

Idolatry Part 1

Turn to Romans 1

What exactly is idolatry? How is it that genuine, sincere, godly people end up ensnared, trapped in idolatry? How is it that anyone becomes ensnared and trapped in idolatry?

1 Corinthians 12:1, 2 says

1 Now concerning spiritual gifts matters, brothers (and sisters), I do not want you to be uninformed.

2 You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led.

The gentiles were pagans who were LED ASTRAY to mute idols. These idols were silent; they could not speak, they were (and are) dead. Yet the gentiles were LED ASTRAY to worship dead idols. What is it to LEAD ASTRAY? It is to SEDUCE, which is defined as:

“To beguile or lure someone away from duty, accepted principles, or proper conduct. To lead astray.”

It is people in leadership categories of life who seduce people. It is religious leaders who seduce people, leading them astray into idolatry. This truth is well known as 1 Corinthians 12:2 indicates.

Romans 1:15

15 So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

17 For in it (the gospel) the righteousness of God (not man) is revealed ~~from faith for faith~~ *beginning and ending in faith*, as it is written, “~~The righteous shall live by faith. The one who by faith is righteous shall live.~~”

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.

20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they (the unrighteous who suppress the truth) are without excuse.

Turn to Psalms 19

There are those who know the truth, who know what can be known about God and yet they suppress the truth. We will see examples of this which are recorded in the Bible. However, God made sure that everyone is shown the knowledge of God. God so constructed the physical realm that people can become acquainted with Him.

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Psalms 19:1

1 The heavens declare the glory (*the exercised power*) of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork.

2 Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge.

3 There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. (*everything spoken is heard*)

4 Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tent for the sun,

5 which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy.

Turn back to Romans 1

This is just one example of how the exercised power of God and His works are declared to everyone throughout the earth.

Romans 1:21

21 For although they (*the unrighteous who suppress the truth*) knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Futile means “incapable of producing results; useless”.

Remember, this verse is referring to the unrighteous who suppress the truth by their unrighteousness.

Their thinking becomes absolutely worthless and they become utterly blind, without any understanding whatsoever.

Romans 1:22

22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools,

23 and exchanged (*there is spiritual commerce going on here*) the glory (*exercised power*) of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves,

25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a (*the*) lie and worshiped and served the creature (*the creation*) rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

There was a price paid in order to influence the unrighteous to agree to the exchange.

In Luke 4:5, the devil attempts to sell Jesus this exchange:

5 And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, **6** and said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory (*exercised power*), for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will.

7 If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.”

8 And Jesus answered him, “It is written, “ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.’ ”

The authority that the devil has over the kingdoms of the world is accessed by spiritual power, devil spirit power.

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In Genesis 3:15 God pronounces the consequences of the devil's actions in beguiling Eve. He mentions the woman's seed and the devil's seed.

The devil only has two things to sell; seed by which people can become his spiritual child and devil spirit possession by which people can seem to have access to authority and rulership in the physical world.

Turn to John 8

In Luke 4, the devil was tempting Jesus with the complete access to the devil's authority and exercised spiritual power via his seed and devil spirit possession. The deal would be complete if Jesus would worship the devil. If Jesus would have worshiped the devil he would have become a slave to the senses realm, he would have immediately been in bondage without remedy. However, Jesus declined the offer and the terms of the agreement. He was not deceived.

Now, this does not mean that anyone who practices idolatry is a child of the devil, as we will see. However these children of the devil have a job to do to bring about the devil's will in the physical realm.

In John 8 is a record where Jesus identifies the children of the devil who were confronting and standing against him, attempting to suppress the truth. It so happened that these children of the devil were of the religious authorities of their day.

John 8:39

39 They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did,

40 but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did.

41 You are doing the works your father did." They said to him, "We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father—even God." (*they accused Jesus of being an illegitimate bastard. Remember, the price that they paid was to worship the devil as God. They did not reveal the identity of their god.*)

42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me.

43 Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word.

44 You are of your father the devil (*by spiritual seed*), and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (*Remember, they exchange the truth about God for the lie; for a price*)

45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.

46 Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me?

47 Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God."

Turn to Deuteronomy 13

Their thoughts, their understanding becomes completely worthless, useless for anything. In the old testament these people were called "sons of belial", or worthless ones. They had made themselves

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worthless. These people have a calling and a ministry from the devil. Their ministry is mentioned in Deuteronomy 13:12

12 “If you hear in one of your cities, which the LORD your God is giving you to dwell there,
13 that certain worthless fellows (*sons of belial*) 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,

Their job, their ministry is to draw away people to themselves, with the purpose of leading the people to SERVE other gods (plural). They lead people to the bondage and slavery of idolatry. These are the people in religious, cultural, political, business, and other leadership positions in the world who work very hard to fulfill their ministry to seduce whole cultures, societies, organizations, countries and continents into the bondage of idolatry.

Turn to Isaiah 44

Remember I said that just because a person is involved in idolatry it does not mean that they are a child of the devil? Isaiah explains what happens when these leaders fulfill their ministry and bring others into the bondage of idolatry.

Isaiah 44:14

14 He (*the carpenter*) cuts down cedars, or he chooses a cypress tree or an oak and lets it grow strong among the trees of the forest. He plants a cedar and the rain nourishes it.

15 Then it becomes fuel for a man. He takes a part of it and warms himself; he kindles a fire and bakes bread. Also he makes a god and worships it; he makes it an idol and falls down before it.

16 Half of it he burns in the fire. Over the half he eats meat; he roasts it and is satisfied. Also he warms himself and says, “Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire!”

17 And the rest of it he makes into a god, his idol, and falls down to it and worships it. He prays to it and says, “Deliver me, for you are my god!”

18 They know not, nor do they discern, for he has shut their eyes, so that they **cannot see**, and their hearts, so that they **cannot understand**.

Through the wrong teaching of twisted doctrines, devil spirits are ministered to people to blind them and their understanding. The shutting of the eyes is done by spirits of error – these get people to believe the errors which are taught by twisted words. In turn, these spirits of error hold the door open so that spiritual blindness and spiritual bondage (involuntary slavery) can overwhelm and control this persons life.

Isaiah 44:19

19 No one considers (*it does not even cross their minds; the spirits make sure of that*), nor is there knowledge or discernment (*judgment*) to say, “Half of it (*the wood*) I burned in the fire; I also baked bread on its coals; I roasted meat and have eaten. And shall I make the rest of it (*the wood*) an abomination? Shall I fall down (*worship*) before a block of wood?” (the wood represents anything else in the senses realm that can be worshiped such as an organization, a PHD Theologian, a teacher, a preacher, a position of authority in the world, money, etc.)

20 He feeds on ashes (*there is no nourishment in eating ashes*); a deluded (*deceived*) heart has

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led him astray, and he **cannot deliver himself** or say, “Is there not a lie in my right hand?”

Verse 20 brings us right back to 1 Corinthians 12:2 and Romans 1:21. The deceived heart is ultimately the heart of the child of the devil whose heart is completely deceived, darkened, blinded and enslaved. It is this person's ministry which sets in motion the seducing, the leading astray of people into the involuntary slavery of idolatry.

Those involved in idolatry cannot deliver themselves by their own efforts; they require spiritual help and deliverance from God.

Before I continue, a few things need to be said about devil spirits. As far as I know, the term “devil spirit” is not used in the bible. God is a spirit and He is holy. We have a new nature in us, a newly created spiritual self which is also holy spirit. There are created spirit beings called angels who are also holy. There are also created spirit beings, including the devil, who rebelled against God and became defiled, cursed, or unholy. These spirit beings are under the command of the devil. You can determine in the scriptures by the context when spirits who are associated with the devil (or devil spirits) are mentioned. They could also be called evil spirits or filthy spirits. Spiritual matters have been so wrongly taught that I believe it is important to identify whether a spirit being is associated with God or with the devil.

As I am led and inspired, I identify the functioning of the devil spirits for instructional purposes. You do need to know about the various ways that they function. For the record, all devil spirits are evil, they all lie, they all work to deceive, they are all bent on enslaving the world, they all promote the purposes of the devil which is to steal, kill and destroy, they are all anti-Christ.

In your day-to-day life walking by the spirit, do not become overly concerned with identifying the names and functions of devil spirits, or even if they are present or not. Whatever you need to know will be revealed to you by spiritual discernment and judgment. There are records in the scriptures where the types of spirits are named and other records where they are not.

For myself, I do not spend my day thinking about devil spirits, nor am I concerned about them. When I need to know something about their functioning, God lets me know. Spiritual discernment and judgment is far greater and expansive than just knowing about devil spirits.

Turn to Isaiah 46

Those involved in idolatry are in slavery to serve the creation, the physical realm. Consider for a moment the many religious buildings that infest our towns and cities. Each one of those buildings must be maintained; the mortgage, utilities, and lawn service must be paid. Professional clergy and their staffs must be housed and paid. The list goes on and on. These idols are to be carried and supported by those that worship them. In our day it is peoples hard earned money, their time, and their talents which are all used to support and maintain the idols in the modern religious realm.

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Isaiah 46:1

1 Bel bows down; Nebo stoops; their idols (*of Babylon*) are on beasts and livestock; these things you carry are borne as burdens on weary beasts.

2 They stoop; they bow down together; they cannot save the burden, but themselves go into captivity (*with their burden, the idols*).

3 “Listen to me, O house of Jacob, all the remnant of the house of Israel, who have been borne (carried) **by me** from before your birth, carried from the womb;

4 even to your old age I am he, and to gray hairs **I will carry you**. I have made, and **I will bear**; **I will carry and will save**. (*Now who is doing the bearing and carrying? God is! Who or what is he carrying? The believers who worship Him! Not only does He desire salvation for us but He desires to carry us!*)

5 “To whom will you liken me and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be alike?

6 Those who lavish gold from the purse, and weigh out silver in the scales, hire a goldsmith, and he makes it into a god; then they fall down and worship!

7 They (*the idol worshipers*) lift it **to their shoulders**, **they carry it**, they set it in its place, and it stands there; it cannot move from its place. If one cries to it, it does not answer or save him from his trouble.

Idolatry never does a thing to benefit anyone. It is totally worthless.

Turn to 1 Kings 11

Now we will examine an account of a king who brought his entire country into the slavery of idolatry. Again, it is the political and religious leadership who are the ones that facilitate and promote religious idolatry.

Now, king Solomon turned from God and brought idolatry into the country because of the influence of his wives. Because of this, the kingdom of Israel would be split in two after Solomon died.

1 Kings 11:26 – 40

After Solomon died, the people came to Rehoboam, Solomon's son. They requested that Rehoboam reduce their taxes and other obligations to the kingdom.

1 Kings 12:15 – 17

1 Kings 12:25 – 13:6

1 Kings 13:33

33 After this thing Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but made priests for the high places again from among all the people. Any who would, he ordained to be priests of the high places. (*it cost them 1 bull or 7 rams; 2 Chron. 13:9*)

34 And this thing became sin to the house of Jeroboam, so as to cut it off and to destroy it from the face of the earth.

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2 Chronicles 11:13

13 And the priests and the Levites who were in all Israel presented themselves to him (*Rehoboam*) from all places where they lived.

14 For the Levites left their common lands and their holdings and came to Judah and Jerusalem, because Jeroboam and his sons cast them out from serving as priests of the LORD,

15 and he appointed his own priests for the high places and for the goat idols and for the calves that he had made.

16 And those who had set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came after them from all the tribes of Israel to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the LORD, the God of their fathers.

17 They strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and for three years they made Rehoboam the son of Solomon secure, for they walked for three years in the way of David and Solomon.

The end of Jeroboam

1 Kings 14:1 – 20

Turn to Ephesians 4

Much later, the Assyrians captured Israel and moved them away from the promised land.

It was the political and religious leadership, influenced by the sons of the devil, the sons of belial who, introduced and promoted idolatry to their country. The idolatry ultimately ruined the entire country.

Ephesians 4:11

11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,

12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,

13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves (*out of control*) and carried about (*forcefully, unwillingly*) by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes (*these are the schemes of the children of the devil, to promote the lie of idolatry*).

15 Rather, speaking the truth in love (*we don't promote the lie of idolatry*), we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,

16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

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How do people become ensnared in idolatry? Isaiah 44:20 (page 4, 5)