

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.