.

And that's why Paul says you must flee from idolatry. And that's why a chapter like Deuteronomy chapter 13 is here in the Bible for us. So let's look at it again for a final time and try and unmask,

again, these powerful lures to false worship that we really need to be alert about.

[11 : 14] We've seen already, we saw the first time in verses 1 to 5, the lure of successful but dazzling spirituality. The very impressive, dazzling new thing that appears in the life of the church.

And it is very impressive. And yet underneath, actually, it is leading away from the true God to other gods. And we saw the hallmark of that.

And it's always the same hallmark. It's there in verse 5. Do you remember? It turns you away from the redemption of God, the true redemption of God in our terms in the New Testament.

It turns us away from the uniqueness of the work of Christ on the cross, redeeming us. And it turns us away from the rule of God. Rebellion against the Lord your God, walking not in His ways.

It turns us away from the work of the cross and it turns us away from following in the way of the cross under the Lordship of Christ. And there's plenty of that around in the professing church today and we need to be aware of that.

[12 : 21] All kinds of movements. Emerging church movements. Just one thing that was in fashion of late. No surprises there. It's emerging out of Christianity altogether.

And again, if you look at the teachings of that sort of movement, it's weak, downplaying the biblical doctrine of the atonement, the cross, and very weak on biblical commands about sexual morality, for example, among other things.

Just exactly the same as here in Deuteronomy. Secondly, last time we saw the powerful lure of sometimes what are our closest earthly affections.

A pull of family, of our spouse, of loved ones, who entice persistently, sometimes secretly. And perhaps we don't notice it.

Maybe they don't realize it. But it's the relentless lure to put the needs of these relationships and the demands of these relationships above that of the Lord, our God.

[13 : 33] And we saw, look how verse 10 is so vicious. Stoning to death all such lures. But of course, we have to recognize the Lord Jesus is just as extreme.

Unless you hate your father, your mother, your brother, your wife, your children, you are not worthy of me. You cannot be my disciple. Jesus must come first.

Nothing, no one can dethrone God as the one true Lord over our lives. And any attempt to do that, he is saying, has to be put down with brutal force in your heart.

Or else, what Jesus is saying, your very salvation is in jeopardy. You cannot be my disciple. But Jesus is very black and white, isn't he?

There's no shades of grey there. There's no halfway. There's no middle way. But when we come now to verses 12 to 18, we come to a third lure.

[14 : 36] And indeed, this is a very powerful one. The lure of, I suppose, what we might term a progressive society. This isn't just enticing in secret from our nearest and dearest.

What's going on here is the sheer force of numbers. Look at verse 13. All the inhabitants of the whole city have been drawn away into a very different way of thinking.

And you see, every society, every culture has its own corporate idols, has its own gods of the day which are celebrated and promoted.

I remember once when I was in India, Isaac Shaw showing me how in different places, different gods of the Hindu pantheon are particularly worshipped.

There are some areas which are particularly devoted to Ram. There's other areas that are particularly worshippers of Shiva and so on. There's the corporate idols, the community idols, the cultural uniting things.

[15 : 37] But it's just the same, actually, in our own Western culture. I guess we live in an age of transition, don't we? We've, I suppose, passed out of the modernist age which idolized human reason, human rationality, science, and so on.

And we've moved now into an age of relativism, post-modernism, if you like. Human autonomy, self-determination, self-identity are the big things.

And so we idolize the right to exert our own personal identity. That's the mantra of politicians today, isn't it?

It's all around us. People demand freedom of choice over ourselves, over our bodies, over our behavior, over our identity. That's what these recent debates about assisted suicide have been about.

The debates about lowering the abortion age and so on. loud voices in favor of these pro-choice. If you don't like it, you can choose not to do it, but don't you dare stop my choice.

[16:48] Unborn babies in the womb, of course, don't get any choice. But it's the same as sexual preference. It's my choice. It's my right to choose my sexual preference, my behavior, my gender expression.

It's even my right now to choose what is naturally impossible, to have children without a heterosexual relationship.

So, science and medical services, which of course are paid for by our taxes over which we have no choice, but these must provide for such choices.

And so on. Well, it's obvious, isn't it, that when the reigning gods in our society, our relativism and autonomy, then there's going to be very little room for a message of uniqueness and exclusivity of one true God.

Or the authority of his one revealed word of truth in the Bible. So our so-called tolerant society can't tolerate that view. And force of numbers is very hard to resist, isn't it, when the whole city is thinking that way, when the whole culture thinks one way, it's very powerful.

[18:02] And it's very pressing on the church. And the social argument is very persuasive. It gives respectability, doesn't it, to the whole culture. When the whole culture speaks with one voice against the truth of God.

People say, well, everybody lives like this nowadays. No one believes that nonsense anymore. when, if somebody ever is on something like Question Time, one of these programs, and dares to articulate the Christian view, the Bible's view about sex and gender or about abortion or whatever it is, they're the person who will be booed loudly by the audience.

They're the person who will be sneered at by the presenter. There are whole societies, this isn't idolatry, this is culture, this is progress, this is development, this is sophistication, this is real freedom.

And that's our world, isn't it? That's the progressive society that we live in today and inevitably it puts great pressure on the church, on the people of God.

I can just hear the Israelite theologians a generation later in the land of Israel saying, well, of course, now we've been in the land for quite a long time, inevitably we've progressed, we've moved on.

[19:30] We're very grateful, of course, for these early evangelical experiences we had under Moses. He was a great evangelist for his time. Those rallies at the Kaddish Hall, they were terrific.

I went forward for counselling, it was wonderful, but of course, I've grown up now, we've moved on. I've matured along my faith journey. I've gained wonderful insights from the richness of the sex culture of the temples here in Canaan.

We've had wonderful contemporary insights from these other faith traditions that we've been exposed to. They've really enriched our understanding of God. So, we've moved on, we've left that narrowness of the past, things we used to call idolatry, of course, we now see all the valuable insights that they offer to us.

And how vital these visual things are, these sensory things are for our worship in a post-Moses world. A familiar ring about it, isn't it?

There's so, so many times I've heard in the past people who were once happy to describe themselves as evangelical churchmen. Speaking in exactly that way, I'm very, very grateful for my past influences, but I've moved on, I've deepened, I've matured, I've progressed in my understanding.

[20:56] But what's happened is, they've been lured by the power of a progressive society, by sheer force of numbers, by pressure to conform.

But, notice verse 13. It's interesting, isn't it, how the world loves to monopolize the nice language, to be liberal.

Sounds nice, doesn't it, to be progressive, tolerant, inclusive. As though any other view was mean, and bigoted, and backward, and primitive.

It's always the same, isn't it, even the media, that somebody, somebody who articulates the Bible's, the Bible's line will be called a hard liner. They're never called somebody with firm convictions, are they?

Never called somebody who's honorably consistent. It's like those irregular verbs from, yes, prime minister. I have convictions. You're inflexible.

[21 : 57] He's a fascist. Well, that's how people talk, isn't it? But look at verse 13. It's very clear, isn't it, about the reality of those who lure culture away from God's truth.

God does not call it liberal or progressive. Do you notice? He calls them worthless fellows. NIV, perhaps even more stark, wicked men.

And what he's saying is we mustn't be cowed by the sheer pressure of our so-called progressive secular society. We're not to be taken in by what God, frankly, calls wickedness.

We are not to welcome those things as helpful progress or to things to be just silent about so we don't alienate people from hearing our message. No, says the Lord, we call these things what they are.

Verse 14, an abomination. Abominations to be utterly rejected by God's people and to be utterly ejected from the church.

[23 : 02] The language there in verse 15, do you see, devoting to destruction. The footnote telling you about that.

It's the language, it's very, very strong language, it's the same language that God uses about his judgment on these wicked Amorite nations that he is purging from the land because of their heinous sins.

And what he's saying here is, in a warning to God's people, God's own people, Israel, is very, very stark. He's saying, don't presume that just because you call yourself Israelites, don't presume that just because you call yourself Christians, you somehow are going to be immune to God's judgment. No, it will be exactly the same because what matters is real and ongoing worship, exclusive worship of the Lord as the one true God, his way. And anything else he's saying is not a new insight, it's apostasy, it's an abomination.

Now that is exactly Paul's point when he writes to the New Testament church in Corinth. He tells them these things were written for our instruction, for the New Testament church.

[24 : 17] So if any of you think you're standing firm, be careful in case you fall because you face exactly the same temptations to idolatry, he tells them.

So flee from idolatry. And in 1 Corinthians 6 verse 18, very similarly, he says flee from sexual immorality.

It's very striking that the languages are similar because you see those two things are very closely related. In fact, it's instructive to see exactly how the apostle Paul applies this passage in Deuteronomy to that church in the New Testament in Corinth.

If you turn with me to 1 Corinthians 5, the passage that we read earlier, you'll see he's dealing with exactly this situation where a whole church community has become so deeply affected by the beliefs and the practices of the pagan world around, particularly in the sexual arena.

In fact, in some ways, what he's saying is the church is actually leading the way in progressive sexuality in verse 1. It's actually reported there's sexual immorality among you out of a kind that's not even tolerated among the pagans.

[25 : 37] He describes a case of incest here and says that instead of the church mourning about it, they actually seem to be proud, arrogant about it, he says in verse 2. No doubt people said, but we're in a committed loving relationship.

How could it possibly be wrong? Isn't the Christian message all about love? Well, yes, it is about love, but of course, that is why there must be discipline.

You love your child. You don't let your child do anything that it wants. You don't let it recklessly do things that will destroy its own health. Of course, you don't. You love them.

Well, you don't love a Christian and you don't love a church, by letting it do that sort of harmful thing either, do you? No, verse 2. Let him who has done this be removed from among you.

When the church acts in discipline in that way, it's with the full authority of Jesus and his apostles, Paul says. Look at verses 3 and 4. Paul, he says, is present in spirit.

[26 : 45] He means through his clear instruction in his apostolic words. His apostolic authority is present. And he says, the Lord Jesus is present in power when the apostles' words are being adhered to and listened to.

So, with all his authority, the church, he says, must act to expel falsehood, to remove from fellowship, to remove from influence, someone who is poisoning the body of Christ.

Verse 5, he describes it as handing him over to Satan. That's what he means when he says in verse 2, removing him from the church. He's been cast out of the realm of God's grace into Satan's dominion because that kind of behavior belongs there, not within Christ's household.

Notice also the reasons for this godly discipline. It's twofold. Do you see that? Look at verse 5. Paul's concern is that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

That is the day of judgment. In other words, the ultimate aim of this discipline isn't punitive, but it's saving. It's to lead him to repentance. But there can't be repentance, can there, unless somebody is made to realize and understand that they need to repent because this is sin.

[28 : 10] It's not trivial, it's serious. So, the loving thing to do is for the church not to pretend that sin isn't sin, certainly not to pretend that it isn't serious.

The loving thing to do is to be absolutely clear about sin. Because unless that's made clear, then a sinner will not be made to repent. He'll just be deceiving himself and endangering his soul.

If you hide sin, if you ignore sin, then someone will remain unrepentant under God's judgment. So, what Paul is saying is that to expose sin is the only loving thing, it's the only merciful thing to do within the church of Jesus Christ.

So, that's the first reason he says that the church must be disciplined. It leads to repentance, it brings salvation to the sinner. But his second reason is just realism in saving not just the sinner who's under God's judgment, but in saving the whole church.

See, in verses 6-8, you see he's saying that unless the whole church is serious about sin, then the leaven of that sin is going to infect the whole lump, it's going to destroy the church.

[29 : 31] Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? So, we can't possibly, therefore, ignore it.

Now, he says in verse 7, we are to be those who have been cleansed from sin. We are those who have been rescued by the blood of the Passover lamb himself. We can't possibly, therefore, reject his holiness.

We can't possibly go back to these ways that we've been delivered from. The leaven of malice and evil and so on. It must be utterly cleansed.

It must be utterly removed. Then notice Paul's clarity. Notice his realism. He's not saying, by the way, as he goes on there to say, he's very clearly not saying the church somehow has to remove itself out of the world into some kind of a ghetto.

He's not saying that. Look at verse 10. He says that kind of separation is not what he's talking about, taking the church out of the world altogether. He's talking about something very different.

[30 : 36] He's talking about rooting the world's ways out of the church. Listen to David Jackman on this passage. He says, a Christian ghetto where saints pride themselves on the avoidance of worldly behavior is bound to fall victim to the sins of arrogance and jealousy and envy and gossip and judgmentalism.

It's an observable fact that these are often the most prevalent characteristic of churches which are turned in upon themselves, be a holy huddle, escaping from the world. Not that Paul's saying, not escaping from the world, not judging the world, but he's very plain, isn't he, that we are to judge within the church.

Verse 11, you are not to associate with one who claims to be a brother but denies it by his actions. Sexual immorality, greed and idolatry and so on.

If these are in the church and especially obviously if these are in the leadership of the church, well it's a problem, isn't it? If there are those who bear the name of brother, who claim to be orthodox, who claim to be Christian, but actually whose behavior is totally against the apostolic gospel, well look at verse 13, what do you do?

The answer is very clear, purge the evil person from among you. He's quoting directly from Deuteronomy chapter 13 here, verse 5. And again, David Jackman I think comments very helpfully.

[32 : 15] He says, withdrawal of table fellowship and other forms of social friendship may be the most loving response that can be made in view of the eternal dangers involved.

The standards of the New Testament church can't be lower than those expressed in the law. A serious view of sin will not tolerate a compromised message or a compromised church.

And that is a clear demonstration of an underlying love for God and love for neighbor. It's tough love, that's true, but it's real love to take sin seriously in the church and to resist these powerful lures to idolatry that so easily infect the church and that come relentlessly from a progressive

godless society all around us.

And church leaders in particular have a great responsibility not to dodge that discipline. However hard it is, however unpopular it makes them.

And friends, today it makes you very unpopular indeed. To dare to require real repentance is very often likely to be called being abusive, having overbearing leadership, being heavy handed.

[33 : 45] We live in such a culture of victimhood, don't we, that very quickly the sinner, if they're told something they don't like or told they have to repent, becomes the victim. But Paul is very, very plain.

Read the pastoral epistles. He commands Timothy and Titus and others, he commands them to guarantee that the apostolic teaching remains intact in the church in their day.

He wants that for the future. For, he says in Titus chapter one, there are many who will not submit, that is, to the apostolic truth.

empty talkers, deceivers, they must be silent, says Paul, since they're upsetting whole households, whole congregations, whole churches, by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach. They profess to know God, he says. Same words as here, but deny him by their works. They're detestable, says Paul, abomination, same word as here in Deuteronomy 13, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

[35 : 03] That's Paul the apostle speaking to Titus in Titus chapter one. He doesn't mince his words, does he? In fact, he gets his words from here, from Moses, the man of God.

These are not progressives in your churches. They're worthless men, they're wicked men. They're not doing what's cool, they're not doing what's culturally sensitive.

It's an abomination to the Lord. You see, what Paul is saying, people haven't changed, they haven't changed in their hearts from the plains of Moab where Moses was speaking to them, or the church in Corinth where Paul's writing to them, or the 21st century church today.

People haven't changed, people's hearts haven't changed, and God hasn't changed. We face the same temptations that are common to all men, says Paul, the same powerful lures to rejecting God's ways, to turning to our own ways, to serve our own gods.

And there are plenty, aren't there, of sex gods and goddesses in our contemporary world, plenty of ideologies, fashions peddled by the media today, green ideology and all the rest of it.

[36 : 28] The same aspirations, the supposed freedoms, the fulfillments, the things that have drawn away all the inhabitants of our cities, all of our culture today.

And God gives to us, his church, exactly the same warning, so flee from these idolatries. So, if today you have theologians or pressure groups within the professing church, even professedly evangelical churches, by sheer force of numbers, bringing the pressures of a progressive society, a pluralistic society, saying things like, well, we can play down the uniqueness, the exclusivity of Christ alone as Savior.

Or we say, well, we have to change our stance on biblical patterns of men and women, biblical patterns of sexuality.

And we often talk about these hot potato issues, these things that might put people off listening to our message, because people don't think like that anymore. Nobody thinks like that anymore.

We can't talk like that anymore. But when that arises, Moses says to us, and Paul the apostle says to us, flee from that idolatry.

[37 : 50] Flee. Call it what it is. It's not progress. It's wickedness. It's not avant-garde, cutting edge.

It's an abomination to the Lord your God. There are some things the Bible is telling us that God's people simply cannot have anything to do with.

And our message can't ever be to affirm lifestyles that are idolatrous and are wicked in the eyes of God.

Apostles plain, isn't they? The gospel is, save yourself from this corrupt generation. Just look at verse 17 here. The end of Deuteronomy 13.

None of the devoted things shall stick to your hand, that the Lord may turn from the fierceness of his anger, and show you mercy, and have compassion on you, and multiply you, as he swore to your fathers, if you obey the voice of the Lord your God.

[39 : 01] Keeping all his commandments that I'm commanding you today, and doing what is right in the sight of your God. God's mercy, God's compassion comes to us through a turning away of his fierce anger against sin.

And what he's saying is, what the whole Bible says, that we're either under one or the other, either under his mercy and compassion, or still under his anger. God's And, friends, there's no cheap grace in the Bible.

You can't have the mercy of God and have the things of idolatry still sticking to your hands, is the way Moses is putting it. You can't have the best of both worlds.

It's one or the other. And so he says in verse 18 there, you got to get rid of all of that and obey only the voice, the one voice of the Lord your God.

That is what fleeing idolatry truly looks like. So, friends, let me conclude this little foray into this chapter.

[40 : 12] According to the Lord Jesus Christ, at the very heart of the whole biblical faith is the great commandment to love the Lord your God alone with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, all your strength.

I am the Lord, he says, there is no other. Beside me, there is no God. To me, every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.

And God has exalted the Lord Jesus. so that in his name and in his name alone, every knee shall bow. So, friends, do not be lured away from him into idolatry, not by anyone, not by anything, not by any dazzling spiritualities that are on offer today.

And there are many and there always will be. not even by the closest affections of your heart. And they are so powerful, aren't they?

And not even by the pressure of our progressive, but in God's eyes, worthless culture. And it's everywhere, all around us.

[41 : 35] We breathe the air every day. No, it says the Apostle Paul to the Colossians in Colossians 3, verse 5, put to death, therefore, whatever is earthly in you, which is idolatry.

And know this, that because of these things, he says, the wrath of God is coming. So flee from idolatry. Love the Lord alone with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength.

And remember, Paul says to the Christian church, these things happen to them as an example, but were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.

Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. Flee back to the only safe place there is, to the arms of the Lord Jesus Christ, to buy the need to His word and His way, and to follow Him and no other.

Amen. Well, let's pray together. O God, who has prepared for them that love Thee such good things as past man's understanding, pour into our hearts such love toward Thee, that we loving Thee above all things, that we may obtain the promises which exceed all that we can desire through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

[43 : 18] Amen. Amen. Amen.