

(The Word for Today) Isaiah 44:8 - Part 3

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes the folly of idolatry and the consequences of shutting God out of one's mind, while highlighting God's power and desire for fellowship with humanity.

Duration: 25:59

Scripture: Isaiah 44:8

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the folly of idolatry and the creation of false gods. He describes how a carpenter meticulously crafts a wooden idol, shaping it to resemble a man. The preacher emphasizes the absurdity of worshiping something created by human hands. He then shifts to discussing a Father's Day parade in San Francisco, highlighting the moral decline and lack of God in society. The sermon concludes with a call to rejoice in God's works and a reminder that He is the creator of all things.

Transcript

Welcome to The Word for Today. The Word for Today is a continuous study of the Bible, taught by Pastor Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, California. Pastor Chuck is currently teaching from the Old Testament, and if you're following along in your Bible, we'll be continuing today in Isaiah chapter 44, beginning with verse 8, as we continue with an in-depth message entitled The Restoration of Israel.

One thing is needful, O my Father, One thing is needful, O my God, That I sit at your feet and pour out my love. This thing is needful, O my God. And now with today's study, here's Pastor Chuck.

And there was a surface spiritual reformation under Hezekiah. But at the death of Hezekiah, idolatry came back with a vengeance. And the nation of Judah was plunging into idolatry, so that by the time that Jeremiah, a hundred years later, was prophesying, the nation was given over to idolatry.

There were many idols in every home, these little statues that the people prayed before and the people worshipped. And so God is going to address here the subject of idolatry, making idols and worshipping them. And though it doesn't really relate to us today in as much as we don't really form or fashion little idols, still people have idols in their hearts that they worship.

You see, the idols to them represented many of the things that people worship today. These things they called gods and they made little likenesses to represent these different things. So if a person says, I'm a

party animal, I love to party, you know, I live to party and all that.

And I've seen it on the bumper stickers, you know, life is a party, born to party. That is a person's God. They haven't created an idol, but in those days they did have the little idol, Bacchus.

And that was saying, I'm born to party. I live for party. They did have the little idols that represented Ashtoreth.

And that was saying, I'm into sex. They did have idols that represented money and power. And they said, I'm after the bucks.

And so they formed idols. And the Lord speaks of the folly of these. They make these little graven images, but they are all of them vanity or emptiness.

And their delectable things shall not profit. They're crafty arts and they are their own witnesses. These little idols are, can't you see? They have eyes, but they can't see.

And they don't know anything that it might be just a sort of a shame. Here's a person praying to this little wooden idol coming in and praying before it and all. And the Lord says, it's got little eyes on it, but it can't see.

It has a head on it, but there's no brains. I mean, can't think it doesn't know anything. And yet here's a person worshiping it.

Who has formed a God or has molded a graven image that is profitable for nothing. They've made these little idols and images and they put all this work in it, but they're really worthless. They're not worth anything.

They're profitable for nothing. Behold, all of his fellows shall be ashamed. The workmen, they are men.

Let them be gathered together. Let them stand up and they shall fear and they shall be ashamed together. For the Smith with the tongs, he works in the coals.

He fashions it with hammers. He works it with the strength of his arms and yet he gets hungry and his strength fails. He drinks no water and he is faint making this little God devoting himself to the creating of this little God.

The carpenter stretches out his ruler. He marks it out with a line. He fits it with his planes and he marks it with a compass and he makes it after the figure of a man according to the beauty of a man that it may remain in the house.

So fashions out this little, carves out this alive, makes it beautiful, like a handsome man that it might be there in the house. He hews down a cedar tree. He takes the cypress and the oak, which he strengthened for himself among the trees of the forest.

And he plants an ash tree and the rain does nourish it. And then it shall be for a man to burn. And he will take thereof and he will warm himself.

Yea, he kindles it and bakes bread. Yea, he makes a God and worships it. He makes a graven image and he falls down to it.

Now here's the whole folly of it. Here's a piece of wood. He's chopped a piece of oak.

Part of it he puts in the fireplace so he can keep warm. He bakes his bread, puts it in the oven and heats the oven, bakes his bread with part of the wood. And then with the rest of it he carves a little God and he worships it.

Now he said, now here's the inconsistency. He burns part in the fire. Part of it he uses to roast the flesh that he eats, that he might be satisfied.

Yes, he warms himself and he says, aha, I am warm. I have seen the fire. And the rest of it he makes a God, even his graven image.

And he falls down to it and he worships it and prays unto it and says, deliver me for you are my God. It's a stick. And he doesn't stop to think, man, I've burned part of this in the fireplace and burned part of it in the oven.

And then carves this little thing and says, you're my God, help me. They have not known nor understood. They don't stop to think.

How ridiculous. For he has shut their eyes. When a man turns his back upon God and the truth of God, that man loses a certain part of his reasoning capacities.

The Bible said that God will give to them a strong delusion that they might believe a lie because they did not have the love of the truth in their hearts. The Bible speaks about a reprobate mind. And that is the mind that is deliberately closed God out of it because they did not want to retain God in their minds.

God gave them over to reprobate minds. And there are people whose minds have become reprobate and the things that they do are shocking. You cannot imagine intelligent grown men and women doing the things that they do.

You think, how in the world can you do those things? You don't know what's going on in that world out there. There are things that the news media isn't showing you that would absolutely shock you, horrify you. Every Father's Day up in San Francisco, that community there puts on a parade in downtown San Francisco.

We're going to send up some video cameras this year to take some shots of that parade. And we will definitely censor it and edit it. We will have to.

But we would like to show you some of the things that are done by supposedly intelligent people in our community, college professors, business leaders. And when you see what is happening, as me, you'll shake your head in disbelief and say, I can't believe that's the United States. I could believe it is Sodom and Gomorrah, but I can't believe it's happening in the United States.

But that's sort of the tragic consequence of shutting God out of your mind. A person may say, well, that's so stupid. I would never do that.

Be careful. When you shut your mind to the truth, God then lets you have a reprobate mind and you will believe a lie rather than the truth. I have some very shocking pictures of this Rosh Hashanah community that was up in Oregon.

Again, you can't believe it. And again, we'd have to edit it. But I've got a people, the things that they are doing, lying on the floor, writing on the floor, screaming thousands of them in the worship of this Rosh Hashanah.

Of course, he's dead now. Their God is dead. Poor people.

Their God died. But these are intelligent people. These are your neighbors.

And you read these things and you say, can intelligent people do the, how can intelligent people? It's because having rejected God, God has given them over to reprobate minds, void of understanding. And so they don't consider in their hearts. Neither is there knowledge or understanding to say I've burned part of it in the fire.

Yes, I've baked bread upon the coals and I've roasted the flesh and eaten it and I shall make out of the rest of it an abomination and I'll fall down to this stock or this branch of a tree. He feeds on ashes. A deceived heart has turned him aside and he cannot deliver his soul nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand? Now remember these, O Jacob and Israel, for you are my servant and I have formed you and you are my servant, O Israel, and you shall not be forgotten of me.

So take this, look at it and remember that God is the one who's created you and formed you. That you might keep your rational senses about you. And I love this.

I have blotted out as a thick cloud, thy transgressions. I've just blotted it out. Can't see it like a thick cloud covered it.

And as a cloud, thy sins return unto me for I have redeemed you. God's cry unto them. Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord has done it.

Shout, ye lower parts of the earth, break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest and every tree therein, for the Lord has redeemed Jacob and glorified himself in Israel. And so the calling to nature to just rejoice in the marvelous works of God among his people. God's work among you.

Oh, give thanks, rejoice for the Lord has formed you and has worked among you and he has redeemed you. Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer that formed thee from the womb. I am the Lord that makes all things that stretched forth the heavens alone, that spreads abroad the earth by myself.

I'm God. I'm the one that's done these things. That frustrated the tokens of the liars and makes the diviners mad.

That turns wise men backward and makes their knowledge foolish. As Paul said, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools because they worshiped and served the creature more than the creator who is blessed forevermore. The moment you deny the existence of God as the creator and you begin to buy into the idiocy of the evolutionary theory, you have to set aside your natural intelligence, logic, because you are declaring this anomaly that you can have design without a designer.

Now that is going in face of my intelligent mind. There was an explosion in a print factory and this book came out of it. All of the songs in neat order, numbered with all of the notes and the words to the verses.

It was a gigantic explosion and it took several billion years for all of the letters to fall into place, but given enough time and we laugh because it's idiocy. But yet the chances of this book coming to pass through an

explosion in the print factory is much more practical than your human body coming to pass by matter on matter over billions of years. Much more insane to think that your body could have just come together in the beautiful, fabulous design without any designer behind it, without intelligence, the eye factor that is missing in the evolutionary theory.

And so God frustrates the tokens of the liars. He makes the diviners mad and he turns wise men backward and makes their knowledge foolish. That confirms the word of his servant and performs the counsel of his messengers that says to Jerusalem, you will be inhabited and to the cities of Judah, you will be built and I will raise up the decayed places thereof.

That says to the deep, be dry and I will dry up thy rivers. Now I'm the Lord and I say to Jerusalem, you're going to be inhabited to the cities of Judah. You're going to be built.

This is before Jerusalem fell a hundred years before Jerusalem fell and God is already prophesying of these events. They, they fell. They were 70 years in captivity.

So this is a hundred and 70 years is actually 180 years before it happened. God is prophesying it. And then he goes one step further that says of Cyrus, he is my shepherd and shall perform all my pleasure.

Even saying to Jerusalem, you will be built and to the temple, your foundation shall be laid. A hundred and 80 years later, Cyrus, the King of Persia said to the Jews, go back, rebuild the temple, rebuild the city. Amazing.

God names him before he was ever born. And so this is what God is talking about. I am God.

I speak of things before they happen. If you're God's prove it, bring us some witnesses, say something that's going to take place so that when it happens, we know that you are God, but that you may know that I am God. And there is none like me.

Here he is. I I'm Cyrus. You're my shepherd.

And, and here's this, this neat internal evidence of inspiration, because it's impossible. In fact, it is so impossible that the critics of the Bible say, Isaiah didn't really write this. And this was written after the fact by a another man who put the name Isaiah to it.

Unfortunately, he didn't inform Jesus. And so Jesus thought that Isaiah had written this in quotes, part of this portion and says that Isaiah prophesied it, but Jesus doesn't know as much as they know. In fact, Jesus may not have said all of the things that he said, and they are determining now, which things Jesus said and which he didn't.

You worship a marvelous God who has formed you, who has created you for his purposes, that he might love you. He has chosen you. You're precious in his sight.

He desires to just demonstrate his love to you in so many different ways. He just wants you to walk in fellowship with him. He wants you to just surrender to his love and to his spirit that you might know the richness of that fellowship and of that love that he has for you.

And surely that's not asking too much. May God help us to respond to his love whereby he has forgiven us our sins, whereby he's forgotten our past, whereby he has justified us in order that he might fellowship with us. And may we live in fellowship with the living God this week as he ministers to you the richness of his

love and grace.

Shall we pray? Father, we thank you for your word. Lord, we know that there is no God like you. You are the first and the last, and beside you there is no other.

And may we allow you upon the throne of our lives as we worship you and as we fellowship together. Pastor Chuck Smith will return with a few closing comments, but first I'd like to remind you that today's message is available in its unedited form on cassette or CD. Simply write or call and ask for ordering details on tape or CD number C-3262.

Again that's tape or CD number C-3262. As we come to a close in today's program, we'd like to introduce a brand new book written by Pastor Chuck Smith entitled Six Vital Questions of Life. In his new book, Pastor Chuck considers six life-changing questions asked by the apostle Paul in the book of Romans and then expounds upon the biblical answers that can revolutionize your Christian walk with God.

Satan is relentlessly pointing out our failures and mistakes, and even though Satan is condemning us, Pastor Chuck reminds us of the scriptures that there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. When Satan is hassling you concerning God's love, look to the cross where God displayed how much he loves you. So if you ever had a question or concern with respect to your relationship with God, the book Six Vital Questions of Life by Pastor Chuck will reassure and reinforce God's unique plan and purpose for your life.

You see, if God is for you, then who can be against you? These are just some of the answers that can help you understand the love that God has for you, and that nothing can separate you from the love of Christ. This is definitely a life-changing resource, and one you'll want to share with your family and friends, especially if there is a misconception of God's love in a person's life. Again, you'll be requesting the book Six Vital Questions of Life, new by Chuck Smith.

Also, if you'd like to order a copy of today's message, you can do so by simply asking for program number C-3262 when you write or call. Once again, that's program number C-3262. Our address is the word for today, Post Office Box 8000, Costa Mesa, California, 92628.

We can also be reached by dialing toll-free 1-800-272-9673. Once again, that's 1-800-272-WORD. Or you can reach us on the World Wide Web at www.twft.com. Or if you'd like to email us, you can do so at info@twft.com. Well, coming up next time on the Word for Today, Pastor Chuck will be continuing his fascinating study through the book of Isaiah.

That's coming up next time on the Word for Today. And now with a few closing comments, here's Pastor Chuck. Father, we thank you for your Word, but we thank you for your promises that you've made for those who will live godly lives in accordance to your Word and your will.

And so, Father, help us. We can definitely see there are two categories here. Those that followed and received your salvation, and those who closed their ears to the truth, did their own abominable practices defying your Word.

Lord, we want to be those that obey your Word and follow after truth. Lead us, Lord, into your truth. Guide us by your Spirit.

Lord, our hearts long, and we pray thy kingdom come and thy will be done in this earth, Lord, even as it is in heaven. And Lord, come quickly. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. This program is sponsored by The Word for Today, the radio ministry of Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, California.

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