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The Road to Idolatry

Series: Divided Heart, Divided Nation

1 Kings 12-13

The Village Church at Shell Point

Evening Service

December 1, 2024

I. Introduction

A. Designations for humans

1. Homo sapiens – man the wise
2. Homo faber – man the maker (Marx)
3. **Fabricum idolarum – the idol factory (Calvin)**

B. Human propensity for idol making

1. Not confined to the creation of statues and artifacts
2. Anything which supplants God is an idol

C. **Romans 1:18–25** (ESV) —

1. 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.
2. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.
3. 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 are without excuse.
4. 21 For although they 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.
5. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools,
6. 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.
7. 24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves,
8. 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever!
Amen.

D. Contemporary idols

1. Materialism
2. Power
3. Humanism
 - a. Man is the measure
4. Success in terms of numbers
5. Self

- a. Just check out which sections of bookstores are larger
- b. Including Christian book stores

II. **Jeroboam was the chief idol maker**

- A. Jeroboam I (son of Nebat)
- B. Story
 - 1. Jeroboam was servant of Solomon
 - a. Gifted leader
 - b. Appointed over forced labor of Joseph
 - 2. Approached by prophet Ahijah the Shilonite
 - a. Told that God was tearing away kingdom from Solomon's son
 - 3. Used a graphic object lesson – tore garment in 12 pieces
 - a. Told Jeroboam to take 10 pieces
 - b. He would receive the kingdom, but not all
 - (1) 10 tribes in the north
 - c. Told the reason God was doing this
 - (1) Solomon had forsaken God, turned to idolatry
 - d. Two tribes would remain with Solomon's son Rehoboam
 - (1) Did this for the sake of David
 - 4. Jeroboam's position became known to Solomon;
 - a. Fled to Egypt until Solomon died
 - 5. After Solomon's death, time for Rehoboam to be confirmed king by the people
 - a. Took place at Shechem
 - 6. Jeroboam returned from Egypt
 - a. Became spokesperson for the people
 - b. Sought to lessen the burden Solomon had placed on the people
 - 7. Rehoboam took three days to discuss the issue
 - a. Elders were consulted – counseled relaxing the hardships
 - b. Young companions were consulted – counseled increasing the hardships
 - c. Took the young companions advice; rejected the elders
 - 8. Rehoboam spoke harshly to Jeroboam and the people
 - 9. People rebelled
 - a. Appointed Jeroboam king
 - 10. Rehoboam fled to Jerusalem
 - 11. Tribes of Judah and Benjamin remained loyal to Rehoboam
 - 12. All other tribes (north) turned to Jeroboam for leadership
 - a. Result was northern kingdom (Israel) and southern kingdom (Judah)
- C. Idolatry began when Jeroboam made a politically astute decision
 - 1. Worship life of the nation was centralized in Jerusalem
 - a. Solomon's chief accomplishment (temple)
 - 2. Jeroboam was afraid that continued pilgrimage of northern tribes to Jerusalem would undercut his influence and authority
 - 3. Jeroboam established alternative worship centers

- a. Bethel (south)
 - b. Dan (north)
 - 4. Jeroboam established alternative gods
 - a. Golden calves – one each in Bethel and Dan
 - 5. Jeroboam established alternative sacrifices
 - a. High places built with altars
 - 6. Jeroboam established an alternative priesthood
 - a. Appointed non-Levites as priests
- D. **Aggravation of idolatry**
- 1. Ahijah’s message to Jeroboam was clear
 - a. Dividing kingdom
 - b. No divided worship
 - 2. **1 Kings 11:37–38** (ESV) —
 - a. 37 And I will take you, and you shall reign over all that your soul desires, and you shall be king over Israel.
 - b. 38 And if you will listen to all that I command you, and will walk in my ways, and do what is right in my eyes by keeping my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, I will be with you and will build you a sure house, as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you.
 - 3. Idolatry was a clear violation, not just of God’s prior prohibition of idolatry, but of God’s own direct word to Jeroboam included with a promise
 - 4. Later, a man of God condemns his idolatry
 - 5. **1 Kings 13:1–6** (ESV) —
 - a. 1 And behold, a man of God came out of Judah by the word of the LORD to Bethel.
 - b. Jeroboam was standing by the altar to make offerings.
 - c. 2 And the man cried against the altar by the word of the LORD and said, “O altar, altar, thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name, and he shall sacrifice on you the priests of the high places who make offerings on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.’ ”
 - d. 3 And he gave a sign the same day, saying, “This is the sign that the LORD has spoken: ‘Behold, the altar shall be torn down, and the ashes that are on it shall be poured out.’ ”
 - e. 4 And when the king heard the saying of the man of God, which he cried against the altar at Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, “Seize him.”
 - f. And his hand, which he stretched out against him, dried up, so that he could not draw it back to himself.
 - g. 5 The altar also was torn down, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign that the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.

- h. 6 And the king said to the man of God, “Entreat now the favor of the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me.”
 - i. And the man of God entreated the LORD, and the king’s hand was restored to him and became as it was before.
 - E. Jeroboam’s idolatry became legendary
 - 1. Jeroboam’s idolatry is said to be responsible for leading Israel into sin
 - 2. Israel’s idolatry seems always to be traced back to Jeroboam
 - a. **1 Kings 15:26** (ESV) — 26 He [Nadab] did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin which he made Israel to sin.
 - b. **1 Kings 15:33–34** (ESV) — 33 In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha the son of Ahijah began to reign over all Israel at Tirzah, and he reigned twenty-four years. 34 He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and **walked in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin which he made Israel to sin.**
 - c. **1 Kings 16:18–19** (ESV) — 18 And when Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the citadel of the king’s house and burned the king’s house over him with fire and died, 19 because of his sins that he committed, doing evil in the sight of the LORD, **walking in the way of Jeroboam, and for his sin which he committed, making Israel to sin.**
 - d. **1 Kings 16:25–26** (ESV) — 25 Omri did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did more evil than all who were before him. 26 For he **walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in the sins that he made Israel to sin,** provoking the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger by their idols.
 - e. Etc...
 - F. What were the things that led to such idolatry?
 - 1. Jeroboam probably didn’t want to become an idolater when he grew up
 - a. Wasn’t the legacy he anticipated
- III. **Fear of something other than God**
- A. **1 Kings 12:25–27** (ESV) —
 - 1. 25 Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim and lived there.
 - 2. And he went out from there and built Penuel.
 - 3. 26 And Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom will turn back to the house of David.
 - 4. 27 If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the temple of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn again to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah.”
 - B. Afraid he would lose power
 - 1. Afraid he would be killed
 - C. Testimony of scripture – **Only God should be feared**

1. **Exodus 20:18–20** (ESV) —
 - a. 18 Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off
 - b. 19 and said to Moses, “You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.”
 - c. 20 Moses said to the people, “Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin.”
2. **Deuteronomy 4:10–14** (ESV) —
 - a. 10 how on the day that you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, the LORD said to me, ‘Gather the people to me, that I may let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children so.’
 - b. 11 And you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, while the mountain burned with fire to the heart of heaven, wrapped in darkness, cloud, and gloom.
 - c. 12 Then the LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of words, but saw no form; there was only a voice.
 - d. 13 And he declared to you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments, and he wrote them on two tablets of stone.
 - e. 14 And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and rules, that you might do them in the land that you are going over to possess.
3. **Deuteronomy 6:1–3** (ESV) —
 - a. 1 “Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the rules—that the LORD your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over, to possess it,
 - b. 2 that you may fear the LORD your God, you and your son and your son’s son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be long.
 - c. 3 Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.
4. **Deuteronomy 6:4–9** (ESV) —
 - a. 4 “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.
 - b. 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.
 - c. 6 And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

- d. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.
 - e. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.
 - f. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
5. **Deuteronomy 6:13–15** (ESV) —
- a. 13 It is the LORD your God you shall fear.
 - b. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear.
 - c. 14 You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are around you—
 - d. 15 for the LORD your God in your midst is a jealous God—lest the anger of the LORD your God be kindled against you, and he destroy you from off the face of the earth.
6. **Deuteronomy 6:24–25** (ESV) —
- a. 24 And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as we are this day.
 - b. 25 And it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to do all this commandment before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us.’
7. **Deuteronomy 10:12–13** (ESV) —
- a. 12 “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,
 - b. 13 and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good?
8. Cf **Deuteronomic history of Kings**
9. **1 Samuel 12:14–15** (ESV) —
- a. 14 If you will fear the LORD and serve him and obey his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the LORD your God, it will be well.
 - b. 15 But if you will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you and your king.
10. **Psalms and Proverbs**
11. **Psalms 36:1** (ESV) —
- a. 1 Transgression speaks to the wicked deep in his heart; there is no fear of God before his eyes.
12. **Psalms 67:7** (ESV) —
- a. 7 God shall bless us; let all the ends of the earth fear him!
13. **Psalms 27:1** (ESV) —

- a. 1 The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
- 14. **Psalm 33:18** (ESV) —
 - a. 18 Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love...
- 15. **Psalm 34:9** (ESV) —
 - a. 9 Oh, fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him have no lack!
- 16. **Psalm 103:13** (ESV) —
 - a. 13 As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him.
- 17. **Psalm 103:17** (ESV) —
 - a. 17 But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children...
- 18. **Proverbs 1:7** (ESV) —
 - a. 7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.
- 19. **Proverbs 9:10** (ESV) —
 - a. 10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.
- 20. **Proverbs 14:26–27** (ESV) —
 - a. 26 In the fear of the LORD one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge.
 - b. 27 The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, that one may turn away from the snares of death.
- 21. Fear of the Lord responsible for **Progress of the church**
- 22. **Acts 9:31** (ESV) —
 - a. 31 So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.
- 23. **2 Corinthians 5:11** (ESV) —
 - a. 11 Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience.

D. Fearing anything else other than God will lead to idolatry

IV. **Political expediency**

- A. **1 Kings 12:26–27** (ESV) —
 - 1. 26 And Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom will turn back to the house of David.
 - 2. 27 If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the temple of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn again to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah.”
- B. From his perspective – he was politically astute

1. Some basis in his judgment
2. **2 Chronicles 11:14–17** (ESV) —
 - a. 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,
 - b. 15 and he appointed his own priests for the high places and for the goat idols and for the calves that he had made.
 - c. 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.
 - d. 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.
3. We're unsure of the time frame
 - a. May have thought this might happen
 - b. May have responded to the exodus of the godly, who themselves had anticipated the turn to idolatry
- C. Jeroboam's act actually had the opposite effect of his intentions
 1. Strengthened Judah
 - a. More people came to Judah
 - b. Solidified religious life
 - c. Important – preserved Judah longer than Israel
 2. Political expediency often has that effect
- D. Contemporary example – abortion
 1. Growing numbers opposed to abortion in US
 2. Since 1973 – abortions killed 1.5 million per year
 - a. More killed in families that support abortion than opposed abortion
 3. Households that were pro-life continued to have children
 - a. Those children tend toward same values as parents
 - b. Now those children are in 20's and 30's, having children of their own
 4. So today a great majority of Americans support at least some limits on abortion
- E. **Biblical examples**
 1. Pilate
 - a. His political expediency didn't do him any good in the long run
 2. Jews who persecuted the church
 - a. **Acts 8:1–4** (ESV) —
 - (1) 1 And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.
 - (2) 2 Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him.

(3) 3 But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

(4) 4 Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word.

b. **Acts 11:19–21** (ESV) —

(1) 19 Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews.

(2) 20 But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus.

(3) 21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord.

F. **Proverbs 14:12** (ESV) —

1. 12 There is a way that seems right to a man,
2. but its end is the way to death.

V. **Corrupt spiritual leadership**

A. 1 Kings 13 – story of old prophet and man of God

1. Puzzling story
2. Old prophet learns of man of God’s prophecy
3. Invites the man to stay with him
 - a. Man of God refuses
 - b. Convinces him by lying about another prophecy
4. Ends up getting the man of God killed because he disobeyed what God had told him

B. Why wasn’t the old prophet speaking against Jeroboam’s idolatry?

1. Where were the prophets of their age?

C. Obviously corrupt – they seemed to know it

1. The old prophet is convicted, buries the man of God himself in his own grave

D. Bible has strong things to say about corrupt spiritual leadership

1. **Ezekiel 34:1–10** (ESV) —

- a. 1 The word of the LORD came to me:
- b. 2 “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord GOD: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep?
 - c. 3 You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep.
 - d. 4 The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them.

- e. 5 So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. My sheep were scattered;
- f. 6 they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them.
- g. 7 “Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:
- h. 8 As I live, declares the Lord GOD, surely because my sheep have become a prey, and my sheep have become food for all the wild beasts, since there was no shepherd, and because my shepherds have not searched for my sheep, but the shepherds have fed themselves, and have not fed my sheep,
- i. 9 therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:
- j. 10 Thus says the Lord GOD, Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require my sheep at their hand and put a stop to their feeding the sheep. No longer shall the shepherds feed themselves. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, that they may not be food for them.

E. **Jesus**

- 1. **Matthew 23:13–36** (ESV) —
 - a. 13 “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people’s faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in.
 - b. 15 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.
 - c. 16 “Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’
 - d. 17 You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred?
 - e. 18 And you say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath.’
 - f. 19 You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred?
 - g. 20 So whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it.
 - h. 21 And whoever swears by the temple swears by it and by him who dwells in it.
 - i. 22 And whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it.
 - j. 23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe the mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters

of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.

- k. 24 You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!
- l. 25 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.
- m. 26 You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.
- n. 27 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people’s bones and all uncleanness.
- o. 28 So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.
- p. 29 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous,
- q. 30 saying, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’
- r. 31 Thus you witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.
- s. 32 Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers.
- t. 33 You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell?
- u. 34 Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town,
- v. 35 so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar.
- w. 36 Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

F. **New Testament holds shepherds accountable for flock**

- 1. **James 3:1** (ESV) —
 - a. 1 Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.
- 2. **Hebrews 13:17** (ESV) —
 - a. 17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

VI. **Rejection of the Word**

- A. Jeroboam had the Word of Deuteronomy
 - 1. Historical examples of its fulfillment
- B. Seems he even used the Word in the opposite of its intention

1. His institution of idolatry appears in almost the same wording as Aaron's sin with the golden calves in Exodus!
- C. Still, his rejection of the Word was exacerbated; his sin aggravated
1. Ahijah came to him personally
 - a. Told him why the kingdom was being torn away and given to him (1) Reason: Idolatry of Solomon
 - b. Told him that fidelity to the covenant would result in God's protection and provision for generations to come
 2. But he almost immediately engaged in idolatry
 3. If that weren't bad enough, after engaging in idolatry, the man of God comes to condemn him
 - a. Prophecies what will happen to the his priesthood under Josiah
 - b. Sign – altar splitting
 - c. When Jeroboam seeks to condemn the man of God, his arm withers – another sign
 - d. Seeks its restoration – grace of God restores
 - e. Then seeks to gain favor of man of God
 4. Knew beforehand; now knows through the correction of God
- D. Ironic – whole event of the divided kingdom was meant to demonstrate that God means what He says
1. **1 Kings 12:12–15** (ESV) —
 - a. 12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king said, “Come to me again the third day.”
 - b. 13 And the king answered the people harshly, and forsaking the counsel that the old men had given him,
 - c. 14 he spoke to them according to the counsel of the young men, saying, “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.”
 - d. 15 So the king did not listen to the people, **for it was a turn of affairs brought about by the LORD that he might fulfill his word, which the LORD spoke by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.**
- E. Also ironic – man of God ended up dying by a denial of the Word
1. God was explicit that he wasn't to do anything with anyone in the north
 2. Allowed himself to be persuaded by another prophet who lied about a prophecy
 3. **Galatians 1:6–10** (ESV) —
 - a. 6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—
 - b. 7 not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.
 - c. 8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.

- d. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.
 - e. 10 For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.
 - F. Word of God is true, trustworthy
 - 1. **Psalm 19:7–11** (ESV) —
 - a. 7 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul;
 - b. the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple;
 - c. 8 the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;
 - d. the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;
 - e. 9 the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;
 - f. the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether.
 - g. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold;
 - h. sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.
 - i. 11 Moreover, by them is your servant warned;
 - j. in keeping them there is great reward.
 - 2. **Psalm 119:89** (ESV) — 89 Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens.
- VII. **Contemporary applications**
 - A. All these issues plague the church
 - B. **Fear of something other than God**
 - 1. Afraid of losing people
 - a. Odd – Jesus lost people as his ministry approached the cross
 - 2. Afraid of losing property
 - a. Mainline churches depart from the gospel
 - b. Church constitutions have reversionary clauses – property reverts to denomination of congregation leaves the denomination
 - 3. Afraid of losing friends
 - 4. Afraid of losing influence by taking unpopular stands
 - 5. Really want to see the church prosper, find a church that isn't afraid of anything but God
 - a. Ex: Church in China
 - C. **Political expediency**
 - 1. Really any kind of expediency is the danger
 - 2. We use our human management practices to try and build the church when God said He would build the church
 - 3. We try to play both ends against the middle in order to maintain peace
 - 4. We get cozy with political parties and personages when our preferred party is in power
 - D. **Corrupt spiritual leadership**
 - 1. Plenty of people who are in positions of leadership who...
 - a. Don't preach the gospel
 - b. Don't live the gospel

- E. **Rejection of the Word**
 - 1. Evangelicals claim the Bible to be Word of God
 - 2. Evangelicals don't really know the Bible
 - 3. Evangelicals continue to use other sources of wisdom to solve problems or issues
 - a. Not inspiration, but the sufficiency of scripture that is denied
- F. Road to idolatry is easy to get on