

**Born Again Church & Christian Outreach Ministries**  
**858 W Trinity Ln**  
**Nashville, TN 37027**  
**Bishop Horace Hockett , Pastor | Elder Brian Hockett, Executive Pastor**

### **Chapter 4 Unholy gods: Idolatry**

**May 8, 2024**

**Lesson 4 Facilitators:** Elder Derick II and Sister Eno Richardson

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

#### **Study objectives:**

- Introduce the characteristics of unholy gods.
- Emphasize the holiness of the one real God.
- Offer insights into modern day unholy gods.

#### **Introduction**

1. What comes to your mind when you think of God? We'll find that what we say of who God is and what we believe can contradict each other. While we say that God is Holy, there are little gods whom we have given faith to.
2. **An unholy god is man-made.**
  1. The Israelites asked Aaron to **make** them a god while Moses was up at Mount Sinai, so they took off the jewelry to fashion a calf made of gold. Ex. 32: 1-6
  2. God is self-existing, uncreated, and self-sufficient.
  3. God can operate freely with us. He can save, deliver, listen, respond, comfort, restrain, transform, create, destroy, and do whatever he likes. Unlike a calf made of gold.
  4. **Idolatry involves an exchange** where the Holy is traded for the profane and the transcendent for the earthly. There is an exchange of the truth of God to serve a lie. Rom. 1:25
3. **An unholy god is local.**
  1. An idol isn't transcendent. It is restrained by space and time.
  2. Even though Israel created the calf to lead them to the land of milk and honey, the calf wasn't transcendent and couldn't. It was a useless creation.
  3. The real God exists outside of time. He has always been. Isa. 46:9-10
  4. The real God is a sovereign who sees it all and recalls all things unlike an idol which can not remember the past or name promises of the future.

4. **An unholy god is anything we attribute God's work to.**
  1. Despite Moses's witness to who it was that sent him to deliver, the Israelites gave the calf credit for bringing them out of Egypt. Exod. 32:4. Israel praised the calf as if it were a messiah.
  2. Israel ignored Moses's testimony, "I AM has sent me to you" and delivered them out of Egypt.
    1. "I AM" means God is who he is. He has always been and will always be. Before and after time.
  
5. **An unholy god is not sovereign**
  1. An unholy god cannot save or deliver. It is deaf and blind and cannot hear the people's cries.
  2. An idol can't save people from anything when its entire existence was dependent on who brought it to life. (Ps. 115:4-7)
  3. Only the true and living God has "complete and inexhaustible power over all creation." (88)
  
6. **An unholy god is futile**
  1. Its value is based on its ability to do something for the creator rather than just being.
  2. Every idol we gather to ourselves is lawless
  3. Idol worship leads to the futility of thought and the darkening of the mind's ability to understand.
  4. Idols are never able to give us what we truly need.
  
7. **Modern day idols**
  1. While it's not as common for people to create and serve physical objects anymore, idols have taken on a new shape.
  2. An idol is anything that we place our hope and trust in.
  3. This includes sex, a relationship, a job, money, an identity, alcohol, sexual identity, autonomy, intellect, relationships, money, marriage, legalism, politics, power, ethnicity, food, social media, children
  4. These idols will fail us forever.
  
8. **Only the one true Holy God is able to save, deliver and fulfill our needs. We must set our eyes on Him.** (Lev.26:30, Num. 33:52, Ps.121:1-2)

#### **Table discussions**

- Select one of the following and discuss how it can be an idol: sex, a relationship, a job, money, an identity, alcohol, sexual identity, autonomy, intellect, relationships, money, marriage, legalism, politics, power, ethnicity, food, social media, children
- How can we guard our hearts from unholy gods?

#### **Announcements/ Prayer request:**

##### **References:**

Perry, Jackie Hill. *Holier Than Thou*. B&H Publishing Group. 2021