

Practice of Idolatry within the Church

Sadly, our Christian friends and family members have been brainwashed to believe that the use of statues, relics, and other articles is acceptable and even necessary for worship. They have been taught that the images and icons used in the church are not actually “worshipped” but are simply “visual aids” to worship. They began making allowances for the idolatrous use of images by the way 1st and 2nd commandment are combined and divided the 10th into two. The omission of 2nd seems accused of the idolatry-forbid worship of man-made things, graven images as idols that represent false gods.

There are good reasons for not using images in worship. First, the use of physical images to “aid” worship violates the command to worship God “in spirit and in truth”(JOH4:23-24) It is an act of the flesh.(GAL5:19-21) *Do not be idolaters, as some of them were;*(1CO10:7) In John 1:18, it is clear no one knows what God looks like: “*No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.*” Idols are the work of men’s hands. And, because God is Spirit, *You shall not make for yourself an image..You shall not bow down to them or worship them;*(EXO20:4-5) Holy angels refused to be worshiped. The response is, *Worship God!*(REV19:10;22:9) Peter and apostles refused to be worshiped.(ACT10:25–26;14:13–14) Mary praises the Lord with song. Mary glorifies God for His power, holiness and mercy.(LUK1:49–50) We are to worship Almighty God alone and give Him thanks, adore, praise, glory. Disobedience to God’s commands and serve/worship/venerate to false gods is sin of idolatry.(ROM1:21-;2TH2:9) It is irreverent to explain God as an iconic representation. But we can see there are paintings of Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and a countless of man judged saints. There are lighting candles before a statue, picture. They do not believe they are committing idolatry. They have been taught to believe that they do not worship these idols; they simply “venerate” them. The problem is “veneration” still gives honor, reverence to something and/or someone other than God; therefore, veneration is idolatry.

When God first gave His Law to mankind, He began with a statement of who He is: “*I am the LORD your God*, with warning that Israel was to have no other God but Him, followed by forbidding the making of any image of anything “in heaven above or on earth beneath or in the waters below” for the purpose of worshiping or bowing down to it. The history of the Jewish people is that they disobeyed this commandment. They made idols to represent gods and worshiped them; beginning with the golden calf during the very time God was writing out the Commandments for Moses! Idol worship drew the Israelites away from the true and living God. Idolatry is the sin of substitution in which we devote ourselves to worship something or someone in that place or honor belong to Almighty God. An idol is any person, object or activity you give a higher priority in your life than a relationship with God. Church leaders/pastor idolizing in how they set themselves up to be an idol for people, rather than God. When churches brand themselves, idolatry is an inevitable result. This kind of idolatry is prevalent in churches that are legalistic in its doctrinal positions. Rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft, stubbornness as bad as worshipping idols. Covetousness is idolatry-worship of strange gods. Idols are an abomination to the Lord. A devotion to Mary is a form of idol worship. Worship of Baal was a form of mystery religion originated in Babylon, with idolatry or spiritual adultery. All idolatry of self has at its core the three lusts “lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,”(1JO2:16) This is Satan has been deceiving since he first lied to Adam and Eve. Sadly, many churches are propagating it in preaching of health, wealth, prosperity gospel built on idol of self-esteem. But we will never find happiness focusing on ourselves. Our hearts and minds must be centered on God. When we love the Lord and our neighbors there will be no room in our hearts for idolatry. If we are to escape idolatry, we have to admit, avoid it, don’t practice in it and a serious insult to God. Christian should be walking by faith, not by sight. Guard yourselves from idols.

God does not want us to make idols of any kind. No idol can begin to represent the eternal and invisible God or help us worship God in the way he wants us to worship him. Idols always lead people away from God and never draw them closer to Him.(ACT17:29) We certainly don’t need a picture to display nature of our Lord, since idols are the work of men’s hands. God has never been glorified or honored by any human effort to represent him with a physical image. Throughout history people have been led astray by their idols and images. We have only to look at His creation, as we are reminded in Psalm 19:1,2: *The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.*” Our existence as the redeemed of the Lord, sanctified, made righteous by His blood shed on the cross, should have Him always before us. Bible is filled with non-physical descriptions of Christ that capture our imaginations. He is the light of the world.(JOH1:5) We Beheld His Glory, Full of Grace and Truth.(v.14-18)

And what agreement has the temple of God with idols?(2CO6:16) God rejects worship given to him through images and statues. God is a jealous God in the sense He expected full devotion,(EXO34:14) The Lord alone is to be glorified. Worship belongs to God, and He is right to be “jealous” of it. The Lord is the object of all our worship. He is our Provider, Protector, Sustainer, Refuge, Strong Tower, Healer, Comforter, Redeemer, Savior, and All in all. Pray to our Heavenly Father as children of God for all your needs/mercy/grace in the name of Jesus as Mediator and thru indwelling of Holy Spirit.(1TI2:5)

Their eyes and hearts are blinded by false teaching they are hearing by tradition. Pray that the Holy Spirit will draw them that they will respond to the Spirit’s leading, God will give wisdom/discernment spirit. Idolaters worship false gods, are barred from entering the eternal city, New Jerusalem.(REV22:15) Idolatry pull you away from God. *Therefore put to death, whatever belongs to your earthly nature:sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.*(COL3:5)