LIFE OF JEREMIAH—HANDOUT #5

What is idolatry?
- Substitution
- Superstition
- Syncretism
- Displacement
- Declension
- Degradation

Reversal

Relational Reversal

Man → god  Pagan religion
- Extract ‘good’ from the deity/god
- Act/perform a deed to gain/obtain ‘good’ from the god
- Do a work to receive a ‘good’ from the god
- Earn/merit/deserve the ‘good’ from the god (works-merit paradigm)
- Worship/adore/be devoted to in order to gain/merit/earn/deserve

God → man  OT/NT religion
- Man receives ‘good’/gift from God
- No act/deed required to receive the gift/‘good’
- Man does not work/work does not obtain/extract ‘good’/gift
- No earning/deserving/meriting secures ‘good’/gift (faith-grace paradigm)
- Worship/adore/devotion in response to ‘good’/gift received (1 Cor. 4:7)

Iconic versus Aniconic (cf. Dt. 4:12)

Psychology
- Willful choice
- Dominate
- Manipulate
- Inversion of self
- Idealization of self
- Emptiness; choice of nothing, non-entity, non-being

Consequences
1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:5; Rev. 21:8; 22:15
Narrative biblical-theological and redemptive-historical paradigm in Jeremiah 2

Idolatry is paganism.
Absolutization of this world and the life of this world (re-imaged via reincarnation, immortality as ghost, spectre, ‘shades’, etc.). No redemption in paganism because no sin in paganism. Coping mechanisms for bad luck or ill fortune. Superstitious/magical manipulation of gods to enjoy the good life now (the not yet is generally scary, dark, uncertain, dreadful, etc.; or simply denied). Where it is positive (i.e., Elysian fields), it is the imagined projection of wish-fulfillment.