

## **THE PANTHEON INCREASES**

### **Isaiah 40:18-25**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

- A. Idolatry has always plagued mankind.
  - 1. Seldom has man been content to worship / serve God according to God's directions.
  - 2. He has always modified the divine decree in some ways.
    - a. Eve – fruit in the garden.
    - b. Cain – sacrifice to God.
  - 3. Warning of a “polluted” religion.
    - a. Acts 15:19-20 – contaminated [polluted] idolatry.
    - b. Modern campaigns against the pollution of the ecosystem, carefully orchestrated strategy showing the consequences of self-centered desires, destroying the balance of nature. I.e., global warming (gas and coal emissions).
  - 4. The same with idolatry –
    - a. The purity of religion devoted to God is being polluted by self-desire.
    - b. Making God in our own image!
- B. Confident it will never happen to us.
  - 1. 1 Corinthians 10:12
  - 2. Our approach to Almighty God is with casual indifference.
    - a. We are comfortable with “finding God in our own way”.
    - b. Idolatry is the result of re-designing and revamping how God is worshipped.
    - c. Leading to a self-centered faith, Jeremiah 23:16-19.
- C. We have looked at three “idols”
  - 1. The god of My Cause.
  - 2. The god of My Understanding.
  - 3. The god of My Experience.

#### **I. THE GOD OF MY COMFORT.**

- A. One word which sums up our culture – “Comfort”.
  - 1. We search for instant relief, soothing satisfaction, and quick “pick-me-ups”.
  - 2. Self-help books are best sellers.
  - 3. Worship must be comfortable – convenient.
- B. We are enticed by a god of comfort.
  - 1. “Do your own thing, the way YOU want.”
  - 2. We no longer listen to the call for self-surrender, Luke 9:23; Galatians 2:20.
  - 3. Bowing before this god will help me get what I want.
  - 4. We deserve to be “happy” – and God will make it so. Focus on SELF.
- C. Harmonizing with Scripture.
  - 1. Matthew 4:1-11 – the devil in disguise.
    - a. Removes the task placed before Christ.
  - 2. The Christian life does Not guarantee comfort, 2 Timothy 3:12; Phil. 1:20.
  - 3. Isaiah 45:9 – the god of comfort allows self to dictate demands to the Almighty.

#### **II. THE GOD OF MY SUCCESS.**

- A. If Comfort is first, then Success a close second.
  - 1. In our culture today, it is difficult to attain to success.
  - 2. We “need” Divine help, Mt. 7:7, 11.

- a. It is the search for material prosperity.
- 3. *Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life*, 1 Chron. 4:10.
  - a. Book Review (2001): Is a timeless prayer that produces timely results! Bruce Wilkinson takes readers to 1 Chron. 4:10 to discover how they can release God's miraculous power and experience the blessings God longs to give each of us... Readers who commit to offering the same prayer on a regular basis will find themselves extravagantly blessed by God, and agents of His miraculous power...Do you want to be extravagantly blessed by God?
- 4. In 1990, over 50 Japanese computer engineers, held a temple ceremony in which old computer chips were presented to Buddha.
  - a. "No doubt this reverence will pay off for the Japanese people."
  - b. The ultimate goal: financial success.
- B. The Big Problem.
  - 1. It cannot lead to happiness, 1 Timothy 6:6-10.
  - 2. It cannot lead to salvation, Luke 18:18-25.
  - 3. Solomon's god of success – misery! Eccl. 2:1-11 (vs. 11).
- C. We Need to Redefine Success, NOT God.
  - 1. The apostle Paul, Phil. 3:4-14.
  - 2. Jeremiah 29:11 **AND** 13.

### III. THE GOD OF MY NATION.

- A. A National God.
  - 1. Particular nations have a divine destiny to fill – Satan!
  - 2. 1990 survey of 113,000 Americans:
    - a. 86% claimed to be "Christian".
    - b. By reason, the character of U.S. should be Christian behavior.
  - 3. 2015 survey – 49% Christian – we are a secular nation.
  - 4. And God is draped in red, white, and blue.
    - a. What is good for America must be good for God.
    - b. We legislate laws, loosen punishments, ignore morality, confidently worship the god of My nation who agrees.
- B. What does Scripture say?
  - 1. Allowing God to be re-designed is SIN.
  - 2. 1 Kings 12:26-33 (Jeroboam)
  - 3. 1 Kings 15:9-14 (Asa, vss. 11, 14)
  - 4. 2 Chron. 16:7-10 (Asa)
  - 5. 2 Chron. 28:23 (Asa cont.)

### CLOSING

- A. We have changed vocabulary:
  - 1. **Sin** has become low self-esteem.
  - 2. **Justification** is experiencing God's affirmation.
  - 3. **Sanctification** is accepting self-worth.
  - 4. **Salvation** is whatever the latest self-help fad offers.
- B. We may have lost a conscious awareness of sin, but we *have not lost the guilt of sin or the need to have sin forgiven.*
- C. The answer – JESUS.
  - 1. And He continues to call today to "come follow Him."
  - 2. Won't you accept Him as He is – changing our lives.