

You shall have no other gods

Francois de Wet

Josiah cleans out the Temple, gets rid of the altars and high places, restores worship and vows to serve God, but Jeremiah is outside saying: “Your hearts are far removed from Me. Return to Me!”

2 Kings 23

Jer 1 & 2

Idols in our lives

We have been looking at Israel at the foot of the mountain.

Ex 24:1 - 12, Ex 32

They worshipped their Idol

They put their resources into what they worshipped

They worshipped in the old manner (the way of the flesh)

They persuaded their leader to recognise their idol and make room for it (Aaron called for a feast to worship Yahweh - they worshipped their golden calf)

Note verse 24 “... a calf came out of the fire, so we worshipped it”

God had reserved the priesthood for all 12 tribes, but only Levi stood up to the rebellion of their brethren and was counted worthy of service before the Lord.

You cannot worship two gods, for you will hate the one and love the other.

The first commandment: “You shall worship no other gods besides Me.”

Second “You shall not make a image of anything living or dead and bow down to worship it”

Man has the need to worship something, so he either worships what is greater than or above him or he worships the work of his own hands (accomplishments).

But it didn't end there. Finally they sacrificed to their idol. Man has sacrificed marriage partners, children, friends, health, happiness, love, etc to their gods.

If something has a higher place than God in your life, you will end up sacrificing what God holds as valuable, to your god. How much will people sacrifice before they will return to God and give Him the place He deserves?

Ex 34:12 - 17

The world wants to make a covenant with us to deceive us.

Balaam was prepared to go into covenant with ungodly kings for profit.

“Do not be unequally yoked with an unbeliever”. But we keep on making covenants with unsaved business people and then get stung. We know someone who was unequally yoked with an ungodly partner and the other guy took off with all the money from a huge contract.

But not only that, he had the contracts drawn up so well, that this guy was left with about R750 000 debt and could do nothing about it. It took him years to pay off the debt, but God was gracious and restored to him what he lost and prospered him.

God had a purpose with Israel and to accomplish that he sent a man. God wanted to establish a relationship with Israel and used a man. People so easily say “I want to see God’s glory”, but when they saw Moses they were afraid of him. Imagine what they would have done if they saw God instead. Jesus had a plan for those who would turn to Him. The plan was the church.

When the tabernacle was made it has made according to the specifications that God gave. When the temple was built, there were specific instructions. When the Ark of Noah was a blueprint. Surely God has a blueprint for the Church. And that blueprint is not what man has thought up.

The Ark of Noah can be seen as a type of the Church
God called them into the Ark - a work of grace
In the Ark there was safety from the flood (deluge) coming on the earth.
In the Ark there was provision, warmth, etc to carry them over into the next dispensation.

The Church is God’s plan. There is no other plan.
God added daily *to the Church* those who were saved.
He didn’t leave them lying around, but built them into the walls of the habitation for the Lord.
We, as living stones, are being together into a fit habitation for the Lord.
God has chosen the church to display His manifold, infinite wisdom to the principalities and powers in the heavenlies.
Eph 3:10

God chose Noah to build an Ark. It took him 100 years to complete. In this time God has raised up men to build Arks for God’s people. A flood is coming, a flood of filth but also of wrath on mankind. But there is place of safety that God has ordained. Within this framework (blueprint), God has taken care of everything. God said to Ezekiel that he is going to raise up shepherds who will have the heart of the Great Shepherd. They will be true Shepherds, not hirelings, who will forsake the sheep when danger comes their way. The true shepherds will even carry the sheep if they have to and will be characterised by humility and the servantheart of the Master himself.

They will be Fathers to the God’s household. They will be God’s servants first and will listen for His leading as the Head of the Body of Christ.

Fathers will go without for the sake of their children. They will even lay down their lives to protect them and give them life. They are not threatened when their children go beyond what they have accomplished, but rather encourage it. If the next generation does not go beyond what we have, then we have failed. A father will sow beyond what he is able, to give his children what he never had.

True Leaders will not only be content to eat the apple, but will sow the seed. The object of apples is not only to eat, but to produce more apple trees.

If the world is not your parish, the parish will become your world. True apostolic vision is looks beyond what is here and now, at what could be and should be.

God has set leaders in place to accomplish His vision

Numbers 16 & 17

Korah's rebellion - against God's choice of leadership - more died from that, than the worship of the golden calf. Only about 3000 died and this by the hands of the Levites, but Korah and his household were swallowed up by the earth, and the other 250 who stood with their censers were consumed by a fire. After that a plague broke out because of God's wrath. Moses and Aaron put a censer with fire in it from the altar with incense on it (intercession for the people) between the people and God, but 14 700 more died that day.

When God appoints people in leadership, they represent Him and carry his anointing for that task. I will never tell you to follow just any man because of some title. Look where God has placed his anointing. Moses did not go to the people and say: "Oh hi, I am Moses. I studied law in the courts of Faruah. I was first in my class and passed with distinction before I killed an Egyptian and had to make a run for it. But I have 40 years of experience in practising law as well. If you follow me, I will lead you out of Egypt to the Promised Land. I am not quite sure where it is, but we will hire some geography majors to show us the way."

God came to Moses with a mandate. With it came the anointing (the staff) to lead them. The staff was a symbol of authority and power which consumed the staffs of the Egyptian sorcerers, thereby stripping them of their authority. God was saying, the anointing and authority that is on this man is greater than that of the earthly rulers and their demonic powers. It was the same staff that God used to drive home the point with Korah's rebellion. Aaron's rod blossomed as God put his stamp on his choice to follow up Moses. The rod was the same rod that Moses had and was passed on to Aaron. That rod was then placed in the Ark of the covenant as a symbol and reminder of God appointing. Church is pretty much a theocracy where God decides. A lot of the problems with leadership is because man appoints (ordains). We have to hear from God and recognise whom He raises up.

Church is not a meeting. It is not a place. It is a people bound together by love. We do not attend Church. We are the Church. On Sunday the Church meets together, but on Monday you are still the church. That means your career is part of church life. Your family is part of church life. Your mission field is wherever you go. Your area of ministry is everywhere that God gives you influence.

Do not forsake the assembly of the believers as is the habit of some. When people forsake the gathering, it often gets them into trouble.

A painting. Start with blue background which forms the basis for the painting and all the other colours. Blue represents grace. Church must be a place of grace. Everything that happens in church must be with grace.