

THE CELESTIAL RAILROAD

April 28th, 2019 – The Celestial Railroad

Part 13 – Vanity Fair ~ Part 2

Today in Part 2 of Vanity Fair, we'll delve into the topic of idols and idolatry, that they are not just physical images, but things, activities or personages that can be idolatized. Vanity Fair has not changed and is just as tangible today in our generation as in past ones. Please read it by [clicking on this link](#) and read 'Vanity Fair'. If you'd like to review this part in Pilgrim's Progress, please [click on this link](#) and read Chapter 21.

Technology, then and now, has a way of making men and women in the church illiterate to what the truth of God's word is found in the Bible. So long as the devil can keep you from studying the Bible, he's able to replace it with radio, TV, internet and social media preachers such as Rev. Mr. Shallow-deep; the Rev. Mr. Stumble-at-truth; that fine old clerical character, the Rev. Mr. This-today, who expects shortly to resign his pulpit to the Rev. Mr. That-tomorrow; together with the Rev. Mr. Bewilderment; the Rev. Mr. Clog-the-spirit; and last and greatest, the Rev. Mr. Wind-of-doctrine. These are ones, that by their names alone, are false prophets and teachers, keeping the truth of God's holy word from being comprehended and understood by you.

Secular entertainment is another great way of keeping you distracted from studying the Bible and understanding the truths found in it. In The Celestial Railroad we read; *“Thus literature is etherealized by assuming for its medium the human voice; and knowledge depositing all its heavier particles – except, doubtless, its gold – becomes exhaled into a sound, which forthwith steals into the ever open ear of the community. These ingenious methods constitute a sort of machinery, by which thought and learning are conveyed to every person's mind, without his putting himself to the slightest inconvenience in the matter.”*

1 John 2:15-17 says this; *“15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”* It sounds like a conditional scripture doesn't it.

1John 2:24-27 also says; *“24 Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. 25 And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life. 26 These things I have written to you concerning those who try to deceive you. 27 But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.”*

When your born again, you have received the Holy Spirit who leads you into truth found in the Bible. Do we have those gifted as teachers, preachers, prophets and evangelists? Yes. But according to this verse, the Holy Spirit is our teacher, so if it was just you and your Bible for any reason, it would be sufficient because of the Holy Spirit living in you would teach you the truth.

The Apostle John continues in **1 John 5:18-21** by saying; *“18 We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him. 19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. 20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. 21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.”*

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In The Celestial Railroad we read; *“There is another species of machine for the wholesale manufacture of individual MORALITY. This excellent result is affected by societies for all manner of virtuous purposes--with which a man has merely to connect himself, throwing, as it were, his quota of virtue into the common stock; and the president and directors will take care that the aggregate amount be well applied. All these, and other wonderful improvements in ethics, religion and literature, being made plain to my comprehension by the ingenious Mr. Smooth-it-away, inspired me with a vast admiration of Vanity Fair.”*

We see that it will cost someone something ‘virtuous’ to partake in things at Vanity Fair. Compromise will need to conscientiously take place in the heart and mind. When you’re not born again, the Holy Spirit is not able to lead you into the truth found in the Bible, and idolatry is not seen as idolatry, because if Jesus is not Lord of your life, then worshipping the creation is just normal to the individual who is not born again of His Spirit.

Continuing in The Celestial Railroad we read; *“It would fill a volume, in an age of 'pamphlets', were I to record all my observations in this great capital of human business and pleasure. There was an unlimited range of society – the powerful, the wise, the witty, and the famous in every walk of life – princes, presidents, poets, generals, artists, actors and philanthropists, all making their own market at the Fair, and deeming no price too exorbitant for such commodities as hit their fancy. It is well worth one’s while, even if he had no idea of buying or selling, to loiter through the bazaars, and observe the various sorts of traffic that were going forward.”*

It all sounds too familiar, Vanity Fair in the 1800’s and Vanity Fair today. The only difference really is that there is an easier way to promote it through social media and because of advanced technology, the sound and theatrics are better. But the heart of man has not changed.

The Apostle Paul talks about God’s wrath on the unrighteous – which is manifest in Vanity Fair - in **Romans 1:18-32**; *“18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, 21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an **image** made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. 26 For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27 Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.”*

This is all over the world and in media today isn’t it? In The Celestial Railroad we continue reading; *“There was a sort of stock, called Conscience, which seemed to be in great demand, and would purchase almost anything. Indeed, few rich commodities were to be obtained without paying a heavy sum in this particular stock, as a man’s business was seldom very lucrative, unless he knew precisely when and how to throw his hoard of*

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Conscience into the market. Yet, as this stock was the only thing of permanent value, whoever parted with it was sure to find himself a loser in the long run. Thousands sold their happiness for a whim.”

When you're not born again, there is conviction of sin that will eventually lead to repentance and receiving the Holy Spirit by your own free will, but until then, your conscience will become seared and the worship of idols is inevitable. What used to concern you today as a moral issue, will no longer concern you and you'll go onto another moral issue. Why? Because your conscience has been seared to that first moral issue and you have no conviction that it is sin.

But for the Christian who is born again, we have the truth of the enduring word of God found in His Bible. **1 Peter 1:22-25** says; “*22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, 23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, 24 because “All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, 25 But the word of the Lord endures forever. Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.”*

Being born again assures you that the word of the Lord endures forever in your life and that it will not change or shift, it's pure truth.

Continuing in The Celestial Railroad we read; “*Prince Beelzebub himself took great interest in this sort of traffic, and sometimes condescended to meddle with small matters. I once had the pleasure to see him bargaining with a miser for his soul, which, after much ingenious skirmishing on both sides, his highness succeeded in obtaining for a few dollars. The prince remarked with a smile, that he was a loser by the transaction.”*

This is key...you're a loser when you bargain with the devil. Your soul that he's bargaining for is worth more than any amount of fortune, fame, pleasure, status, knowledge, power and money etc. He knows that you'll lose because he knows what he lost when he was kicked out of heaven. He knows the glory and power in heaven, the Celestial City. How many have sold their soul by the seductions of the devil or have made a pact with him?

But is it really selling out? They're already in the kingdom of darkness and are a child of the devil if they're not born again. So what kind of sale is it? How are they really selling out? They're selling out primarily in that they're rejecting and refusing to be born again of the Spirit of God by receiving Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. They're selling out the kingdom of heaven in exchange for the pleasures of this present temporal world. One must remember that it's not only getting involved in obvious demonic things as witchcraft, sorcery, demonic cults etc., but in all that we just read in Romans 1 by exchanging the glory of God for unrighteousness.

The Apostle Paul again says to flee from idolatry in **1 Corinthians 10:14-22**; “*14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. 15 I speak as to wise men; judge for yourselves what I say. 16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? 17 For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread. 18 Observe Israel after the flesh: Are not those who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? 19 What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? 20 Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. 21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons. 22 Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?”*

If you're sacrificing to and idolizing the world, it's being done as unto demons. When you want to fellowship more with the world than with the Lord, when you're exchanging your fellowship with the Lord, the church, the

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body of Christ for secular activities, what have you done? You've set up an idol and in the end your fellowship is with demons because it's idolatrous. Anything that's an idol in your life, anything set up that brings division between you and God, is demonic in its origin. It can be anything; power, fame, fortune, sports, music, education, career etc. If anything is taking the place of God in your life, it's idolatrous. You could even put family and friends in there if you've set them up as an idol. You look at the mob mentality – family is number one. But Jesus explicitly says that the cost of discipleship means giving up everything and not looking back, [Luke 9:57-62](#). Idolatry, remember, is 2nd in the 10 Commandments which we're to flee from. God hates idolatry.

In **Galatians 5:16-26**, we read the conflict and warfare that goes on between the Spirit and the flesh. It says; *“16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 **idolatry**, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things **will not inherit the kingdom of God**. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.”*

When you're not born again, the Bible makes it clear that your father is not God, but rather your father is the devil and the works of your father you're going to do. It will flow naturally from you because Jesus is not your Lord and Saviour. If you're of the kingdom of darkness, it's normal to act and live like the kingdom of darkness. That's why our passenger on The Celestial Railroad had no qualms about living and engaging in Vanity Fair – he was not born of the Spirit of God. He found it appealing, pleasurable and was at ease.

Please read all of [John 8:37-47](#) but a portion of it says *“...41 You do the deeds of your father.” Then they said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God.” 42 Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. 43 Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. 44 You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.”*

So, it's obvious that if your father is already the devil, then the only sell out of your soul is to not become born again in exchange for fortune, fame and the pleasures of the world. But if you are born again, and make a decision to sell out your born again birthright in exchange for fortune and fame, the Bible clearly states the consequences.

It says in **2 Peter 2:20-22**; *“20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. 21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. 22 But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: “A dog returns to his own vomit,” and, “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.””*

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So, it is possible for a born again Christian to sell out his born again birthright and return to the world like a dog to his own vomit. All the more reason to have no idols, and not worship the creation, but rather worship Jesus only.

Hebrews 12:12-17 says; “*12 Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, 13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed. 14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: 15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; 16 lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. 17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.”*

Those Bible believers on The Celestial Railroad are just behaving like their father the devil. But who are you behaving like, Christian? Are you worshipping the creation more than the Creator? If so, you need to repent before it's too late and you're not able to repent?

Hebrews 12:20-21 continues says; “*20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. 21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.”*

This is serious and to some may sound legalistic; it will be worse for the person in the end, who has been born again and then entangled themselves again in Vanity Fair, to have never been born again. They will have sold their birthright for a whim. Idolatry will lead to backsliding. We've read today various scriptures that idols and idolatry is associated to demons and the demonic realm, so flee idolatry. The devil has and is doing a great job at getting Christians out of the church, to get them to fall back into idolatry. Vanity Fair is here to stay until Jesus returns. Whatever you idolize you'll start looking and acting like. The entertainment industry has made billions on making idols. Get rid of idols in your life today and at any other time the Holy Spirit shines the spotlight and puts a finger on it. Remember John 10:10 says that, the thief (devil) comes only to steal, and kill and destroy, but Jesus came to give life and life abundantly. Idols and idolatry give the devil access into your life to kill, steal and destroy.

Idolatry then is not only a carved image in the likeness of anything that is in heaven, on earth, beneath the earth or in the seas, but it is anything that takes the rightful place of God being worshiped only. Be holy, be righteous, set yourself apart and ask the Holy Spirit to show you what is idolatrous in your life today. You will be blessed, strengthened and strong. Choose the abundant life found in Christ Jesus.