



Sermon Notes

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WELCOME TO CITY ON A HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

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Welcome to Babylon

We begin a new series this morning that wrestles with a truth most of us have trouble accepting: *We no longer live in a nation that sees Christianity as a good or positive thing. It's no longer viewed by many as the foundation of moral good for our society.*

Now, whether or not you accept the idea that the United States was originally a Christian nation, I don't think anyone can honestly argue that Christianity didn't play a major role in shaping this country. Especially when it comes to morality and the ideas that led to human rights. From the early pilgrims to the founding fathers, the men and women who helped shape this country's values and cultural structures were steeped in a Christian worldview. As a result, those who considered themselves to be Christians felt pretty much at home living in this nation. But over the last 50 to 60 years, things have changed drastically. The United States is no longer a nation rooted in Biblical values. But instead, it has become a form of what the Bible describes as Babylon: A metaphor used to describe a nation whose primary worldview stands opposed to God and His plan of redemption for all mankind.

Just like Daniel and his three friends who were taken from their homes and exiled to Babylon in the Old Testament, we have to learn how to serve God in a culture that stands directly opposed to His Word. Through today's study in Daniel 1, we'll discover a powerful truth: *Even in Babylon, God is able to do amazing things when His people, who are empowered by the Holy Spirit, walk in obedience to His Word!*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. It's our 1st 2 service Sunday! Feel free to stick around between services to fellowship! If you have any feedback as we work through the weeks to come, email it to cityonahill@chccmi.com
2. C3 College Bible Study @ UofO on Tuesday evenings from 7-9 in the Cutler Student Center

CHURCH CALENDAR

- 10/2: Living in Babylon Class 1 @ CHCC, 6:30p
- 10/12: Men's Ministry Breakfast @ CHCC, 9-11a
- 10/13: Next Step Class @ 9:30a
- 10/16: Living in Babylon Class 2 @ CHCC, 6:30p
- 10/19: Women's Ministry Gathering @ Whitson's 9a-11a

Genesis 11:1-4 (NLT), “At one time all the people of the world spoke the same language and used the same words. **2** As the people migrated to the east, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia and settled there. **3** They began saying to each other, “Let’s make bricks and harden them with fire.” (In this region bricks were used instead of stone, and tar was used for mortar.) **4** Then they said, “Come, let’s build a great city for ourselves with a tower that reaches into the sky. This will make us famous and keep us from being scattered all over the world.”

Genesis 1:28 (NLT) - “Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”

LIFEPPOINT: *Even in Babylon, God is able to do amazing things when His people, who are empowered by the Holy Spirit, walk in obedience to His Word!*

Daniel 1:1-8 (NLT), “During the third year of King Jehoiakim’s reign in Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. **2** The Lord gave him victory over King Jehoiakim of Judah and permitted him to take some of the sacred objects from the Temple of God. So Nebuchadnezzar took them back to the land of Babylonia and placed them in the treasure-house of his god. **3** Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief of staff, to bring to the palace some of the young men of Judah’s royal family and other noble families, who had been brought to Babylon as captives. **4** “Select only strong, healthy, and good-looking young men,” he said. “Make sure they are well versed in every branch of learning, are gifted with knowledge and good judgment, and are suited to serve in the royal palace. Train these young men in the language and literature of Babylon.” **5** The king assigned them a daily ration of food and wine from his own kitchens. They were to be trained for three years, and then they would enter the royal service. **6** Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were four of the young men chosen, all from the tribe of Judah. **7** The chief of staff renamed them with these Babylonian names: Daniel was called Belteshazzar. Hananiah was called Shadrach. Mishael was called Meshach. Azariah was called Abednego. **8** But Daniel was determined not to defile himself by eating the food and wine given to them by the king.”

The context of historical Babylon as it appears in the Bible:

Isaiah 33:22 (NLT), *“For the LORD is our judge, our lawgiver, and our king. He will care for us and save us.”*

1. A similarity between our current Christian culture and ancient Jewish culture - People stray, the government becomes corrupt, and things start to fall apart when the citizens forget where they have come from. The foundations are basically good, but the people begin drifting from them. **We too have drifted, just like the nation of Judah at the time of Daniel.**
2. **Another very significant similarity** - after they had begun to drift, along came a powerful empire with a very different culture.

Babylon is not going anywhere soon. It is here to stay. So what do we do?

Daniel 1:2, *“The Lord gave him (King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon) victory over King Jehoiakim of Judah and permitted him to take some of the sacred objects from the Temple of God.”*

Daniel has grabbed a hold of a powerful Biblical truth: *God is sovereign. He rules over the affairs of mankind.* **God’s plans do not depend on who is in political power in our time!**

LIFEPPOINT: *Even in Babylon, God is able to do amazing things when His people, who are empowered by the Holy Spirit, walk in obedience to His Word!*

What does it mean for a culture to become Babylon?

- 1) **It is a culture that is built on human pride** - **Genesis 11:4a (NLT)**, *“Come, let’s build a great city for ourselves with a tower that reaches into the sky. This will make us famous.”*
- 2) **It is a culture that is built on human rebellion** - **Genesis 11:4b (NLT)**, *“This will...keep us from being scattered all over the world.”*

3) It is a culture that offers you a new identity - Daniel 1:7-8 (NLT), *“The chief of staff renamed them with these Babylonian names: Daniel was called Belteshazzar. Hananiah was called Shadrach. Mishael was called Meshach. Azariah was called Abednego.”*

4) It is a culture that is hostile to those who oppose its idols.

5) It is a culture whose most powerful weapon is seduction - If you’ll just compromise on a few key issues, you can continue to live in ease and comfort!

Babylon is a very good time. It offers prosperity and sensual pleasures. It offers many enjoyable things to the average person, if you’ll just follow the party line and not rock the boat.

Daniel 1: 8 (NLT), *“But Daniel was determined not to defile himself by eating the food and wine given to them by the king.”*

LIFEPOINT: *Even in Babylon, God is able to do amazing things when His people, who are empowered by the Holy Spirit, walk in obedience to His Word!*

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Taking Refuge in the Lord

Last Sunday we looked at two important ways the Bible refers to Babylon. We started with the historical reality of the kingdom of Babylon that came and conquered the Kingdom of Judah. They took God's people captive, including Daniel and his friends, carrying them off to the city of Babylon where they had to learn to live in a pagan culture. But we also looked at the Biblical metaphor that Babylon became for any culture down through history that stands opposed to God. There are some similarities to our culture today and what is happening around us, and what happened to Judah in Daniel's day.

There are many lessons we can learn from Daniel and his friends about how to live out our faith in a pagan culture. We will be focusing on those lessons throughout this series. But today we are going to take a step back and look at the scriptural context for why there is an ongoing battle between the spirit of Babylon and God's people. This battle is first and foremost a spiritual battle. Our enemies are not the people who are caught up in the spirit of Babylon. They're only doing what lost people do, following the spirit of this age. It is this satanic spirit behind Babylon that we stand against as believers.

According to the Bible, there is a cosmic battle taking place all around us. It is a battle that Jesus has already won, in the sense that we know the final outcome. But it is a spiritual battle that will continue to rage here on earth until Christ' return. Through our study this morning, we'll discover an important truth: *If you want to live with confidence in Babylon, you have to learn to see the ongoing cosmic battle from God's perspective.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Our next Next Step Class will be on Sunday, October 13th during first service. Sign up in the digital bulletin!
2. 7th Annual Youth Group Turkey Hunt on November 10th after service! All 5th-12th grade students welcome Sign up in the digital bulletin. Questions? See Joey or Mikaela Vanator!

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Genesis 11:4 (NLT), “Then they said, “Come, let’s build a great city for ourselves with a tower that reaches into the sky. This will make us famous and keep us from being scattered all over the world.”

Genesis 12:1-4 (NLT), “The LORD had said to Abram, “Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father’s family, and go to the land that I will show you. **2** I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. **3** I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you.”

Matthew 28:18-19 (NLT), “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. **19** Therefore, go and make disciples of **all the nations.**”

LIFEPPOINT: *If you want to live with confidence in Babylon, you have to learn to see the ongoing cosmic battle from God’s perspective.*

1) The nations are at war with God, attempting to take His throne - Psalm 2:1-3 (NLT), “Why are the nations so angry? Why do they waste their time with futile plans? **2** The kings of the earth prepare for battle; the rulers plot together against the LORD and against his anointed one. **3** “Let us break their chains,” they cry, “and free ourselves from slavery to God.”

1 Peter 2:9b (NLT), “For you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God’s very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.”

Romans 2:1 (NLT), “You may think you can condemn such people, but you are just as bad, and you have no excuse! When you say they are wicked and should be punished, you are condemning yourself, for you who judge others do these very same things.”

The sin nature that controls rebellious mankind, also dwells in our hearts. It attempts to get us to join the nations in rebellion against God.

Why do the nations continue to war against God?

John 3:19 (NLT), “And the judgment is based on this fact: God’s light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil.”

Ephesians 2:1-2 (NLT), “Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. **2** You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God.”

2) **God responds through His Son who is firmly on the throne - Verses 4-6**, “But the one who rules in heaven laughs. The Lord scoffs at them. **5** Then in anger he rebukes them, terrifying them with his fierce fury. **6** For the Lord declares, “I have placed my chosen king on the throne in Jerusalem, on my holy mountain.”

Psalm 37:12-13 (NLT), “The wicked plot against the godly; they snarl at them in defiance. **13** But the Lord just laughs, for he sees their day of judgment coming.”

Psalm 59:8 (NLT), “But LORD, you laugh at them. You scoff at all the hostile nations.”

Psalm 46:10 (NLT), ““Be still, and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world.”

3) **The outcome of the battle was never in doubt - Vs 7-9**, “The king proclaims the LORD’s decree: “The LORD said to me, ‘You are my son. Today I have become your Father. **8** Only ask, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, the whole earth as your possession. **9** You will break them with an iron rod and smash them like clay pots.””

Philippians 2:9-10 (NLT), “Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names **10** that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Colossians 2:13-15 (NLT), “You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. **14** He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. **15** In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross.”

The King wins this battle through the cross. That’s how He defeats evil. This makes no sense in human terms, but it is a life-changing truth in spiritual terms.

1 Corinthians 1:18 (NLT), *“The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! But we who are being saved know it is the very power of God.”*

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NLT), *“We are human, but we don’t wage war as humans do. **4** We use God’s mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. **5** We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ.”*

Why would we ever adopt the weapons of this world when we have the supernatural weapons of God: *Prayer, God’s Word, The Gospel message, and The Holy Spirit’s power and peace!*

4) **Sinful man’s only hope is to repent and bow before the Son - Vs 10-12**, *“Now then, you kings, act wisely! Be warned, you rulers of the earth! **11** Serve the LORD with reverent fear, and rejoice with trembling. **12** Submit to God’s royal son, or he will become angry, and you will be destroyed in the midst of all your activities—for his anger flares up in an instant. But what joy for all who take refuge in him!”*

The Gospel is only Good News when you understand what it saves you from: The judgment of God. We must be willing to warn all who will listen of the judgment that is to come!

Revelation 19:15 (NLT), *“From his mouth came a sharp sword to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will release the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty, like juice flowing from a winepress.” - **We warn men of the judgment to come!***

We are part of a Cosmic Battle that is so much bigger than the circumstances of our daily lives. Once we recognize the resources available to us in the battle, it changes everything!

LIFEPPOINT: *If you want to live with confidence in Babylon, you have to learn to see the ongoing cosmic battle from God’s perspective.*



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Finding Peace in Captivity

Today's passage provides important insight for us on how God's children can live and even thrive as a minority in a foreign culture. This is important to us as Christians, because we have recently become a minority concerning the beliefs and values that dominate our culture. It used to be that Christianity played a major role in forming the worldview of those in power in our country. Christian values permeated every area of our society, even though many people lived more like cultural Christians than true believers. But that is simply not the case today. All you have to do is to express your beliefs about biblical marriage and sexuality, or dare to suggest that Jesus is the only way to the Father, to find out just how far the pendulum has swung in the other direction.

So this morning we're going to focus on what God has to say about living as a believing minority in a country that is largely pagan in its values and outlook. As we study Jeremiah 29 and God's instructions to His people living in exile in Babylon, we find some surprising instructions. Instead of holding grudges and fighting against those who stand opposed to their Jewish beliefs, the Israelites were called to work for the peace and prosperity of this new city that had become their home. All those who would follow these new instructions were given a powerful promise: *If they would live with a mission to bless others, they are promised God's peace in return!*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Upcoming class to tie in with our sermon series - Wednesday, 10/2 @ CHCC, 6:30pm. Childcare & snacks provided.
2. Youth Group meets on Monday nights here at the church from 6:30-8p. All 7th-12th grade students welcome. Check out chccmi.com/youth for more info!

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Romans 1:18-25a (NLT), *But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who suppress the truth by their wickedness. 19 They know the truth about God because he has made it obvious to them. 20 For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God. 21 Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn't worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused. 22 Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools. 23 And instead of worshiping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshiped idols made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles. 24 **So God abandoned them to do whatever shameful things their hearts desired.** As a result, they did vile and degrading things with each other's bodies. 25 **They traded the truth about God for a lie.**”*

Jeremiah 29:1, 3b-14 (NLT), *“Jeremiah wrote a letter from Jerusalem to the elders, priests, prophets, and all the people who had been exiled to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar... 3b This is what Jeremiah's letter said: 4 This is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies, the God of Israel, says to all the captives he has exiled to Babylon from Jerusalem: 5 “Build homes, and plan to stay. Plant gardens, and eat the food they produce. 6 Marry and have children. Then find spouses for them so that you may have many grandchildren. Multiply! Do not dwindle away! 7 And work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare.” 8 This is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies, the God of Israel, says: “Do not let your prophets and fortune-tellers who are with you in the land of Babylon trick you. Do not listen to their dreams, 9 because they are telling you lies in my name. I have not sent them,” says the LORD. 10 This is what the LORD says: “You will be in Babylon for seventy years. But then I will come and do for you all the good things I have promised, and I will bring you home again. 11 For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. 12 In those days when you pray, I will listen. 13 If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. 14 I will be found by you,” says the LORD. “I will end your captivity and restore your fortunes. I will gather you out of the nations where I sent you and will bring you home again to your own land.”*

Five instructions for living in exile:

1) Build houses and plant gardens (vs 5)

2) Multiply your families (Vs 6)

Deuteronomy 6:4-8, “Listen, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. **5** And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. **6** And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. **7** Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. **8** Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. **9** Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

God knew that with strong fathers and mothers planting the Word of God into the hearts of their children, these families could survive paganism.

Two things would happen as a result:

- God’s Word would bear fruit through these children
- A strong remnant would be ready to return to the Promised Land at the end of 70 years

3) Be a good neighbor (vs. 7a) - “And work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile.”

Shalom - prosperity, wholeness, blessing and favor - To be integrated, body, soul, and spirit.

LIFEPPOINT: As God’s people living in Babylon we’re called to work for its peace. When we live with a mission to bless others, we are promised God’s peace in return!

4) Pray for the welfare of the new community you live in (Vs. 7b) - “Pray to the LORD for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare.”

If God’s people are not praying for their nation, then who will? Who is calling out to God on behalf of our politicians and leaders? It needs to be us, the church.

5) Trust the generational promises of God (Vs. 10-12) - “This is what the LORD says: “You will be in Babylon for seventy years. But then I will come and do for you all the good things I have promised, and I will bring you home again. **11** For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. **12** In those days when you pray, I will listen.”

Encouragement from this passage:

- **God always cares for His People. Our current circumstances are not the ultimate measure of God's love.**
- **We can trust God's promises**
- **God is sovereign over the nations of the world!**

Shalom actually resides in a Person. And it is *His shalom* that we bring to the world: *The peace of Jesus Christ!*

LIFEPOINT: *As God's people living in Babylon we're called to work for its peace. When we live with a mission to bless others, we are promised God's peace in return!*

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Blessed are the Persecuted

The Bible gives several warnings to nations that have enjoyed periods of prosperity and earthly power. They are at risk of radical moral decay. This has been the case since Genesis 11, where the city of Babel fell into the trap of pride and rebellion against God. So God judged them for what they were doing. This pattern has been repeated over and over again throughout human history. We get insight into how Babylon cultures go wrong from the phrase, "This will make us famous." They are cultures built on pride. Their downfall is found in the belief that: Nobody can achieve anything for us that is better than what we can achieve in our own strength and by our own might! They had removed God from their thinking and made themselves the greatest thing, rather than God.

When a culture begins to mirror Babylon, pride and rebellion against God rises to the surface. This leads to hostility toward the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. When you tell a proud and rebellious people that humility and repentance is the path to God's Kingdom, you are striking at the heart of their idols. The result is often hostility and persecution. This is the challenge we face today as Christians living in our culture. How do we live faithfully in the face of hostility and persecution? As we study Jesus' words in Matthew chapter 5, we will discover an important truth: When we give in to the pressure and compromise with Babylon, we lose our witnesses to the goodness and sufficiency of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Join us this Wednesday 10/2 @ 6:30p for a Living in Babylon class as we look at what the Bible says about gender & sexuality! Childcare for 0-4th grade.
2. Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes - Take a box home today to fill & bring back with \$10 for shipping by Sunday, Nov 10th! See a staff member if you have any questions!
3. The next Men's Breakfast will be Oct 12th here at the church from 9-11a. Bring a breakfast item to share if you are able!

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Genesis 11:1-7 (NLT), “At one time all the people of the world spoke the same language and used the same words. **2** As the people migrated to the east, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia and settled there. **3** They began saying to each other, “Let’s make bricks and harden them with fire.” (In this region bricks were used instead of stone, and tar was used for mortar.) **4** Then they said, “Come, let’s build a great city for ourselves with a tower that reaches into the sky. This will make us famous and keep us from being scattered all over the world.” **5 But the LORD came down to look at the city and the tower the people were building. 6 “Look!” he said. “The people are united, and they all speak the same language. After this, nothing they set out to do will be impossible for them! 7** Come, let’s go down and confuse the people with different languages. Then they won’t be able to understand each other.”

They have removed God from their thinking and made themselves the greatest thing in His place.

Matthew 22:37-40 (NLT), “‘You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ **38** This is the first and greatest commandment. **39** A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ **40** The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.”

If your true self is so good, then why did Jesus Christ have to die? Why did He go to the cross, if it wasn’t for our sinful fallen hearts?

Jeremiah 17:9 (NLT), “The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?”

Matthew 15:19 (NLT), “For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all sexual immorality, theft, lying, and slander.”

Matthew 5:1, “God blesses those who are (spiritually) poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.”

To whom does salvation come? To the humble, to those who are poor in spirit! Jesus says only those who truly understand their own spiritual poverty are going to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.

Your heart is not the answer. It is actually the problem! One of the clearest signs that God is working in someone's life is that they are convicted of their own sin.

Isaiah 57:15 (NLT), *"The high and lofty one who lives in eternity, the Holy One, says this: "I live in the high and holy place with those **whose spirits are contrite and humble**. I restore the crushed spirit of the humble and revive the courage of those with repentant hearts."*

We have to expect rejection and even persecution from those whose hearts are set on Babylon.

Matthew 5:10-12 (NLT), *"God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. 11 "God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. **12 Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way."***

Do you believe that when you face persecution for His sake, He has a very special blessing in that particular trouble?

LIFEPPOINT: When we give in to the pressure and compromise with Babylon, we lose our witnesses to the goodness and sufficiency of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Matthew 5:13-16 (NLT), *"You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless. **14** "You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. **15** No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. **16** In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father."*

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No other gods

Is idol worship just a thing of the past? No! Over the next four weeks, we will be looking at how prevalent idol worship still is today. It may not look the same as it did in the Old Testament, but any time you and I put something other than God number one in our lives, we are practicing idolatry. It is crucial that we be alert to idolatry creeping into our lives. Once we *recognize* any idols that may be entering our lives, we will use God's Word to figure out how to *remove* those idols and then *replace* them with things that we should be truly worshiping.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Join us on Wednesday 10/16 @ 6:30p for a Living in Babylon Question & Answer Class. If you'd like to submit a question, please email cityonahill@chccmi.com or put it in the tithe box! Childcare for 0-4th grade.
2. Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes - Take a box home today to fill & bring back with \$10 for shipping by Sunday, Nov 10th! See a staff member if you have any questions!
3. Women's Ministry Gathering - registration now open!! Join us for a freezer meal party at the Whitson's on 10/19! Sign up at chichi.com/connect

CHURCH CALENDAR

- 10/12: Men's Ministry Breakfast @ CHCC, 9-11a
- 10/13: Next Step Class @ 9:30a
- 10/16: Living in Babylon Class 2 @ CHCC, 6:30p
- 10/19: Women's Ministry Gathering @ Whitson's 9a-11a
- 10/27: Membership Class @ CHCC, 5-7p
- 11/10: YG Turkey Hunt (5th-12th grade)

“We always pay dearly for chasing after what is cheap.” - Aleksander Solzhenitsyn, Russian author and Soviet dissident

Joshua 24:14-15 (NLT), *“So fear the Lord and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord alone. But if you refuse to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord.”*

Jeremiah 10:3, 5-6, 8-11, 14-16 (NLT), *“Their ways are futile and foolish. They cut down a tree, and a craftsman carves an idol. Their gods are like helpless scarecrows in a cucumber field! They cannot speak, and they need to be carried because they cannot walk. Do not be afraid of such gods, for they can neither harm you nor do any good. Lord, there is no one like you! For you are great, and your name is full of power. People who worship idols are stupid and foolish. The things they worship are made of wood! They bring beaten sheets of silver from Tarshish and gold from Uphaz, and they give these materials to skillful craftsmen who make their idols. Then they dress these gods in royal blue and purple robes made by expert tailors. But the Lord is the only true God. He is the living God and the everlasting King! Say this to those who worship other gods: ‘Your so-called gods, who did not make the heavens and the earth, will vanish from the earth and from under the heavens. The whole human race is foolish and has no knowledge! The craftsmen are disgraced by the idols they make, for their carefully shaped works are a fraud. These idols have no breath or power. Idols are worthless; they are ridiculous lies! On the day of reckoning they will all be destroyed. But the God of Israel is no idol! He is the Creator of everything that exists.”*

Romans 1:23, 25 (NLT), *“And instead of worshiping the glorious, ever living God, they worshiped idols made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles. 25 They traded the truth about God for a lie. So they worshiped and served the things God created instead of the creator himself, who is worthy of eternal praise!”*

Why worry about false gods?

1. The One True God is a Jealous God

Exodus 20:3-5 (NLT), *“You must not have any other god but me. You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods.”*

"We never break the other commandments without breaking the first one."

-Martin Luther

Deuteronomy 6:14-15 (NLT), *"You must not worship any of the gods of neighboring nations, for the Lord your God, who lives among you, is a jealous God. His anger will flare up against you, and he will wipe you from the face of the earth."*

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (ESV), *"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart and with all of your soul and with all your might."*

2. Idolatry is a major theme of the Bible as a whole

Jonah 2:8 (NIV), *"Those who cling to worthless idols turn away from God's love for them."*

1 Corinthians 10:14 (NLT), *"So, my dear friends, flee from the worship of idols."*

1 John 5:21 (NLT), *"Dear children, keep away from anything that might take God's place in your hearts."*

1 Kings 21:26 (NLT), *"No one else so completely sold himself to what was evil in the Lord's sight as Ahab did under the influence of his wife Jezebel. His worst outrage was worshiping idols..."*

"The central principle of the Bible is the rejection of idolatry."

- Moshe Halbertal and Avishai Margalit, Idolatry

3. We are more susceptible to idolatry than we think

Jeremiah 17:9 (ESV), *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?"*

"The idols that drive us are complex, multi-layered, and largely hidden from us."

- Tim Keller, Counterfeit Gods

"Though few would own it, nothing is more common than idolatry. If we think of our soul as a house, idols are set up in every room, in every faculty." - **David Clarkson, Soul Idolatry**

4. True Worship can only Exist when False Worship is Removed

Romans 1:20-23 (NLT), *“For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuses for not knowing God. Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn’t worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused. Claiming to be wise, they became utter fools. And instead of worshiping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshiped idols made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles.”*

2 Kings 17:15 (NLT), *“They rejected his decrees and the covenant he had made with their ancestors, and they despised all his warnings. They worshiped worthless idols, so they became worthless themselves. They followed the example of the nations around them disobeying the Lord’s command not to imitate them.”*

2 Kings 17:41 (NIV), *“Even while these people were worshiping the Lord, they were serving their idols. To this day their children and grandchildren continue to do as their fathers did.”*

“Whatever your heart clings to and confides in, that is really your god, your functional savior.” - Martin Luther

LifePoint: We need to **recognize, remove, and replace** the idols in our lives.

How Do I Recognize My Idols?

1. Through the Word of God - **Hebrews 4:12 (NLT)**, *“For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes the innermost thoughts and desires.”*
2. Through the people of God - **Hebrews 3:13 (NLT)**, *“You must warn each other every day, while it is still ‘today,’ so that none of you will be deceived by sin and hardened against God.”*
3. Through the Spirit of God - **Psalms 139:23-24 (NLT)**, *“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.”*

WELCOME

TO CITY ON A HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

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No other gods

As we continue this series on "Living in Babylon", we will again be looking at the detriment of putting things other than God as our objects of worship. The Bible calls this idolatry. Over the next couple of weeks, we will continue to look at ways to **recognize, remove** and **replace** any idols that have crept into our lives. Spending time in God's Word, having Christian brothers and sisters in our lives, and relying on the Holy Spirit are ways to accomplish this. Today, we will be looking at the nature, cost, and signs of idol worship in our lives. As we dig into this important topic, pray, as David did, that God will reveal any areas in your life that require attention.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Join us this Wednesday 10/16 @ 6:30p for a Living in Babylon Question & Answer Class. We'll be discussing personhood theory, DEI and some politics. Childcare for 0-4th grade.
2. The next Membership class will be Sunday, October, 27th from 5-7p! Sign up in the digital bulletin!
3. Today is the last day to register for the Women's Ministry Freezer Meal Party next Saturday, 10/19 from 9-11 at the Whitson's! Sign up at chccmi.com/connect

CHURCH CALENDAR

- 10/16: Living in Babylon Class 2 @ CHCC, 6:30p
- 10/19: Women's Ministry Gathering @ Whitson's 9a-11a
- 10/27: Membership Class @ CHCC, 5-7p
- 11/9: Men's Ministry Breakfast @ CHCC, 9-11a
- 11/10: YG Turkey Hunt (5th-12th grade)

Jeremiah 17:1-10 (NLT), “The sin of Judah is inscribed with an iron chisel - engraved with a diamond point on their stony hearts and on the corners of their altars. **2** Even their children go to worship at their pagan altars and Asherah poles, beneath every green tree and on every high hill. **3** So I will hand over my holy mountain - along with all your wealth and treasures and your pagan shrines - as plunder to your enemies, for sin runs rampant in your land. **4** The wonderful possession I have reserved for you will slip from your hands. I will tell your enemies to take you as captives to a foreign land. For my anger blazes like fire that will burn forever. **5** This is what the Lord says: Cursed are those who put their trust in mere humans, who rely on human strength, and turn their hearts away from the Lord. **6** They are like stunted shrubs in the desert, with no hope for the future. They will live in barren wilderness, in an uninhabited salty land. **7** But blessed are those who trust in the Lord and have made the Lord their hope and confidence. **8** They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they never stop producing fruit. **9** The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is? **10** But I, the Lord, search all hearts and examine secret motives. I give all people their due rewards, according to what their actions deserve.”

LifePoint: We need to **recognize, remove, and replace** the idols in our lives.

“It’s easy: You simply follow the trail of your time, your affection, your energy, your money and your allegiance. At the end of the trail you’ll find a throne; and whatever, or whoever, is on that throne is what’s of highest value to you. On that throne is what you worship.”

- **Louie Giglio**

Reasons idolatry is important:

1. God is a jealous God
2. Idol worship is a major theme throughout the entire Bible
3. We are more prone to idolatry than we may think
4. True worship can only exist when false worship is removed

“Man’s nature, so to speak, is a perpetual idol factory of idols.” - **John Calvin**

Joshua 24:14-15 (NLT), “So fear the Lord and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord alone. **15** But if you refuse to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord.”

The Nature of Idol Worship - v. 1-2, *“The sin of Judah is inscribed with an iron chisel - engraved with a diamond point on their stony hearts and on the corners of their altars. 2 Even their children go to worship at their pagan altars and Asherah poles, beneath every green tree and on every high hill.”*

1. It is deeply stubborn - engraved in your heart (v. 1a)
2. It is mixed with worship - on the horns of the altar (v. 1b)
3. It is part of your family patterns - even the children remember (v. 2)

The Cost of Idol Worship - v. 3-4, *“So I will hand over my holy mountain. Along with all your wealth and treasures. And your pagan shrines - as plunder to your enemies, for sin runs rampant in your land. 4 The wonderful possession I have reserved for you will slip from your hands. I will tell your enemies to take you as captives to a foreign land. For my anger blazes like a fire that will burn forever.”*

1. You will lose true worship (v. 3)
2. You will lose your wealth and treasures (v. 3)
3. You will lose what you worship (v. 3)
4. You will lose your inheritance (v. 4)
5. You will lose your freedom (v. 4)
6. You will lose God's favor (v. 4)

7 Signs of Idol Worship - Trust in Man - v. 5-6, 9, *“This is what the Lord says: Cursed are those who put their trust in mere humans, who rely on human strength, and turn their ways from the Lord. 6 They are stunted like shrubs in the desert, with no hope for the future. They will live in barren wilderness, uninhabited salty land... 9 The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked.”*

1. The experience of being cursed (v. 5)
2. Dependence on the flesh for strength (v. 5)
3. A heart that turns away from God (v. 5)
4. Spiritual “dryness” (v. 6)
5. Inability to see prosperity when it comes (v. 6)
6. Lack of connection with others (v. 6)
7. Self-deception (v. 9)

7 Signs of True Worship - Trust in God - v. 7-8, *“But blessed are those who trust in the Lord and have made the Lord their hope and confidence. 8 They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green and they never stop producing fruit.”*

1. Blessing (v. 7)
2. Refreshment (v. 8)
3. Rootedness (v. 8)
4. Lack of fear (v. 8)
5. Resilience (v. 8)
6. Lack of worry (v. 8)
7. Consistent fruit (v. 8)

Reflection:

- Where do I spend my money?_____
- On what do I spend my time?_____
- On what do I spend my talents and abilities?_____
- What captivates my thoughts and attention?_____
- Where do I get my joy?_____
- What do I most eagerly anticipate?_____
- What do I trust?_____
- What music do I listen to?_____
- With what (or whom) do I identify?_____
- What do I publicly proclaim?_____
- What do I wear or display?_____
- What am I unwilling to question?_____
- What makes me angry?_____

“It’s easy: You simply follow the trail of your time, your affection, your energy, your money and your allegiance. At the end of the trail you’ll find a throne; and whatever, or whoever, is on that throne is what’s of highest value to you. On that throne is what you worship.”

- Louie Giglio

Homework assignment: Read 2 Kings 23:1-20 - underline/highlight all of the adjectives used to describe how King Josiah removed the idols present in Israel.

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No other gods

What made King Josiah unlike any king that came before him or has ever reigned since? When King Josiah **recognized** the idols that were present in his kingdom, he thoroughly **removed** them from sight! Will you and I have the courage to do the same? We also learn that removal is only a part of the process. We will also look at some of the archetypes of idols in the Old Testament and look at how we can begin to reshape our thinking and **replace** those idols with things that are truly worthy of our worship! I look forward to continuing this journey on how to make sure the objects of our worship are worthy pursuits.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The next Membership class will be Sunday, October, 27th from 5-7p! Sign up in the digital bulletin!
2. Hurricane relief: Bring needed items to the semi truck at Whitetail Market next Saturday 10/26, 8-6 or Sunday 10/27, 11-6. (Personal care, bedding, non perishable foods, baby items, tarps, work gloves, etc.)
3. Lifewise 3rd grade sign-up now open! See link for more information in the digital bulletin.

CHURCH CALENDAR

- 10/27: Membership Class @ CHCC, 5-7p
- 10/28: YG Harvest Party (5th-12th) @ CHCC, 6:30-8:30p
- 11/4: Night of Worship @ CHCC, 6:30-8p
- 11/9: Men's Ministry Breakfast @ CHCC, 9-11a
- 11/10: YG Turkey Hunt (5th-12th) after service
- 11/23: Women's Ministry: Thanksgiving Baskets @ CHCC, 9-11a

LifePoint: We need to **recognize, remove, and replace** the idols in our lives.

Joshua 24:14-15 (NLT), “So fear the Lord and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord alone. But if you refuse to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord.”

“The secret to change is to identify and dismantle the counterfeit gods of your heart.”
- **Tim Keller**, *Counterfeit Gods*

How do I Remove My Idols?

2 Kings 22:2 (NLT), “He did what was pleasing in the Lord’s sight and followed the example of his ancestor David. He did not turn away from doing what was right.”

2 Kings 22:10 - 11 (NLT), “Shaphan also told the king, ‘Hilkiah the priest has given me a scroll.’ So Shaphan read it to the king. When the king heard what was written in the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes in despair.”

2 Kings 23:3 (NLT), “The king took his place of authority beside the pillar and renewed the covenant in the Lord’s presence. He pledged to obey the Lord by keeping all his commandments, laws, and decrees with all his heart and soul. In this way, he confirmed all the terms of the covenant that were written in the scroll, and all the people pledged themselves to the covenant.”

2 Kings 23:4 (NLT), “Then the king instructed Hilkiah the high priest and the priests of the second rank of the Temple gatekeepers to remove from the Lord’s temple all the articles that were used to worship Baal, Ahserah, and all the powers of heaven.”

King Josiah...

Burned - v. 4

Did away with - v. 5

Burned, ground to ashes, threw the dust - v. 6

Tore down - v. 7

Destroyed- v. 8

Defiled - v. 10

Removed and burned - v. 11

Tore down, destroyed, smashed to bits - v. 12

Desecrated - v. 13

Smashed and cutdown - v. 14

Burned down and ground it to dust - v. 15

2 Kings 23:25 (NLT), *“Never before had there been a king like Josiah, who turned to the Lord with all his heart and soul and strength, obeying all the laws of Moses. And there has never been a king like him since.”*

Replacement of the idol:

2 Kings 23:3 (NLT), *“The king took his place of authority beside the pillar and renewed the covenant...”*

Jeremiah 19:5 (NLT), *“They have built pagan shrines to Baal, and there they burn their sons as sacrifices to Baal. I have never commanded such a horrible deed; it never even crossed my mind to command such a thing!”*

1 Kings 18:26, 28-29 (NLT), *“So they prepared one of the bulls and placed it on the altar. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning until noontime, shouting, ‘O Baal, answer us!’ But there was no reply of any kind. Then they danced, hobbling around the altar they had made. 28 So they shouted louder, and following their normal custom, they cut themselves with knives and swords until blood gushed out. They raved all afternoon until the time of the evening sacrifice, but still there was no sound, no reply, no response.”*

1 Kings 18:38 (NLT), *“Immediately the fire of the Lord flashed down from heaven and burned up the young bull, the wood, the stones, and the dust. It even licked up the water in the trench.”*

Baal represented **Protection, Power and Control**.

He was worshiped by:

- Bowing down - Numbers 25:2-3
- Sacred pillars and sacred stones - 2 Kings 3:2
- Vestments (special clothes/robes) - 2 Kings 10:22
- Calf worship - 2 Kings 17:6
- Altars - 2 Chronicles 23:17
- Child sacrifice - Jeremiah 19:5
 - We can sacrifice our families on the altar of our idols
- Prophesying in the name of Baal - Jeremiah 23:13

What does that look like in our world today?

- Money
- Power
- Anger
- Strength
- Education
- Powerful friends
- Manipulation
- Lack of submission
- Title

2 Corinthians 4:18 (NIV), *“So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”*

2 Kings 23:3 (NLT), *“The king took his place of authority beside the pillar and renewed the covenant in the Lord’s presence. He pledged to obey the Lord by keeping all his commands, laws, and decrees with all his heart and soul. In this way, he confirmed all the terms of the covenant that were written in the scroll, and all the people pledged themselves to the covenant.”*

“If you uproot the idol and fail to plant the love of Christ in its place, the idol will grow back.” - **Tullian Tchividjian** - Pastor and Christian author (grandson of Billy Graham)

Protection and power redirected:

The Lord is King of Kings

Revelation 19:16 (NLT), *“On his robe at his thigh was written this title: ‘King of all kings and Lord of all lords.’”*

The Lord is Enthroned over Everything

Psalms 29:10 (NLT), *“The Lord rules over the floodwaters. The Lord reigns as king forever.”*

The Lord is a Shield around Me

Psalms 3:3 (NLT), *“But you, O Lord, are a shield around me; you are my glory, the one who holds my head up high.”*

The Lord is a Strong Tower

Proverbs 18:10 (NLT), *“The name of the Lord is a strong fortress; the godly run to him and are safe.”*

The Lord will Supply our every Need

Psalms 34:10b (NLT), *“...but those who trust in the Lord will lack no good thing.”*

LifePoint: We need to **recognize, remove,** and **replace** the idols in our lives.

Joshua 24:14-15 (NLT), *“So fear the Lord and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord alone. 15 But if you refuse to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord.”*

The Idol of Asherah - The goddess of fertility - **Fruitfulness** and **Prosperity**

Deuteronomy 16:21 (NLT), *“You must never set up a wooden Asherah pole beside the altar you build for the Lord.”*

Asherah was worshiped in the following ways:

- Family gatherings - Jeremiah 17:2
- Offerings and drink offerings - Jeremiah 44:17
- Sacred prostitution - 2 Kings 23:7
- Sacred weaving - 2 Kings 23:7

What does Asherah look like today?

- Money and possessions
- Productivity
- Marriage
- Careers
- Successful friends
- Clothes
- Self help “techniques”
- Social media “likes”
- Image
- Success of our children

How will I have what I need for a rich and meaningful life?

The Lord is Good

Psalm 27:13 (NLT), *“Yet I am confident I will see the Lord's goodness while I am here in the land of the living.”*

The Lord's Goodness and Love will follow me

Psalm 23:6 (NLT), *“Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the Lord forever.”*

The Lord's Love is steadfast (also see Psalm 33:5, 52:8, 89:1, 103:17, and 107:43)

Isaiah 63:7 (NLT), *"I will tell of the Lord's unfailing love. I will praise the Lord for all he has done."*

The Lord is the Giver of all Good Gifts.

James 1:17 (NLT), *"Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father."*

The Starry Hosts - Sun, Moon, and the Stars - gods of the heavens - **Stability** and **Security**.

Romans 1:18-21 (NIV), *"The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened."*

Romans 1:25 (NIV), *"They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen."*

The Starry Hosts were worshiped...

- In the Temple of the Lord - bowing with their backs to the sanctuary. - Ezekiel 8:16
- On the high places in the cities of Judah and around Jerusalem - Isaiah 16:12
- At altars on the roofs of royal houses and other housetops - Zephaniah 1:5

Zephaniah 1:5 (NLT), *"For they go up to their roofs and bow down to the sun, moon, and stars. They claim to follow the Lord, but then they worship Molech, too."*

The Starry Hosts were worshiped in the following ways:

- The people bowed down to serve them - 2 Kings 21:3
- The people worshiped them - Deuteronomy 4:19
- The people loved and served them - Jeremiah 8:2
- The people burned incense as an offering to them - Jeremiah 19:13

What do the starry hosts look like today?

- Horoscopes
- Astrology
- Worship of planning or schedule
- Fear of change
- OCD like behaviors
- Insurance for the future
- Savings account
- Unwillingness to move

How will I feel secure when I think about the future? - *If you want stability and security, look to the one who set it all in motion with just the word of his voice.*

Psalm 19:1-4 (NLT), *“The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies proclaim his craftsmanship. Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known. They speak without a sound or word; their voice is never heard. Yet their message has gone throughout the earth, and their words to all the world.”*

Psalm 89:8-9 (NLT), *“O Lord God of Heaven’s Armies! Where is there anyone as mighty as you, O Lord? You rule the oceans. You subdue their storm-tossed waves.”*

Psalm 8:3-4 (NLT), *“When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers - the moon and the stars that you set into place- what are mere mortals that you should think about them, human beings that you should care for them.”*

Luke 12:6-7 (NLT), *“What is the price of five sparrows-two copper coins? Yet God does not forget a single one of them. And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows.”*

Molech - god of destruction - gods of fear - **Safety** or **Relief from Fear**.

Leviticus 18:21 (NLT), *“Do not permit any of your children to be offered as a sacrifice to Molech, for you must not bring shame on the name of your God. I am the Lord.”*

How was Molech worshiped?

- On the Mount of Olives - 1 Kings 11:7
- Child sacrifice in the valleys and among the jagged rocks - Isaiah 57:5
- Child sacrifice in the Temple - Jeremiah 32:34-35
- Offerings of olive oil and perfume - Isaiah 57:9
- The people worshiped out of dread and fear - Isaiah 57:11, 13

What does the worship of Molech look like today?

- Fear of...fill in the blank - Molech is the god of fear
 - Fear wants to be king
 - Fear of loss
 - Fear of man
 - Fear of the future
 - Fear of death
- Avoidance of failure
- Letting someone control you by their anger, guilt, or even expectations
- Worry and stress
- Abortion

How will I overcome fear?

Destruction of the Destroyer

The time for destroying the destroyers of the earth

Revelation 11:18 (NLT), *“The nations were filled with wrath, but now the time of your wrath has come. It is time to judge the dead and reward your servants and prophets, as well as your holy people, and all who fear your name, from the least to the greatest. It is time to destroy all who have caused destruction on the earth.”*

The time for destroying every rule, authority, and power.

1 Corinthians 15:24 (NLT), *“After that the end will come, when he will turn the Kingdom over to God the Father, having destroyed every ruler and authority and power.”*

The last enemy to be destroyed will be death.

1 Corinthians 15:26 (NLT), *“And the last enemy to be destroyed is death.”*

Death is swallowed up in victory

1 Corinthians 15:54-55 (NLT), *“Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?’”*

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Why Is Idolatry So Bad?

We live in a fallen world where everything is out of sorts. Sin is rampant, temptations are plentiful, and idols are everywhere. When we harbor idols in our hearts, they corrupt our relationship with God and rob us of God's blessings.

The idols of Babylon cannot be avoided—but they can be overcome! When we subject our idols to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, they lose their power over us. We are free to serve God and receive his blessings. In the absence of idols, God fills our hearts with his peace, hope, and joy.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Night of Worship is tomorrow! Monday, November 4th from 6:30-8p. Childcare for 0-5 yrs.
2. Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes are due back to the church NEXT Sunday, November 10th!
3. Every year we support many local families with a Thanksgiving meal! Please pick up a tag or two at the giving table in the lobby & bring the items back by Sunday, November 17th.

CHURCH CALENDAR

- 11/4: Night of Worship @ CHCC, 6:30-8p
- 11/9: Men's Ministry Breakfast @ CHCC, 9-11a
- 11/10: Shoeboxes due back to the church!
- 11/10: YG Turkey Hunt (5th-12th) after service
- 11/17: All Thanksgiving food items due!
- 11/23: Women's Ministry: Thanksgiving Baskets @ CHCC, 9-11a
- 12/8: Next Step Class @ 9:30a
- 12/9: Women's Ministry Cookie Exchange 6:30-8:30p @ Alaina's
- 12/14: Men's Ministry Breakfast 9-11a at CHCC

LIFEPPOINT: Inviting idols into your heart is like asking God to leave. God wants you to reject help from the gods of Babylon and depend upon him for everything you need.

Why is idolatry so bad?

1. Idols cripple your relationship with God.

Inviting idols into your heart displaces God and squeezes him into the corners of your heart.

Ezekiel 14:1-8 (NLT), “Then some of the leaders of Israel visited me, and while they were sitting with me, 2 this message came to me from the LORD: 3 “Son of man, **these leaders have set up idols in their hearts.** They have embraced things that will make them fall into sin. Why should I listen to their requests? 4 Tell them, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: **The people of Israel have set up idols in their hearts and fallen into sin, and then they go to a prophet asking for a message.** So I, the LORD, will give them the kind of answer their great idolatry deserves. 5 I will do this to capture the minds and hearts of all my people who have turned from me to worship their detestable idols.’ 6 “Therefore, tell the people of Israel, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Repent and turn away from your idols, and stop all your detestable sins. 7 **I, the LORD, will answer all those, both Israelites and foreigners, who reject me and set up idols in their hearts and so fall into sin, and who then come to a prophet asking for my advice.** 8 I will turn against such people and make a terrible example of them, eliminating them from among my people. Then you will know that I am the LORD.”

Who is in your god bag?

Our decisions and our aspirations should only be founded on the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 10:14-21 (NLT), “So, my dear friends, **flee from the worship of idols.** 15 You are reasonable people. Decide for yourselves if what I am saying is true. 16 When we bless the cup at the Lord’s Table, aren’t we sharing in the blood of Christ? And when we break the bread, aren’t we sharing in the body of Christ? 17 And though we are many, we all eat from one loaf of bread, showing that we are one body. 18 Think about the people of Israel. Weren’t they united by eating the sacrifices at the altar? 19 What am I trying to say? Am I saying that food offered to idols has some significance, or that idols are real gods? 20 No, not at all. I am saying that these sacrifices are offered to demons, not to God. And I don’t want you to participate with demons. 21 **You cannot drink from the cup of the Lord and from the cup of demons, too. You cannot eat at the Lord’s Table and at the table of demons, too.”**

2. Following the gods of Babylon is choosing a life of folly.

People serve idols for two reasons:

1. To avoid pain and difficulty
2. To gain some advantage

Leviticus 18:1-5 (NLT), “Then the LORD said to Moses, 2 “Give the following instructions to the people of Israel. I am the LORD your God. 3 So do not act like the people in Egypt, where you used to live, or like the people of Canaan, where I am taking you. **You must not imitate their way of life.** 4 You must obey all my regulations and be careful to obey my decrees, for I am the LORD your God. 5 **If you obey my decrees and my regulations, you will find life through them.** I am the LORD.”

God will destroy Babylon, the gods of Babylon, **and those who make their home in Babylon.** But God will bless those who place their trust in him and make their home in the Kingdom of God.

Deuteronomy 29:16-20 (NLT), “You remember how we lived in the land of Egypt and how we traveled through the lands of enemy nations as we left. 17 You have seen their detestable practices and their idols made of wood, stone, silver, and gold. 18 I am making this covenant with you so that no one among you—no man, woman, clan, or tribe—will turn away from the LORD our God to worship these gods of other nations, and so that no root among you bears bitter and poisonous fruit. 19 “Those who hear the warnings of this curse should not congratulate themselves, thinking, **‘I am safe, even though I am following the desires of my own stubborn heart.’ This would lead to utter ruin!** 20 The LORD will never pardon such people. Instead his anger and jealousy... will burn against them. All the curses written in this book will come down on them, and the LORD will erase their names from under heaven.”

The first place you turn during times of trouble **and** times of blessings is where you place your ultimate trust.

There is a conflict between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Babylon. When we participate in the kingdom of Babylon, we are fighting against all that God is doing, all he wants for us, and all his blessings.

3. God wants you to depend solely upon him.

Exodus 20:2-5a (NLT) , *“I am the LORD your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery. 3 “You must not have any other god but me. 4 “You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. 5 You must not bow down to them or worship them, for **I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods.**”*

God does not tolerate competition. There's no room in your heart for a live-in idol.

How to avoid idols

1. Examine your heart to see what idols are there. (Jeremiah 17:9)
2. Filter sources of help through the truth of God's Word. (James 1:16-17)
3. Remain faithful to God alone. (Deuteronomy 6:4-5)
4. Fill your heart with God's truth. (Psalm 119:11)
5. Focus on the kingdom of God and core Christian beliefs. (Matthew 6:33)
6. Seek God and his will. (2 Timothy 4:3-4; 1 Corinthians 10:31)
7. Place your trust in God alone. (1 Peter 5:7; Philippians 4:6)

LIFEPOINT: Inviting idols into your heart is like asking God to leave. God wants you to reject help from the gods of Babylon and depend upon him for everything you need.

WELCOME

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Trading the Truth for a Lie

The Bible makes some powerful claims about truth: God is the ultimate source of truth, Jesus came to bear witness to the truth, and creation is designed to reveal the truth about our Creator. All three of these divine sources teach us about God and our dependence on Him. Satan has one goal: To get us to “trade the truth about God for a lie” by rejecting God’s design for human flourishing and embracing his plan that leads to our destruction. This is why we must learn to worship God in Spirit and truth, desiring that His will would take place in our lives.

Even as believers we have to make a choice. Will I trust God and embrace what His Word tells me about this world and my place in it? Or will I reject God’s direction for my life and go my own way? If you want to worship God, you have to embrace the truth of His design. Idol worship always starts with a rejection of that truth!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes are due back to the church TODAY. If you forgot yours, please see a staff member to make other arrangements.
2. Please pick up a tag or two at the giving table in the lobby & bring the items back by next Sunday, November 17th to help fill Thanksgiving baskets for local families in need!

CHURCH CALENDAR

- 11/10: YG Turkey Hunt (5th-12th) after service
- 11/17: All Thanksgiving food items due!
- 11/23: Women’s Ministry: Thanksgiving Baskets @ CHCC, 9-11a
- 12/8: Next Step Class @ 9:30a
- 12/9: Women’s Ministry Cookie Exchange 6:30-8:30p @ Alaina’s
- 12/14: Men’s Ministry Breakfast 9-11a at CHCC

Romans 1:21-25 (NLT), “But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who **suppress the truth** by their wickedness. **19** They **know the truth** about God because he has made it obvious to them. **20** For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God. Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn’t worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused. **22** Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools. **23** And **instead of worshipping** the glorious, ever-living God, they **worshiped idols** made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles. **24** So God abandoned them to do whatever shameful things their hearts desired. As a result, they did vile and degrading things with each other’s bodies. **25** **They traded the truth about God for a lie.** So they **worshiped and served** the things God created instead of the Creator himself, who is worthy of eternal praise! Amen.”

John 4:23-24 (NLT), “But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. **24** For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

LifePoint: If you want to worship God, you have to embrace the truth of His design. Idol worship always starts with a rejection of that truth!

Deuteronomy 30:19 (NLT), “Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live!”

Isaiah 5:20-21 (NLT), “What sorrow for those who say that evil is good and good is evil, that dark is light and light is dark, that bitter is sweet and sweet is bitter. What sorrow for those who are wise in their own eyes and think themselves so clever.”

Three of Babylon’s lies that attack the three foundational authority structures of God:

- **Marriage and sexuality** - “Love is love”
- **The church** - “The God of the Bible is hateful and misogynistic”
- **Civil Government** - “You can’t legislate morality”

1 John 4:8 (NLT), *“But anyone who does not love does not know God, **for God is love.**”*

Marriage and sexuality are the very first things that God addresses in the Bible after His creation:

Genesis 1:26-28 (NLT), *“ Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.” **27** So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. **28** Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”*

Genesis 2:21-24 (NLT), *“So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took out one of the man’s ribs and closed up the opening. **22** Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man. **23** “At last!” the man exclaimed. “This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called ‘woman,’ because she was taken from ‘man.’” **24 This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.**”*

LifePoint: If you want to worship God, you have to embrace the truth of His design. Idol worship always starts with a rejection of that truth!

1 John 2:15-17 (NLT), *“Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. **16** For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world. **17** And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.”*

John 15:18-19 (NLT), *“If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first. **19** The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you.”*

Commenting on 1 John 2:15-17, Pastor Voddie Baucham points out three ways that the love of the world is sinful:

- 1) **Our love becomes sinful when it is directed at the wrong object - (Vs. 15)** *“Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you.”*

The Bible uses the word 'world' (or Cosmos in the Greek) in three ways:

- The actual physical world. All of creation. The heavens and the earth.
- All the people of the world
- The Satanic spirit realm that is in rebellion against God, and in opposition to His Kingdom. It always stands opposed to God and His design for our lives.

2) **Our love becomes sinful when it comes from the wrong source - (Vs. 16)**, “For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world.”

3) **Our love becomes sinful when it produces the wrong fruit - (Vs. 17)** “And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.”

Romans 1:18-19, 25-29(NLT), “But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who **suppress the truth** by their wickedness. **19** They **know the truth** about God because he has made it obvious to them...**25** They **traded the truth about God for a lie**. So they **worshiped and served** the things God created instead of the Creator himself, who is worthy of eternal praise! Amen. **26** That is why God abandoned them to **their shameful desires**. “Even the women turned against the natural way to have sex and instead indulged in sex with each other. **27** And the men, instead of having normal sexual relations with women, burned with lust for each other. Men did shameful things with other men, and as a result of this sin, they suffered within themselves the penalty they deserved. **28** **Since they thought it foolish to acknowledge God, he abandoned them to their foolish thinking and let them do things that should never be done.** **29** **Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, quarreling, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip.”**

“If you want to help someone, you tell them the truth. If you want to help yourself, you tell them what they want to hear.” - **Thomas Sowell**

God loves you, but He also has revealed His design for human flourishing. If you really want to experience the eternal life that Jesus offers, then you must bow before His authority and follow His good design!

LifePoint: If you want to worship God, you have to embrace the truth of His design. Idol worship always starts with a rejection of that truth!

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The Keys to the Kingdom

Last week we looked at Babylon's attack on God's design for marriage, family, and sexuality. We see an example in the popular phrase "Love is Love," which really means "If God is love, then no love can be sinful." This morning we're going to focus on God's design for the church and the lie that "the God of the Bible is hateful and misogynistic." This lie implies that God's Laws are degrading to women and bigoted toward sexual minorities. Therefore, we can't trust the Bible or the authority structures that it supports.

Through today's study we look at how God's own character and nature are behind His design of this world and the authority structures that govern it. We'll discover that these structures are not random rules pulled out of thin air. They are instead a reflection of His loving care. This understanding leads us to an important truth: *When we go against God's design, we are going against His nature. It is not good to go against the nature of God!*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

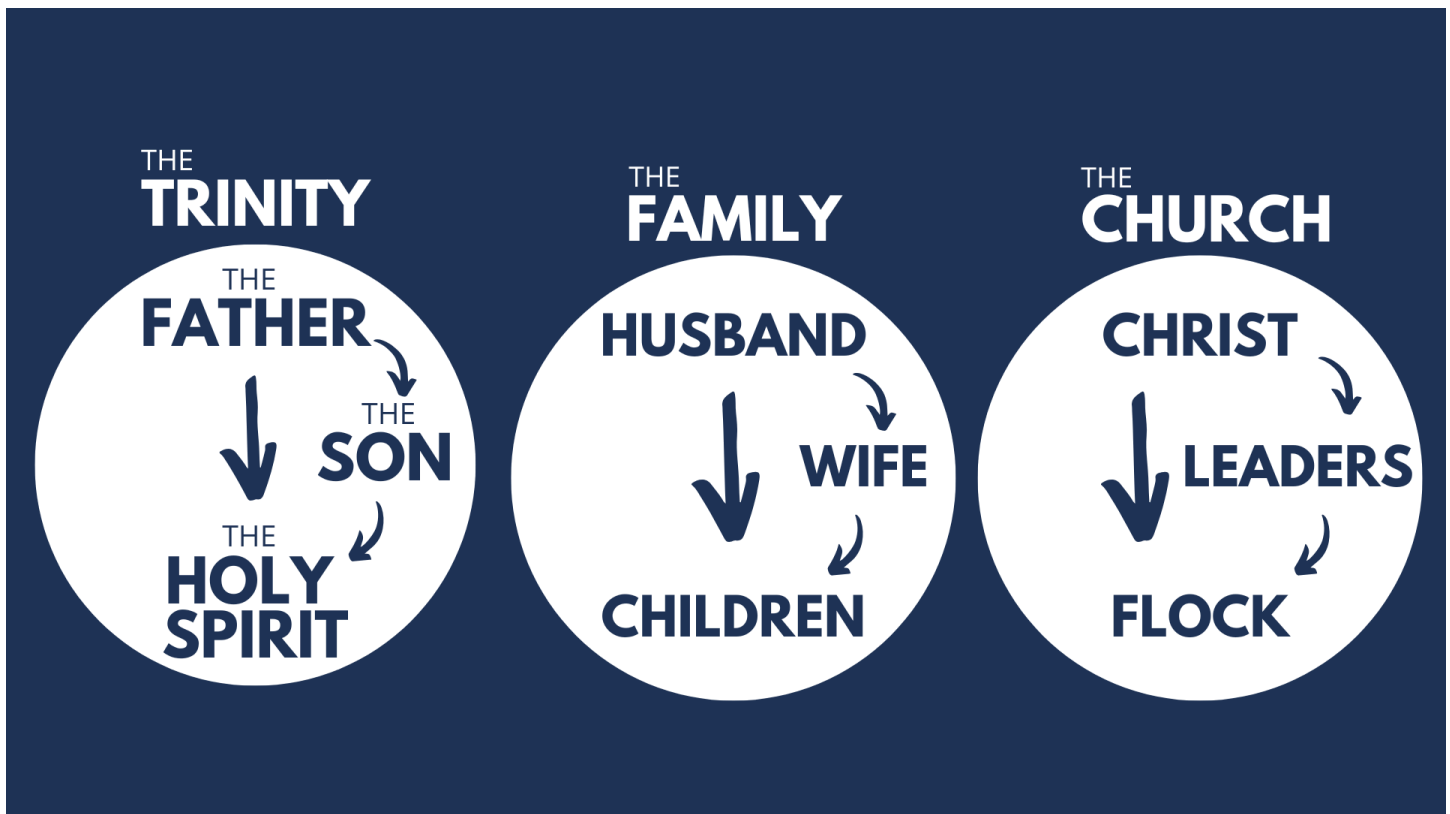
1. Ladies, join us next Saturday at the church from 9-11a for a time of fellowship and Thanksgiving basket packing! Bring a dish to share if you can!
2. Interested in learning more about becoming a member of CHCC? Sign up for our Next Step Class on December 8th - 9:30a @ chccmi.com/next or talk with a staff member!

CHURCH CALENDAR

- 11/17: All Thanksgiving food items due!
- 11/23: Women's Ministry: Thanksgiving Baskets @ CHCC, 9-11a
- 12/8: Next Step Class @ 9:30a
- 12/9: Women's Ministry Cookie Exchange 6:30-8:30p @ Alaina's
- 12/14: Men's Ministry Breakfast 9-11a at CHCC

LIFEPPOINT: When we go against God’s design, we are going against His nature. It is not good to go against the nature of God!

Psalm 19:1-4a (NLT), “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. **2** Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. **3** They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. **4** Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”



Deuteronomy 6:4 (NIV), “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.”

2 Corinthians 13:14 (NLT), “May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

The Westminster Confession: “In the unity of the Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.”

God exists as One God, in three persons. Within the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are in perfect relationship with each other. *There is perfect authority, submission, unity, love, and oneness that exists between them.*

The three foundational structures of authority from God lead to human flourishing and well-being because they come directly from the nature and character of God.

Genesis 2:24b (NLT), *“a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.”*

John 10:30 (NLT), *“The Father and I are one.”*

Matthew 16:16-19 (NLT), *“Then He (Jesus) asked them, “But who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “**You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.**” **17** Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. **18** And I tell you that you are Peter, and **on this rock I will build my church**, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. **19** I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*

Ephesians 5:22-24 (NLT), *“For wives, this means submit to your husbands as to the Lord. **23 For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church.** He is the Savior of his body, the church. **24** As the church submits to Christ, so you wives should submit to your husbands in everything.”*

Ephesians 5:25-30 (NLT), *“For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her “Christ gave up his life for her **26** to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God’s word. **27** He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault. **28** In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself. **29** No one hates his own body but feeds and cares for it, just as Christ cares for the church. **30** And we are members of his body. **31** As the Scriptures say, “A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.” **32** This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one. **33** So again I say, each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.”*

- **Husbands:** We are called to love and serve our wives by using your spiritual authority in the same way that Christ loved and served the church.
- **Wives:** You are called to respect your husbands by submitting to their spiritual leadership in the home in the same way that Christ submits to the Father.

Switching our focus to the church, we find the same types of cultural attacks on God's design:

Titus 1:5-6 (NLT), *"I left you on the island of Crete so you could complete our work there and appoint elders in each town as I instructed you. 6 An elder must live a blameless life. He must be faithful to his wife, and his children must be believers who don't have a reputation for being wild or rebellious."*

Acts 20:28 (NLT), *"So guard yourselves and God's people. Feed and shepherd God's flock—his church, purchased with his own blood—over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as leaders."*

Hebrews 13:17 (NLT), *"Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this with joy and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit."*

Because Babylon is built on pride and rebellion it hates this design. But God's Kingdom is built on humility and obedience. The first leads to death and destruction. The second to life and human flourishing.

Ephesians 4:11-16 (NLT), *"Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. 12 Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. 13 This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. 14 Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. 15 Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. 16 He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love!"*

When a culture is built upon these types of families and churches, it brings the very presence of the Kingdom of heaven here to earth! But when it trades "the truth about God for a lie," it brings the chaos and destruction of hell here to earth!

LIFEPPOINT: When we go against God's design, we are going against His nature. It is not good to go against the nature of God!

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The Governing Authorities

When we look back over human history, we see that civil governments have failed over and over to use their power with goodness and humility. Instead, we see endless cycles of war and violence as greedy leaders use *the sword* for selfish gain. We also see that citizens often begin to worship their political leaders, placing their hope in a fallen human being, instead of trusting in their Creator. This points us to an important truth: *When a people reject God's standard of truth and morality, they inevitably look to the state to save them and provide for their needs!*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

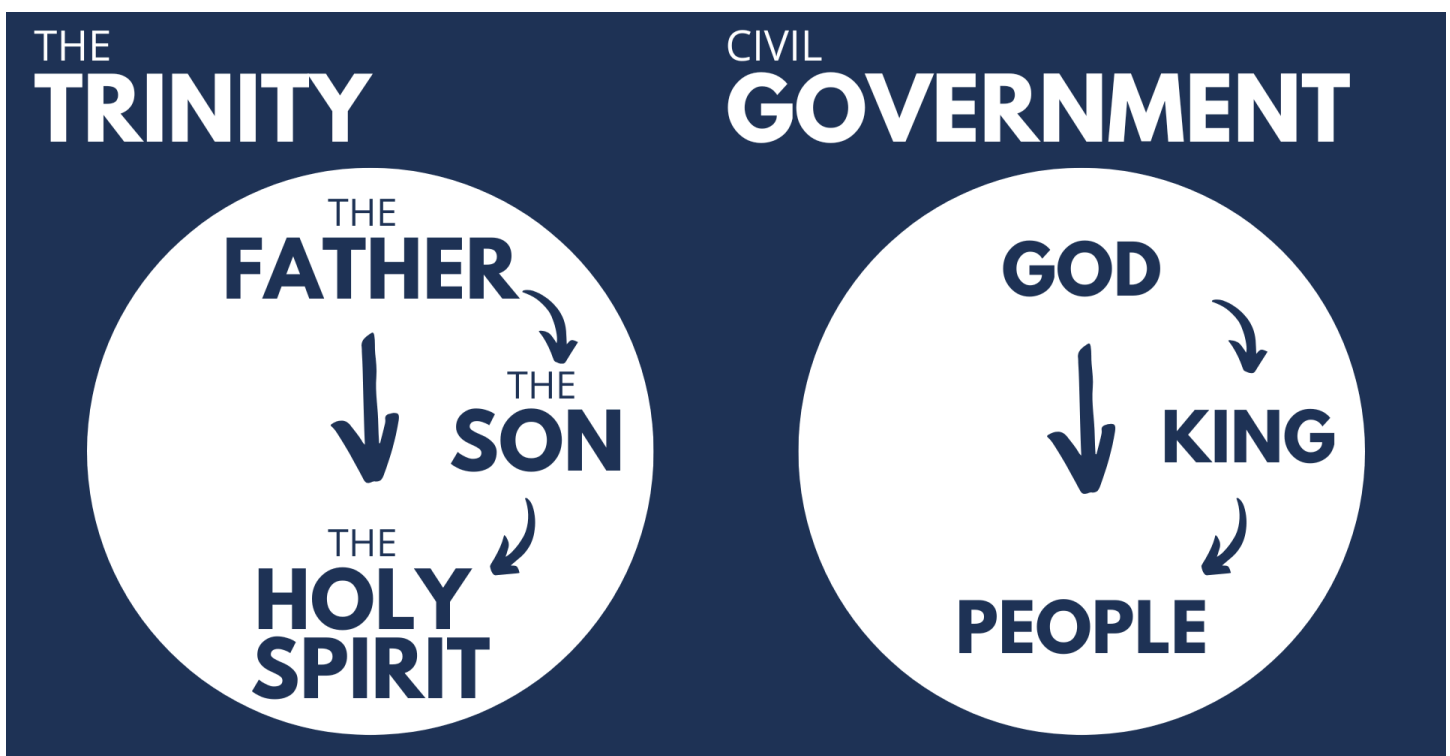
1. Interested in learning more about becoming a member of CHCC? Sign up for our Next Step Class on December 8th - 9:30a @ chccmi.com/next or talk with a staff member!
2. Ladies, join us for our Annual Cookie Exchange on December 9th from 6:30-8:30p at Alaina's house. (771 Summer St Olivet) Bring two of your favorite dozen cookies & an appetizer to share if you're able!

CHURCH CALENDAR

- 11/27-11/29: Church office closed for Thanksgiving
- 12/8: Next Step Class @ 9:30a
- 12/9: Women's Ministry Cookie Exchange 6:30-8:30p @ Alaina's house
- 12/14: Men's Ministry Breakfast 9-11a at CHCC
- 12/22: Christmas Services @ 9:30 & 11:15

Daniel 7:1-3 (ESV), “In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head as he lay in his bed. Then he wrote down the dream and told the sum of the matter. **2** Daniel declared, “I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. **3** And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another.”

Acts 17:26-27 (NLT), “From one man He created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and He determined their boundaries. **27** “His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward Him and find Him—though He is not far from any one of us.”



Romans 13:1-7 (NLT), “Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. **2** So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. **3** For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you. **4** The authorities are God’s servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God’s servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong. **5** So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience. **6** Pay your taxes, too, for these same reasons. For government workers need to be paid. They are serving God in what they do. **7** Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority.”

Definition of politics from Webster's Dictionary from 1828: *“Politics is the science of government: **That part of ethics** which consists in the regulation and government of a nation or state, for the preservation of its safety, peace, and prosperity; comprehending the defense of its existence and rights against foreign control or conquest...and the protection of its citizens in their rights, **with the preservation and improvement of their morals.**”*

Those in positions of political power, hold their power purely as delegates and representatives of the King of all kings. They are appointed and armed with the sword in order that they might:

1) punish evil

2) condone good

1 Samuel 8:4-9, 19-20 (NIV), *“So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. **5** They said to him, “You are old, and your sons do not follow your ways; **now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have.**” **6** But when they said, “Give us a king to lead us,” this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the LORD. **7** And the LORD told him: “Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, **but they have rejected me as their king.** **8** As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you. **9** Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will claim as his rights.”**10** Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king...*

19 But the people refused to listen to Samuel. “No!” they said. **“We want a king over us. 20 Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles.”**

LIFEPPOINT: *When a people reject God’s standard of truth and morality, they inevitably look to the state to save them and provide for their needs!*

1 Samuel 8:11-18 (NIV), *“He said, “This is what the king who will reign over you will claim as his rights: He will take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots. **12** Some he will assign to be commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and others to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and still others to make weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. **13** He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. **14** He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his attendants. **15** He will take a tenth of your grain and of your vintage and give it to his officials and attendants. **16** Your male and female servants and the best of your cattle and donkeys he will take for his own use. **17** He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves. **18** When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, but the LORD will not answer you in that day.”*

When we take God out of the equation, the authority and submission structures designed for our good begin to fall apart. Instead of humility, unity, and self-sacrifice, we see greed, corruption, jealousy and envy.

Romans 13:1 (NLT), *“Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God.*

Pattern of Delegation: *The Father delegated authority to Jesus / God delegated authority to the husband / God delegated authority to the elder/shepherds / God delegated authority to the civil magistrates*

Pattern of Subjection: *The Son is subject to the Father / Husbands are subject to Christ / Wives are subject to husbands / The children are subject to their parents / The elders are subject to Christ / The flock is subject to the elders / The king or civil leaders are subject to God / The people are subject to their civil authorities*

The Purpose of the State: *to help maintain order by punishing evil and condoning good. It is given the authority to make laws that help create a standard of morality for the culture that should be based on God’s revelation of what constitutes good and evil.*

Romans 13:4 (NLT), *“The authorities are God’s servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God’s servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong.”*

When the family and the church get in the way, the state claims authority over them, which undermines God’s design and destroys sphere sovereignty. When this takes root in a nation, the concepts of good and evil get flipped on their head.

“Do not fear Babylon, it has no power over you - it has already been judged - it is all merely dust and smoke and ruins - do not take it so deadly seriously anymore, do not let your hatred and zealotry consume you, for it is all so temporary - it is not even important anymore - other things, however, are indeed important - remain firm in faith, hold fast to Christ, do not be touched by Babylon, remain sober, and do not let fear overwhelm you - listen to God’s voice, the Almighty, who says: fallen is Babylon the great.”
- **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**