

MAN'S REJECTION OF DEITY'S GREATNESS

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: Romans 1:16-23. From Roy H. Enoch (09-16-1994).
- B. We need to often be reminded of the glorious blessings that God has provided for us.
 - 1. It seems to be the easiest to be grateful for material things that we can see and experience.
 - 2. It also seems to be easy to take for granted those things which we have always enjoyed.
 - 3. Learning gratitude for the great blessings of God and for the greatness of X will cause us to be more humble and happier.
 - 4. In fact, when we study these great blessings, we wonder why we are not more grateful, and therefore, more devoted.
- C. At this time we want to reflect on the question: "Why does man reject God's greatness?"
 - 1. First, a look at some examples of man's rejection of God's blessings.
 - 2. Second, determining what causes this rejection.
 - 3. Finally, suggestions to avoid rejecting God's greatness.

I. THE BIBLE IS FULL OF EXAMPLES OF MAN REJECTING GOD'S BLESSINGS.

- A. In Genesis 6, we have a description of man leaving God (Gen. 6:5).
 - 1. The process of their departure from the Lord is alluded to earlier in the chapter (6:2).
 - 2. They were doing what "they chose".
 - 3. When we are doing as we please, we are not giving credit to God for his greatness.
- B. God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage, yet they continued to murmur and complain when they didn't have what they wanted.
 - 1. Sometimes the slave prefers security more than freedom. This is the major support for socialism.
 - 2. When Moses was on the mountain receiving the Law from God, the people had Aaron make a golden calf to worship.
 - a. They wanted a god that they could see.
 - b. Men still like to focus on what they can see and show.
 - 3. The twelve spies found a rich land, but they were afraid to trust God to give it to them.
- C. During the period of the Judges, they continually left God to do as they pleased.
 - 1. They were faithful for a while (Jo. 24:31; Jud. 2:10,11).
 - 2. Then the Lord allowed them to be oppressed (Jud. 2:14-15).
 - 3. When they were oppressed enough for them to return to the Lord, He sent a Judge to deliver them (Jud. 2:16).
 - 4. God had forbidden them to marry those of other religions (Deut. 7:3-4).
 - 5. They continued to do this anyway (Jud. 3:6-7).
- D. With all of his wisdom and knowledge, Solomon followed the same disobedience (1Kgs 11:1-6). After blessing him richly, the Lord rejected Solomon because he rejected the Lord (1Kgs 11:11).
 - 1. God had given him a long life, great riches, peace, and great wisdom.
 - 2. He had also allowed Solomon build the temple, and many other great things.
 - 3. With all of that wisdom, he left God to do as he pleased.
- E. The Jews rejected Jesus in spite of His fulfillment of prophecy and the miracles which were the sign of the Messiah.
 - 1. They rejected Him when He did not respect their traditions.
 - 2. Some seemed to simply be jealous of His popularity.
 - 3. Even those who believed on Him, many would not confess Him (Jn. 12:42-43).

II. SOME OF THE CAUSES OF REJECTING GOD.

- A. It seems to be man's (sinful) nature to be self-centered and to want to do as he pleases.
 - 1. This is natural for infants, but adults should out-grow it.

2. Yet, regardless of how much we are aware of the danger, we still seem to be tempted to focus on our own wants.
 3. Greed or covetousness is called idolatry.
 4. Many philosophies of life focus on pleasure, as the Epicureans would say, "let us eat and drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we may die."
 5. Hedonism is "the doctrine that pleasure or happiness is the sole or chief good in life" *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th ed.
 - a. It is the American way to "get all the gusto you can out of life."
 - b. "Whatever feels good, do it."
- B. Our natural inclination to focus on physical things rather than the spiritual.
1. Paul described how man could know the nature and power of God by the things that He made so that they are without excuse (Rom. 1:20).
 2. But they preferred to worship what they could see (Rom. 1:23).
 - a. In almost all cultures, the sun is worshipped as the chief male god and the moon as the female goddess.
 - b. Features of the earth are frequently worshipped as the seas, mountains, and volcanoes.
 - c. Also, features of the weather such as thunder, lightening, rain, etc.
 3. Therefore, man is easily distracted from worshipping a God that he cannot see.
- C. But not all temptations are of the flesh, because Satan and many of the angels of heaven seem to have sinned without flesh (2Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).
1. Even those who would be likely to be considered to become elders should be experienced and mature enough in the faith that they would not be too subject to pride.
 2. See 1Tim. 3:6 (many interpret this as pride was what caused the devil to be condemned.)
- D. It may partly be pride that causes some to refuse to even consider God as the source of the blessings that they enjoy.
1. But Robert Milligan only admits to two sources of infidelity: "ignorance and dishonesty; an uninstructed and darkened understanding, and a dishonest and wicked heart."
 2. He says that the first class can sometimes be instructed, by fair and honorable argument, but the second class are of those who do not want to retain God in their knowledge because they love darkness since their deeds are evil (Robert Milligan, *The Scheme of Redemption*, p. 46.)
- E. Sometimes people seemed to reject these great blessings because of fear.
1. Israel was afraid of the people in Canaan.
 2. Some were afraid to confess Jesus.
 3. Peter probably denied knowing Jesus because he was afraid.

III. SOME WAYS TO AVOID REJECTING GOD.

- A. Last Sunday we studied the need for spiritual strength and how to get it from Eph. 6:10-17.
1. We need spiritual strength because we are at war.
 - a. Not against flesh and blood, but spiritual wickedness.
 - b. If we do not want to fight, we are enslaved.
 - c. But too many Xians would rather "sleep w/ the enemy" than to fight.
 2. They gamble w/their souls and w/those of their children. Bulletin Article:

"GAMBLERS"

I am a gambler! Oh, not the kind that frequents places behind closed doors in some night spot. I'm not that kind of gambler. Such gambling as this is "peanuts" to the gambling that I do. You see, I GAMBLE WITH MY SOUL AS THE STAKE. I'm betting that I can live a life of "do-nothing indifference, a life of neglect of those things of God," and still be saved.

I'm gambling w/ the souls of my children as stakes. I am betting their souls that I can let

them miss Bible classes, worship services, and mid-week meetings, and that I can get sufficient knowledge without attending study classes, and that I can remain indifferent to the teachings of X on liberal giving, and yet X will bless me. I am betting that I can ignore the "lost" about me, and that I can "wink" at sin, and still drift into heaven.

Yes, I am a gambler--the most reckless type. I am gambling against impossible odds with my soul and the souls of my children at stake, for, you see, I AM A LUKEWARM CHRISTIAN.
(Author unknown)

- B. The entire "armor of God" focuses on the word of God (Eph. 6:10-17).
 - 1. "...waist girded with truth"
 - 2. "...the breastplate of righteousness"
 - 3. "...having shod your feet w/the preparation of the gospel of peace"
 - 4. "...taking the shield of faith"
 - 5. "...take the helmet of salvation"
 - 6. "...the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God."
- C. These are to be used with: (Eph. 6:18).
 - 1. Constant prayer.
 - 2. Supplication in the Spirit.
 - 3. With all perseverance.
 - 4. Supplication for all the saints.
- D. We need constant self-examination or introspection (2Cor. 13:5; 1Cor. 11:28).
- E. We also have a responsible to encourage others to faithfulness (Heb. 10:24-25).

There are several lists of Xian responsibilities that we should regularly check ourselves on.
See Eph. 5,6; 1Th. 5:12-22.