

Eight Ways Man-Made Religion Tempts Us and Traps Us—and How We Can Resist Themclick bit.ly/30GgNWr to hear this lesson as taught (or scan QR code→)

What was that sin that Jeroboam son of Nebat caused Israel to sin? Pastor leads his family in today's "Hopewell @Home" passage. 1Kings 12:25–33 prepares us for the first serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these nine verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that in order to keep God Himself as the Pleasurer and Prescriber of our worship, we must watch against Scriptureless self-talk, Pragmatism, Populism, Creativity as self-expression, fleshly Convenience, Traditionalism, personal investment by Involvement, and Holy days other than God's.

Wednesday, April 27, 2022 • Read 1Kings 12:25–33

Questions from the Scripture text: Who built up what, where, in v25? Where did he go/build after dwelling in Shechem? Where does the speech in v26–27 take place? What end result is he worried about (v26b)? In what way is he worried that this will happen (v27a)? What sequence of events does he think that this obedience to God's worship commands will produce (v27b)? How does the king come up with his new way of worshiping Yahweh (v28)? What did he end up making? How does he make it sound like he's really just interested in making things easier for them? With what words does he remind them that this is a many-centuries historic and traditional way of worshiping Yahweh (cf. Ex 32:4–5)? In what southernmost and northernmost towns of the northern kingdom did he set this up (v29)? What did this thing become (v30)? What else did he make (v31a)? What else did he make from among whom (v31b)? And not from whom (v31c)? What else did Jeroboam start (v32a)? When (v32b, cf. Num 29:13; 1Ki 8:2)? Whom did he install for this (v32c)? How does v33 summarize his action? From where was all of this devised?

Why would anyone who had gotten such a marvelous offer as in 11:38 proceed to create religion “from his own heart” (v33)? There are important lessons here for guarding against our heart's turning to wicked worship?

Poor self-talk (v26). Jeroboam spoke fear in his heart. And not just fear of the unknown, but fear that directly contradicted the promises of God to him (cf. 11:29–39). He ought to have known in 11:40 that Solomon couldn't carry through on that threat. And he ought to know now that Rehoboam could not take back the ten tribes from him. But instead of recounting to his heart the Word of God, he instead spoke his fears to himself.

Pragmatism (v27). Jeroboam's fears made orthodox worship practice seem undesirable. Oh how this has afflicted generations of pastors and church leadership boards! Many have thought, “if we just worship how God says then everyone will leave, and if we disciple only by the program that God has established in His church, then no one will do it, and no one will grow.”

They may not have said it in exactly those words, but Jeroboam almost does. He basically says that if the people worship the way that God has said to, then he's going to lose his throne and his life. Rather than consider what worship God says is right, he went with the worship that he thought he could use to get “good” results.

But why would the people of the northern kingdom be willing to adopt such false worship? Didn't they know that false worship had gotten the previous inhabitants of the land exterminated by Yahweh? Now, we have important lessons for guarding against *accepting* and even *appreciating* wicked worship.

Popular demand (v28a). Where our translation says “asked advice,” it's actually a doubling of the word for “consult.” He “consulted consultations.” Except in Hebrew, this sort of doubling is extremely emphatic. He did all of the polling, market research, etc., until there was no more to be done. He found out what people liked and didn't like so that he could customize the worship to their preferences. Beware the church that is interested to know how you want them to worship (unless they want to correct you for that). What a believer needs is a church that wants the people to worship the way that their God says.

Creativity (v28b). Of course, by the end of the chapter, the creativity is off the charts, but here is where it starts. Jeroboam made two calves of gold. Beware of valuing “creativity in worship,” which is a reasonable working definition for “idolatry.” Creativity in worship “arts” often goes hand-in-hand with creativity in worship “theology,” which is one of the reasons that the “calves” thing works.

Bulls, like bunnies and eggs, were symbols of fertility. Several ancient near-eastern religions included metal or stone figures of their male fertility god (usually the most powerful/active of their pantheon) standing on the back of a bull or even twin bulls. But Yahweh is “invisible,” so there's no one on the back of this bull. And He's not just invisible but immense, so perhaps He is thought to be straddling the entire northern kingdom from Dan in the north to Bethel in the South. And then, this bull isn't stone or bronze but gold. Worship like the pagans? They weren't worshipping like the pagans. They were using the smallest little connection to show how *opposite* the LORD is! Or so they could have creatively thought. Many such justifications can be made when we get “creative” with our thinking about how we should worship.

Convenience (v28c). “It is too much for you.” Worship is hard work. Elderly, disabled, and those with domestic chaos know that it can be hard work getting there. The recent covidification of many churches has tempted a multitude to fall in love with the convenience of virtual worship. Jeroboam couldn't Zoom you in, but he could at least save you a trip to Jerusalem!

And once you get there, it can be hard work, especially if you worship God's way. Singing in which the congregation are “the praise team.” Praying along with extended, led prayer—even if it's *well led*—not only keeping up with your thoughts but stirring and lifting up your heart. Listening to a sermon that is explaining all about the Scripture text, and why it means what it means, and what we're supposed to do about it is a lot more work than being entertained by jokes and stories or pumped up by you-can-do-it-ism. Churches that sell convenience are similar to Jeroboam, and it can be very tempting to go for it.

Tradition (v28d). Here's another stroke of genius. Jeroboam quotes Israel's first high priest, Aaron, “Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!” It's right out of Exodus 32:4 (including the plural, which is in the original in both texts). Like Jeroboam (v32–33), Aaron had also instituted a new feast, even explicitly calling it a “feast to Yahweh” (cf. Ex 32:5). So, it had the sentimentality of four hundred years of “church tradition” behind it. And it celebrated a great act of redemption: the exodus from Egypt.

It's ancient; it's been done by “good men”; it's unto the right God; it celebrates a great moment of His redeeming work. But for the rest of the life of the northern kingdom, we will be hearing just how much God hated it.

Involvement (v31). There were (for now) Levites in the northern kingdom. But one of the ways the people got sucked into Jeroboam's worship plans was by involvement. He made satellite campuses (small group meetings?) on the high places (v31a) and opened up church office far beyond the narrow strictures of the conservative movement (v31b). Now people of all sorts could become priests, not just Levites! He even brought them all to Bethel for a special commissioning ceremony for all the local group leaders (end of v32).

Holidays (v32). A new feast—what fun! A great time for getting the whole family together, and celebrating deliverance from Egypt and atonement from sin! But where did the significance of the 15th day of the 8th month come from? Not God. Sure, it was the man whom God had very specifically called to rule over ten tribes. But men are just men, and designating holy days is the purview of God alone.

In these nine verses, we're reminded of just how easily we can get sucked into inventing religion, and how easily we can get sucked into accepting and approving of manmade religion. So, let us be constantly reminding our hearts from Scripture that God is good, and that God is God. And thus using the Spirit's means, let us seek that He would convince us to let God alone be God and trust that this is always for good!

How are you countering poor self-talk with Scripture self-talk? How do you go about preparing for and putting forth the hard work necessary for biblical worship? If our hearts are tempted to value manmade worship or religion, of what can we remind ourselves to help resist that?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for showing Yourself God by creating for us the worship style and worship calendar by which You are rightly praised and by which You do us good. Forgive us for being tempted to think that our creativity in worship could bring a better result, or for being tempted to enjoy worship that is designed to cater to us. By Your Spirit, make us content with the religion that You have designed, and make us to rejoice that it is You Yourself whom we have in it, in Jesus Christ, AMEN!!

Suggested songs: ARP22C “I'll Praise You in the Gathering” or TPH151 “Lord of the Sabbath, Hear Us Pray”

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

First Kings, 12, verses, 25 through 33. These are the words of God.

Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the mound mountains of Ephraim and dwelt there. Also, he went out from there and built Peniel and Jeroboam said in his heart. Now, the kingdom may return to the house of David. If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of Yahweh at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their Lord, Rehoboam, king of Judah.

They will kill me and go back to rebellious King of Judah. Therefore, the king asked advice and made two calves of gold and said to the people. It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods of Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt and they set up one in Bethel and the other he put in Dan.

Now, this thing became a sin for. The people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. He made shrines on the high places and made priests for my every class of people who are not of the Sons of Levi durable, Jordan defeat on the 15th day of the 8th month.

Like the feast that wasn't Judah and offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did it. Bethel sacrificing to the calves that he had made and at Bethel. He installed the priests of the high places, which he had made. So he made offerings on the altar, which he had made at Bethel on the 15th day of the eighth month, and the month, which he had devised in his own art.

He ordained a feast for the children of Israel and offered sacrifices on the altar and burnt incense.

So far the inspired in an errant word of God.

Wonder your family is a very important passage and not just because for the rest of first and second Kings, we're going to hear over and over and over again about the sin of Jeroboam the Son of me back and which he made Israel to sin. That's one reason that it's very important for us to understand this passage now and to think about what it teaches and be warned by it.

But I wasn't just something that Israel did up until the fall of the northern kingdom. When Dan and Bethel. It's something that is a perpetual problem even today even in churches where there is not outward idolatry where there is not outwardly, the kind of worship that man has made up.

Instead of God, we have in our hearts all of the same sorts of temptations that produce these actions and God is one who sees our hearts and who judges the secrets of men's hearts according to Christ Jesus, the secrets of men, according to Christ. Jesus. Romans 2 says, and for him, for our hearts, we needed the blood of Christ to atone and Christ's righteousness from his heart to be counted for us and part of what the Holy Spirit is doing and us.

Who believe I do hope that you believe and if he's not doing it in you, then cry out to God for forgiveness and that, he would join you to Christ by faith and that he would do in your heart. Part of what the Holy Spirit is doing in the hearts of us, who believe is making our heart.

Like Christ's instead of like Jeroboam, son of Niebat and we have in front of us. One, two, three, four, five six. At least seven different ways by which, Jeroboam no. Eight turns to this wicked worship and by which he, and the people who were entrusted to his care, ended up in bondage to this wicked worship, that God, hated that many of them thought that God loved and yet God abominated.

So let's make careful attention to how this happened. The very first part of how this happened. We see in verse 26 and Jeroboam said, in his heart, you know, it would be very good to speak in your heart. The things that God has said and God had sent a prophet.

The silencer he's either silent Night. The prophet to Jeroboam to tell him that God was establishing the kingdom with him and to make him the same offer that he made to David. That if he walks with him, according to his ways, he would have a kingdom, that was established and would continue so that if he really was concerned about the kingdom slipping away from him, he had words to tell himself about how to stop that from happening, but he instead speaks his own wisdom to his heart, instead of God's wisdom to his heart, Watch out whenever you are grumbling to yourself about what people might do, or what you think people are doing is a, they're going to do this and they're gonna do that.

And don't let your heart run away with self-talk. That comes from, you speak to yourself from the Word of God as it touches the circumstances that you are in. So that rather than reinforcing your own ideas and every time you draw another line of your own ideas on top of it, it becomes bolder and bolder and until you feel like it's the only reality or that that's there.

But you did that to yourself. Jeroboam did this to himself? Didn't he had the Word of God? That told him exactly the opposite. But instead of speaking to himself the Word of God as touches his circumstances, who spoke to himself concerning his own ideas and particularly his own fears, and that brings us to the second the way by which he fell into the sin and brought all of Israel to fall into the sin.

And that is pragmatism The word of God tells us the ways of God. The Word of God tells us that God, is all powerful, and God rules in all things. According to the wisdom in which he according to the love in which he has planned to take sinners for himself and sanctify them and bring them at last into their inheritance of enjoying Him fully forever.

That's the word, what the Word of God tells us about and it tells us what God wants us to do and that we are just to walk in the ways that he is commanded us and trust that he will use them in a proper way. The word of God does not forbid wisdom.

It often points out how although the godly are attacked and assaulted for a time. And although the foolish can bring a city and a house and a nation crumbling down to ruin, economic and military ruin, and how they're all these things that happen in God's providence. That can be very discouraging yet.

The ordinary way that he has caused his world to go. Is that wisdom and godliness are a strength by which in the province of God. He tends to build houses and churches and nations and we must leave to him, the extent to which and the endurance unto, which those things are built, the Lord helped us for instance to do a lot of good work at the church in Orange City and then fools came behind and brought everything to the ground.

Was it all lost? No, in multiple different ways. First of all, what God wanted to do was done. And second of all, there are many who are brought to the Lord and built up in the Lord who are still. So but are indifferent places. And so instead of one strong church remaining in the place, there are dozens of strong earth,

churches in many other places But that's safe with God, would do what he says because we trust him to do what he does.

Geroboam said, Here's what I'm afraid is going to happen and here is how I am going to stop it from happening and rather than walk in what God had said because he was being a pragmatist because he was trying to stop them, from stop it from happening rather than trusting, God, to do whatever is right, because he was a pragmatist.

He He made decisions not according to what God instructs but to what he thought could get him, the outcome that he wanted. So for soft talk was one way. Pragmatism another way pragmatism often descends into popular demand. One of the reasons we saw in Acts chapter 6, that God gives the deaconet to be the complaint department in the church, is because men, even apostles, even elders are sinners.

And, whereas the apostles were supposed to be ministers of the Word of God. And so declaring God's Word to the people, not trying to do the people's way, what pleases the people, but what pleases God, it was good to have others who were over earthly things in, which it is more appropriate to complain.

Now, it's true that when people are having difficulty spiritually, they should come to their elders and say, I am having difficulty spiritually, so that the elders can teach them what the Word of God says, about how to address that difficulty. So it's not like you can never talk to your elders.

About the trouble that you're that you're having. But the church is to be governed by the Word of God, in a way that does not take poles to find out what we should do. And this is in part. How Jeroboam came up with this? You can especially in verse in the way.

The New King, James translates, verse 28. You can miss it very easily, Therefore, the king asked advice, but what's behind the phrase asked advice is one of those doublings of two different. Conjugations of the same Hebrew verb and literally it's consulting. He consultant. So he did nothing but consult he was like the politicians who have the focus groups and the market research surveys And he wanted to figure out what the people would best let them.

What would please the, what would most please? The most people so he could figure out what to do. That's where pragmatism will. Always go Pragmatism will will, you know, schmooze around the congregation or schwz around your God? Help you if you are in a youth subculture. But as smooth as around to all the people in whatever the the social group is and it tries to figure out what they what they want so it can give it to them.

We must be, we must be very wary of this popular demand trying to give people what they want and if you're doing popular demand then you have to get creative If God has given you directions and you just do what God says, as well as possible. And there's some room in exercising, skill and wisdom.

Under what God says to do it in God's way as well as you can. And so some of the quote, unquote creativity, we might have if we were fixing up. The worship room at Hopewell was we would say the way it's designed now is more conducive to front-led technology, assisted instrument, assisted singing.

But that's not what God wants in worship. He wants us to hear one another So we rip out the ridiculous acoustic tile and fix all the leaks in the roof you know puts him insulation up there save some of God's money for ministry for other things we put in something reflective so that the the acoustics of the room are more conducive to the congregation hearing one, another sing.

And we notice that there's a temptation for kids to gaze at columns and marble patterns, and, you know, plastic flour, arrangements of which the Hobby Lobby might be embarrassed and all of that stuff, and we strip away everything except the Word of God and maybe the the table of God.

But tables are for eating at. Not really for for looking at the, you know, putting the table right in in the middle from the start is kind of a, it's okay, the way we have it. The Word of God is high but there's room for exercising. Wisdom and saying, here is the way that God has commanded to be worshiped.

Let us do as well as possible. What he has given us in such a way that doesn't do that as much as possible or as little as possible comes from us, right? So there's a creativity. If you can use that word, It's like an anti-creativity that says, let's have as much as possible.

What is from God? What God expresses because we have a real and living God who expresses himself in the worship. But most people, when they think about creativity because we're coming at it from a pragmatist point of view, where we want a certain result and we are coming up with the way to get the result that we want.

And therefore it also becomes the populist idea of what do most of the people want? When they say creativity, they mean to express ourselves more fully and better and you end up with the fashioning of things, The damning words at the end of this passage, which he had devised in his own heart from verse 33 and it begins with in verse 2018 made two, calves of gold.

He created something, He didn't have the promise of God like Solomon where God had said, you will build this for me and and he would thereby have the confidence that God was the one who had ordained that it be done. He came up with his own way. So there's creativity.

The other thing that another thing that you have when you try to works up in the way that you want, and especially, if you ask people, what they want is convenience, You don't want to have to go a long way to travel. You don't want to have to plan ahead.

You don't want to have to work hard and so he says it is too much. There's too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. So he puts one at Bethel, which is right at the bottom of the southern kingdom, or, but sorry, bottom of the northern kingdom. It's actually not that far from Jerusalem itself.

But just in case anyone from the north was was tempted to go south. You know, they might get they might get as far as Bethel and say, oh there's there's a great big worship center here. I have to go all the way to Jerusalem and then he puts one in Dan which is at the top of the Northern Kingdom so that half the northern kingdom wouldn't even turn south to go down.

So he's an indulging, the people by making it easier and easier and communicating that the worship of God should be easy and convenient and you might add to this pleasant because that's really a form of convenience. If it pleases my senses more than it's easier for me to do.

So you know, some ways that we do this are by are by shortening services and adding enjoyable. Quote-unquote elements, you know, maybe like having coffee ordering from the pews. I don't know what churches do these days and how bad things have gotten. I guess the ultimate conveniences, having Zoom church where you don't even have to gather, right?

You just do everything from your couch, in your, in your pajamas with, you know, whatever it is. That you enjoy, You may even be able to have, you know, the football game on silent to the other window or or whatever it is. But when we seek convenience and we say, the place that God picked, and the way that God picked, and the people that God picked all of that stuff is too much.

Don't don't go up to Jerusalem which God called the place in which he had chosen to establish His name. We can establish His name in other places, too, that are that are more convenient. Watch out for wanting things to be easier. If you're doing it God's way, then it's worth putting forth the extra effort.

That's not to say, you should do things in a more difficult way on purpose. That's stupid. That's not trying to follow God's way as well as possible. But if you're going to add two or modify God's way to make it easier, that's wicked, that's choosing convenience over God. And then another thing is tradition, we want to feel connected to people but we should want to feel connected to the right people.

The people for whom being connected to God is how to be connected to them. That's one of those exciting things as you read Church history and you read, you know, good theology from the past. Yeah, you theologians even like Calvin or not getting absolutely everything right. But so much of what they say and so much of what they do and so, much of what they experience is from the Bible and by genuine faith, and the living God.

And to the extent that we have those things in common, we rejoice that our unity is in God. But people take that desire to connect with others and they say, we want to increase our connection with the past. And so they choose things that have been done for a long time that God didn't give and you know, many ways that we do that the way Jeroboam did it.

Was He quoted exactly from Exodus chapter 32? Here are your Gods of Israel who brought you up from the land of Egypt. In fact, the word Elohim is often formed in the plural but but is used singularly with respect to the living God and you could say, here is your god of Israel.

Who brought you up from the land of each either way. He's floating Aaron at the mountain So it's, you know, it's not entirely a new thing where we're in a tradition of hundreds of years of recognizing God, and recognizing this great act of his redemption. Surely we should have some way of commemorating his great deliverance of his people.

And here's the historic way of commemorating the great deliverance of His people. And we know, even from then, in Exodus 32 verse 5, that they ordained their own, feast at the bottom of the mountain, but it was a feast. They had ordained for the name of the Lord. When Aaron said tomorrow shall be a feast to Yahweh about this very same kind of worship.

That Jeroboam is now establishing in Bethel and watch out for tradition. God tells us to hand down what he has said to do from one generation to another. But many generations continue to hand down things not that God has said to do, but that man invented and they think that somehow the older that it becomes the better that it is just because a sin is very, very old and has been committed by many generations.

Does not somehow make it more acceptable. Even if God has not yet destroyed, those who are committing. It ought to make us not persist in it and say God must be okay with it. But to marvel at the patients of God and say Lord how good you have been to us and to our fathers who have continuously provoked, you we repent of this for such a good God.

As you, We will worship the way that you say. So in our, in our church culture, tradition is like five years, anything that's like five years old or older has been done forever in our church. And people will say this is the Hopewell way. Well, God help us. If the Hopewell Way isn't something from the Bible and let's not be in love with something that we have been doing for a while just because we've been doing it for a while.

And even just because God has been merciful to us in it and despite it, but let us let us be wary of the temptations. That tradition present presents and then the idea of involvement, you know, popular demands taking people's opinions doing what they like, and then you also want to get them hooked and so you give everyone their own little job and that's what Jeroboam does in verse 31.

He made shrines on the high places and made priests from every class of people who are not of the sons of Levi. So not only did he set up the the main worship sacrifice sites in day in the North and Bethel in the south but all over the place.

The yeah Communities localities would be kind of centered around higher places. It's good to have, it's good to have high ground and you can farm in the valley and you can have your city and the in the higher location. And then there would be by having the the worship in the high places.

Not only would you have like the beautiful inspiring place to worship, but you'd also have a convenient location for everybody. So, every locality would have its own kind of worship center. And then in every localities worship center, you wouldn't have Levites be the priests but you'd get people from every every class of people and every tribe and just kind of have this, this local community involvement, get everyone involved.

This volunteerism where if you can get a person to feel like they're personally invested in what's going on, and if he was using the Evangelical language, you'd be like, well, we're gonna take spiritual gifts inventories and we're gonna come up with a different role for every single person that is the use of their spiritual gift.

And everyone's going to be involved. So, watch out for the, the temptation to use involvement, to get people to be invested rather than setting before them. God, our Savior, God our Creator. God for whose glory. We exist. God upon whom we depend God who ought to be our great delight.

If we can set God before people in Christ in the gospel and this does not captivate their desire to continue If this does not make them feel personally invested than what they need. Is not a job in the church to make them part of the machinery of how it all works.

What they need is conversion to Jesus Christ that he himself would be the reason that they are invested and you too, especially because you guys are involved more than others, just because of where we live. And who's your daddy and, and all of that watch out in your own heart that you don't feel invested primarily because you have these particular tasks that you do every week, You know, setting up the video feed or helping set the Lord's Supper up, or sweeping, or arranging things, cleaning up later, or whatever it is, Watch against the temptation to feel like the tasks that you do are the reason that you're personally invested in the church.

Let the Lord Jesus himself, rehing your Savior, and your delight and your hope be what has you invested in the church, so that you are not susceptible to the sorts of things that Jerbellum set up because then if you have a Reformation, and you have to get rid of some things that people have been involved in.

Yeah, you get rid of the praise band, or the choir or, you know, whatever, man-made architecture and furniture, furnishings of the worship, you have, Then you you run the risk of, oh, but they'll feel like we're rejecting them because they've been serving in this. Well if they're invested because of Christ rather than because of their involvement.

Then you know the removal of a thing in which they were involved would not remove their investment and then holidays Everyone likes a good holiday and so, you know, there were the three great feasts in the life of Israel and one of them was the 15th day of the seventh month.

So Jeroboam makes one on the 15th day of the eighth month and he ordains the ordains a feast of his of his own devising. But, you know, it would be a time when all of the families would get together. And there would be special meals and almost certainly, you know, kids would see other friends that they normally only see it feast time.

And, and setting aside the work for the special feast and the special meals and the special time together. Probably came also with special games and activities, holidays are so much fun and this would be a meaningful holiday because it's a holiday unto. The god who brought us up from the land of Egypt, Watch out for the desire to create special events, because God himself has created his own special event and it's not creation day and it's not resurrection Day, it's creator Day.

That's what the Sabbath was a Sabbath unto Yahweh. Your God, it was creator Day and the Lord's day isn't resurrection Day. It's the resurrected ones day, It's his day for him and if we create these days and these feasts that are special to us in a way that competes with the Lord's day or makes it seem like one Lord's day is more special than another, Then we indulge ourselves.

And and we distract from that delight and devotion that should be in the Lord himself And so easy to get sucked into that. So you see how these eight things can. So easily pull us into religion. That is of our own making but has so much of the same language and shape as the true religion that God has given.

No wonder. No wonder the northern kingdom fell. So hard and could never get out of it, but ended up in the sin of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin and which they didn't get out of until God destroyed the northern kingdom. But let us watch out because every one of these are things that even if on the surface, we are keeping what's called the regulative.

Principle worshiping only in the way that God has said Every one of these things continue to be temptations. In our own hearts. Let's pray Our Father in heaven. We pray that you would save us from poor self-talk and pragmatistic thinking and which we think that we can reduce outcomes that we want instead of depending upon you pray that you would deliver us from desiring to please.

Men instead of desiring to please you. We pray that you would want us make us want to see all of your expression of yourself that we would worship you and depend upon you. And that we would want you to do away with that, which is from our fleshly nature and to produce in us the expression of Christ by his spirit.

So keep us, we pray from that creativity, which seeks to give event to itself and grant to us that skill and zeal that seeks to have that which you are producing in the new creation in the new creature to come out of our heart and our mouth. Lord help us for.

We are addicted to comfort and convenience and pleasantness, and so easily will make things out of proportion. Make us O Lord to find you most comfortable and you must pleasant. So that we will aim at that which enables us to do most according to what you have set and that this is what we would find convenient to our soul.

Even if we find it inconvenient in earthly logistics, Lord protect us from wanting to be connected to other people in any other way then having our connection in you so that you would spare us both from popularism in our contemporary circles and spare us from traditionalism in which we try to be connected to a stream or tradition or a history of men in anything.

Other than what you have given, Lord help us. We pray to find our investment. In the fact that it is, you who give yourself to us by your means. And that this is what we are invested in forever and grant to us, to serve diligently because of it, but not to get sucked into feeling invested by our involvement.

And we pray O Lord that you would keep us from the deceitful and and harmful approach of trying to get others to be invested by their involvement rather than by the the value and necessity of Christ to them. Lord help us to love your day because it is yours.

And in it you give yourself to us. And by your spirit you give to us to give ourselves more directly and entirely to you in a way that is not available to us on the other days and in the assembly that is not available to us on the other days.

And then the worship of that assembly that is not available to us on the other days So make us to delight in you and on your day and to rejoice that you have consecrated it as holy so that nothing else can be holy and nothing else can compare to it.

Oh Lord. We confess that we are so easily tempted to all of the weaknesses and all of the wickedness by which Jerebellum brought your people into such sin, that from which they could never escape. So help us our God for we are weak, but you are our strength and we thank you for your word, which is so clear.

And so helpful in these things and we pray that your spirit would keep writing it on our hearts so that more and more we would delight in you and depend on you and be defended devoted to you alone. In all things help us, we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.