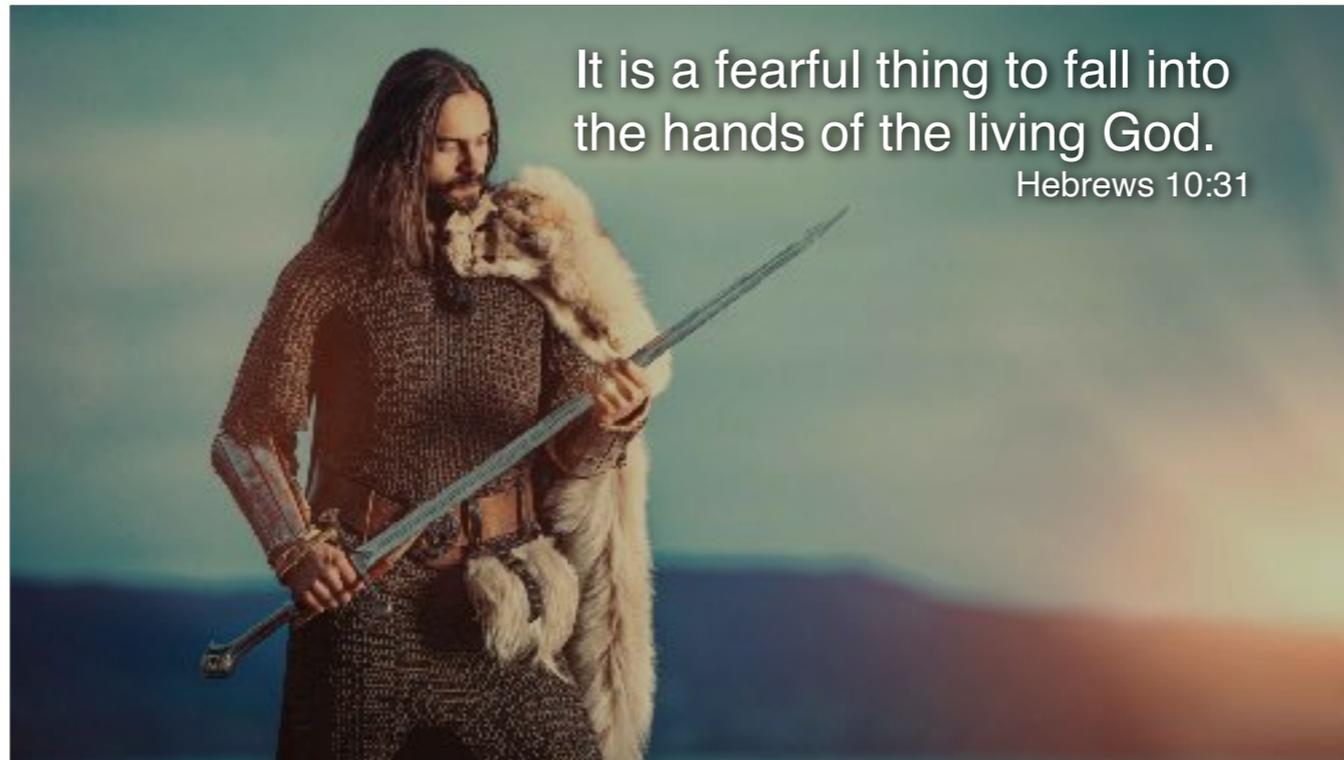




- Story of Balaam is a fun story for children...
 - a bad man who who fails to be bad
 - a talking donkey
- For adults, there are much more serious issues... it's not funny.
 - It's instructive
 - It's deep in meaning for each of us



- What is it like to have God opposed to you?
 - Hebrews 10:31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
 - Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.



- Numbers 22...
- But first some insight from God about Balaam's character
- 2 Peter 2:15-16; Joshua 13:22
 - who loved gain from wrongdoing
 - madness.
 - practiced divination



- This is the man that Balak, King of the Moabites tried to pay to solve a problem for him. The Israelites were passing through Moab and he was scared of them because there were so many and because of their triumphs.
- He wanted Balaam to curse Israel so that they would fail.
- He sent representatives with money, Balaam refused, God said no.
- [12] God said to Balaam, “You shall not go with them. You shall not curse the people, for they are blessed.”



- He sent more representatives with more money, Balaam refused again, claiming to ask Jehovah. God said go if they come ask. But Balaam got up in the morning and just went.
- [21] So Balaam rose in the morning and saddled his donkey and went with the princes of Moab.



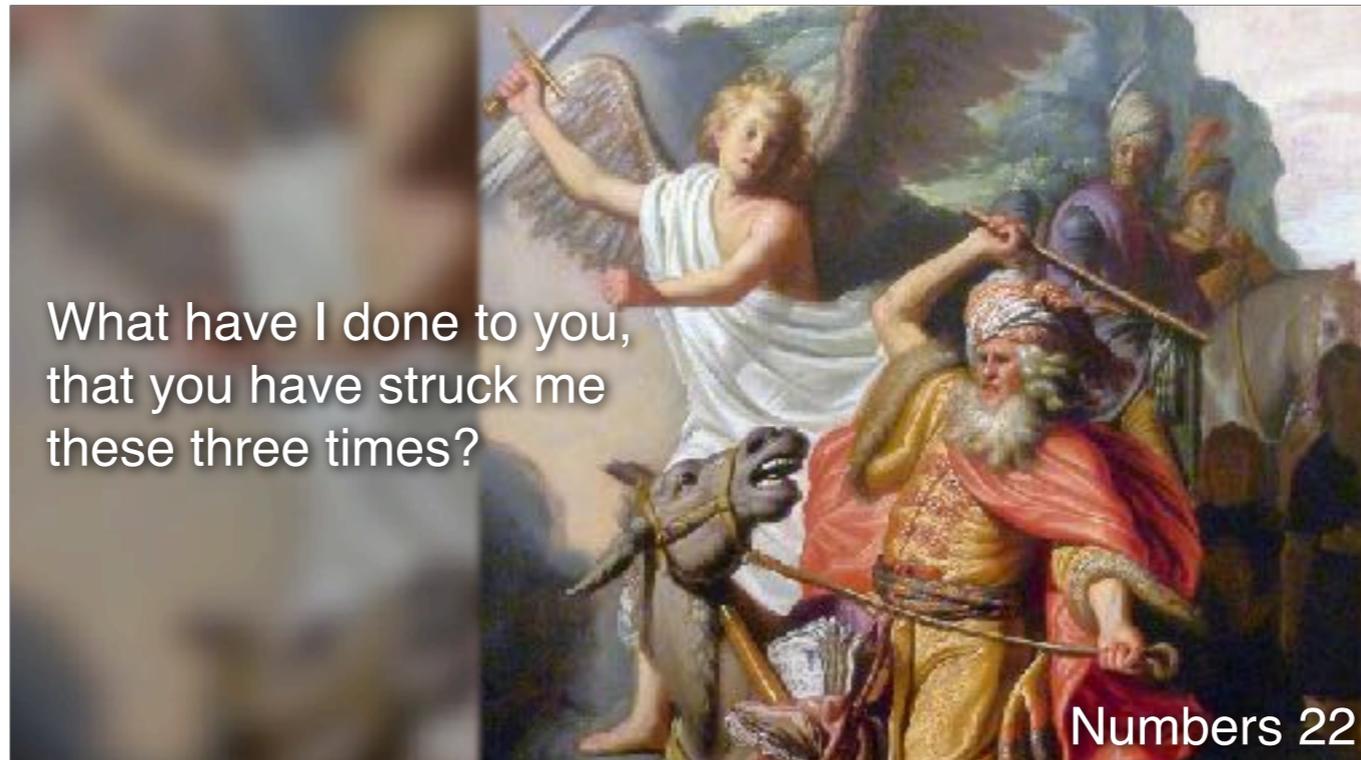
- God was angry at Balaam's disobedience.



- As Balaam traveled to Moab, the angel of Jehovah opposed him.
- Donkey sees AoJ, with drawn sword: turn off of road into field. Balaam hits donkey to get her back on road.
- Donkey sees AoJ in narrow part of path, walls on both sides; pushes Balaam's foot into wall. Balaam hits her again.

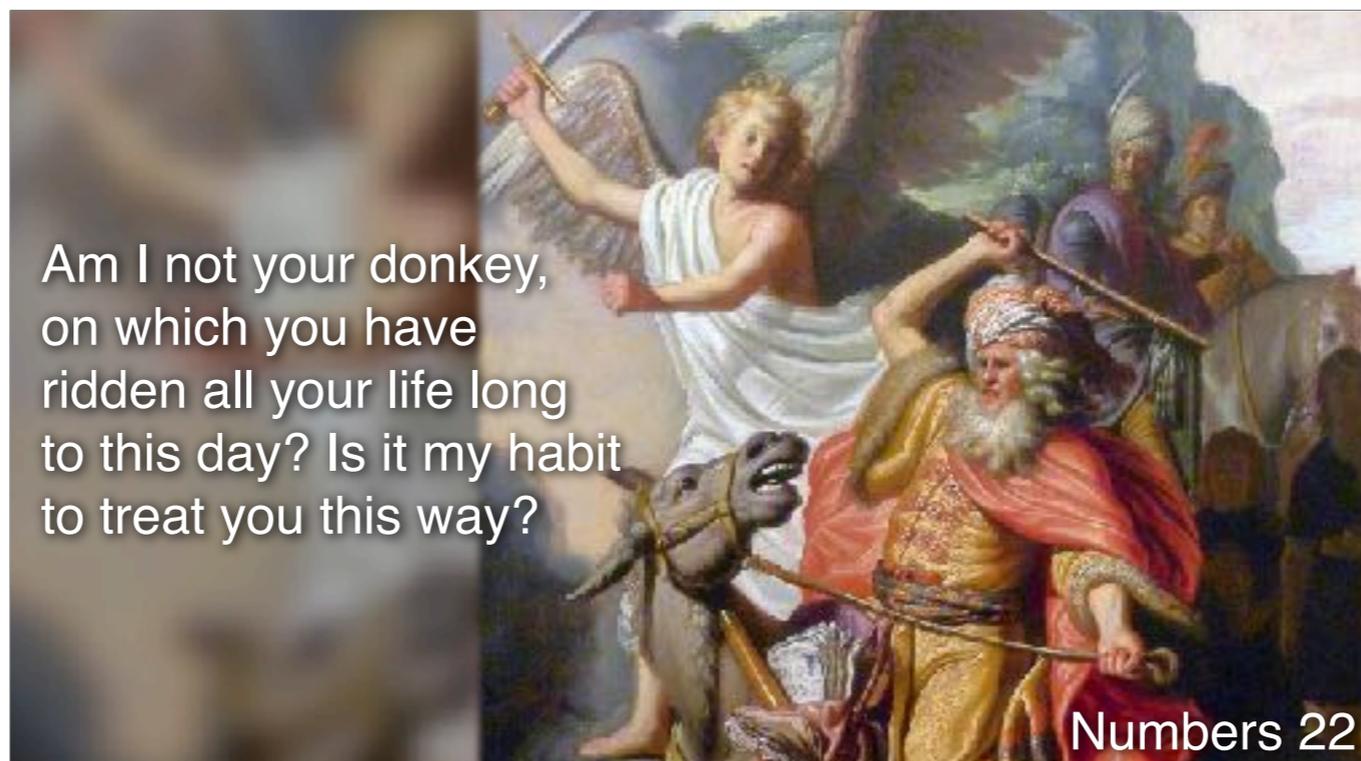


- Donkey sees AoJ in very narrow part of path, can't turn, so she lays down.
- Balaam is angry and strikes her with his staff.
- Jehovah opens the mouth of donkey so that she can speak.

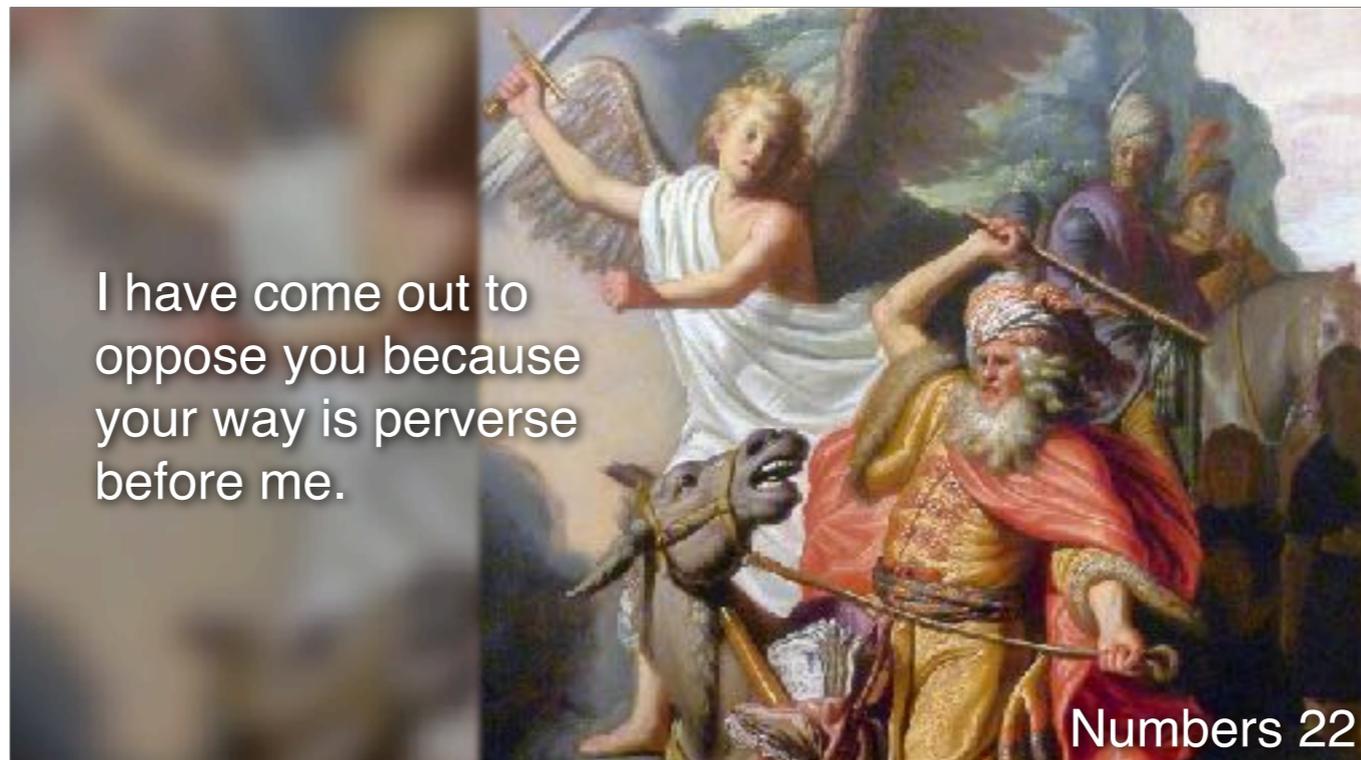


What have I done to you,
that you have struck me
these three times?

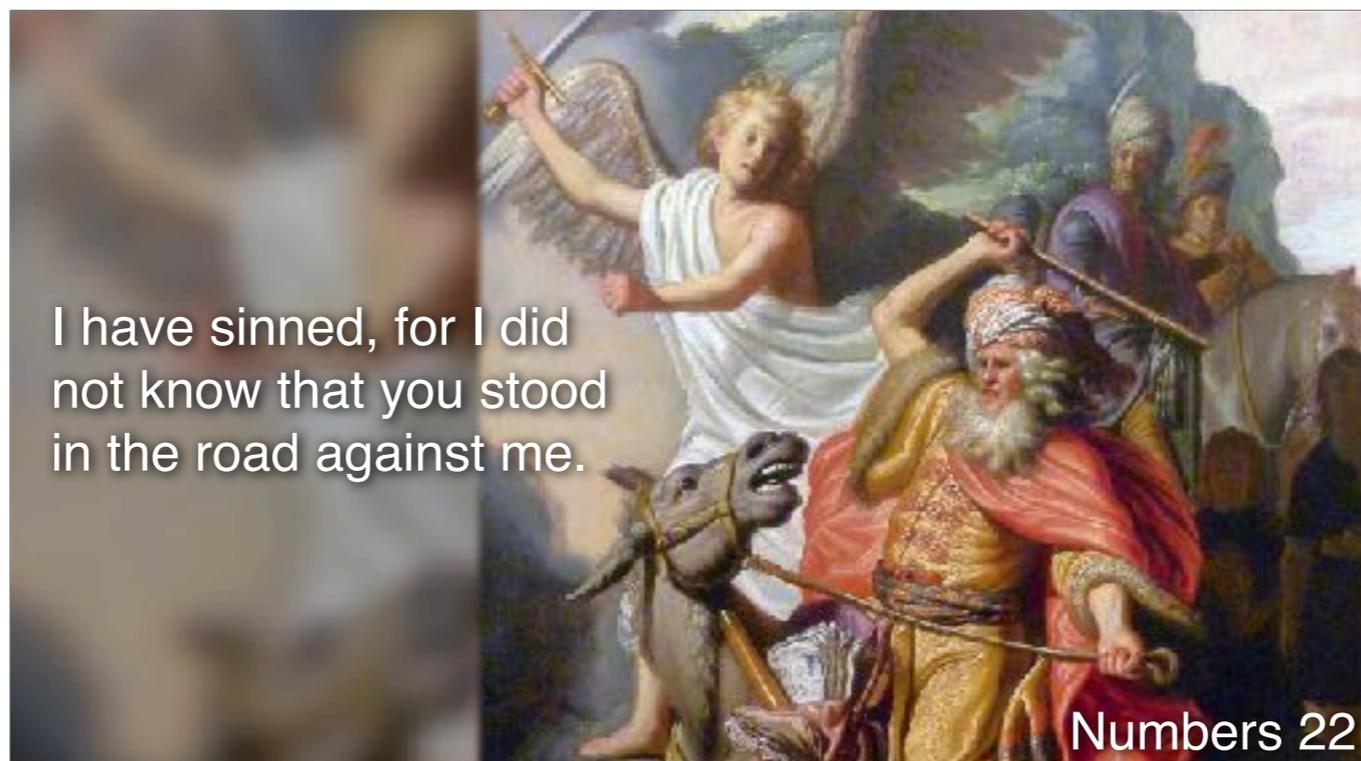
- "What have I done that you have struck me these three times?"
- Balaam answers: "You have made a fool of me. I wish I had a sword in my hand, for than I would kill you."



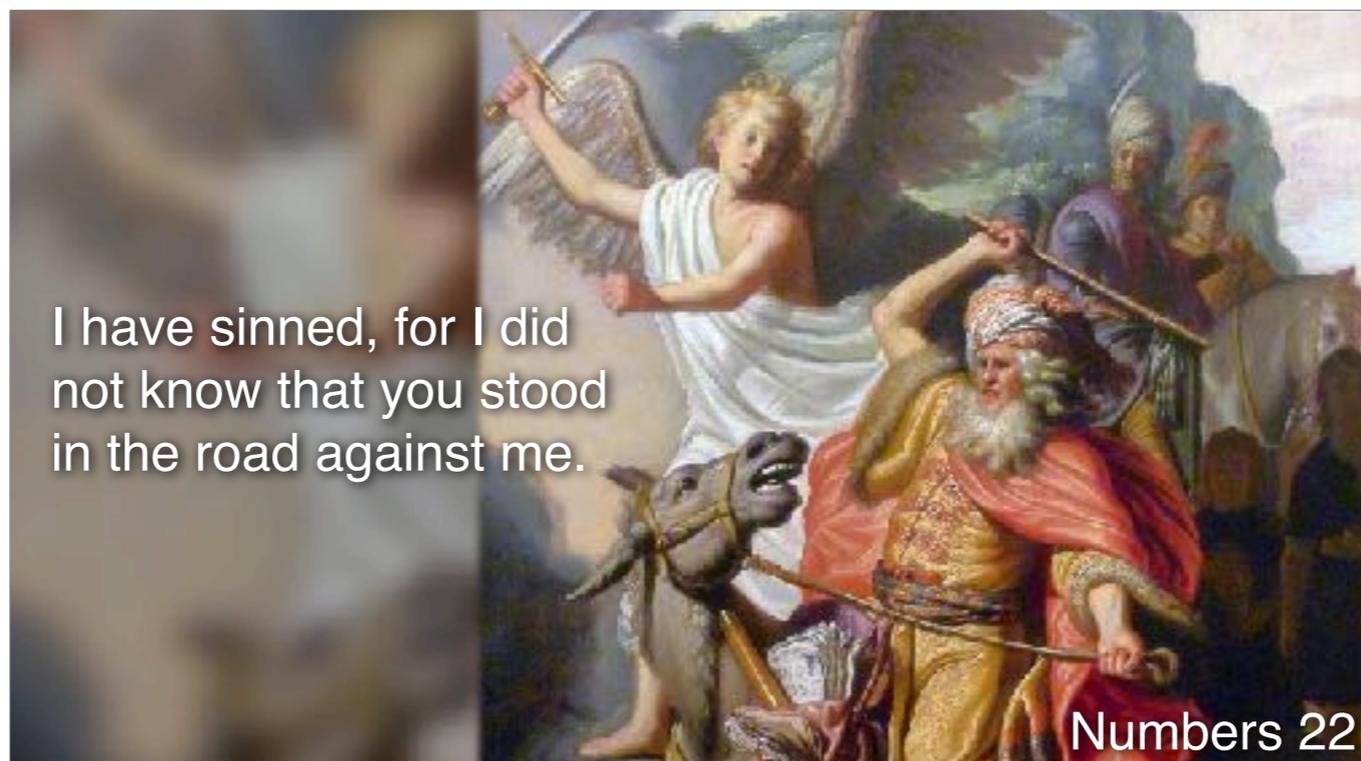
- "Am I not your donkey, on which you have ridden all your life long to this day? Is it my habit to treat you this way?"
- Balaam: No.
- Balaam didn't know that she had saved his life three times. What the donkey did for his good, he perceived as bad (in spite of lifelong relationship).



- Jehovah opens Balaam's eyes, finally sees AoJ, with sword.
- Bows down, falls on face
- AoJ: "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? I have come out to oppose you because your way is perverse (reckless) before me. The donkey saw me and turned aside these three time. If she had not turned aside from me, surely just now I would have killed you and let her live."



- "I have sinned, for I did not know that you stood in the road against me."
- Balaam was ignorant of Jehovah's wrath, ignorant of his danger and how close he was to death.
- Although the donkey had saved Balaam three times, Balaam was angry enough to kill the donkey for what he considered "slights" that made him look foolish.
- Until he could see the AoJ with the sword, Balaam ignorantly continued in his sin



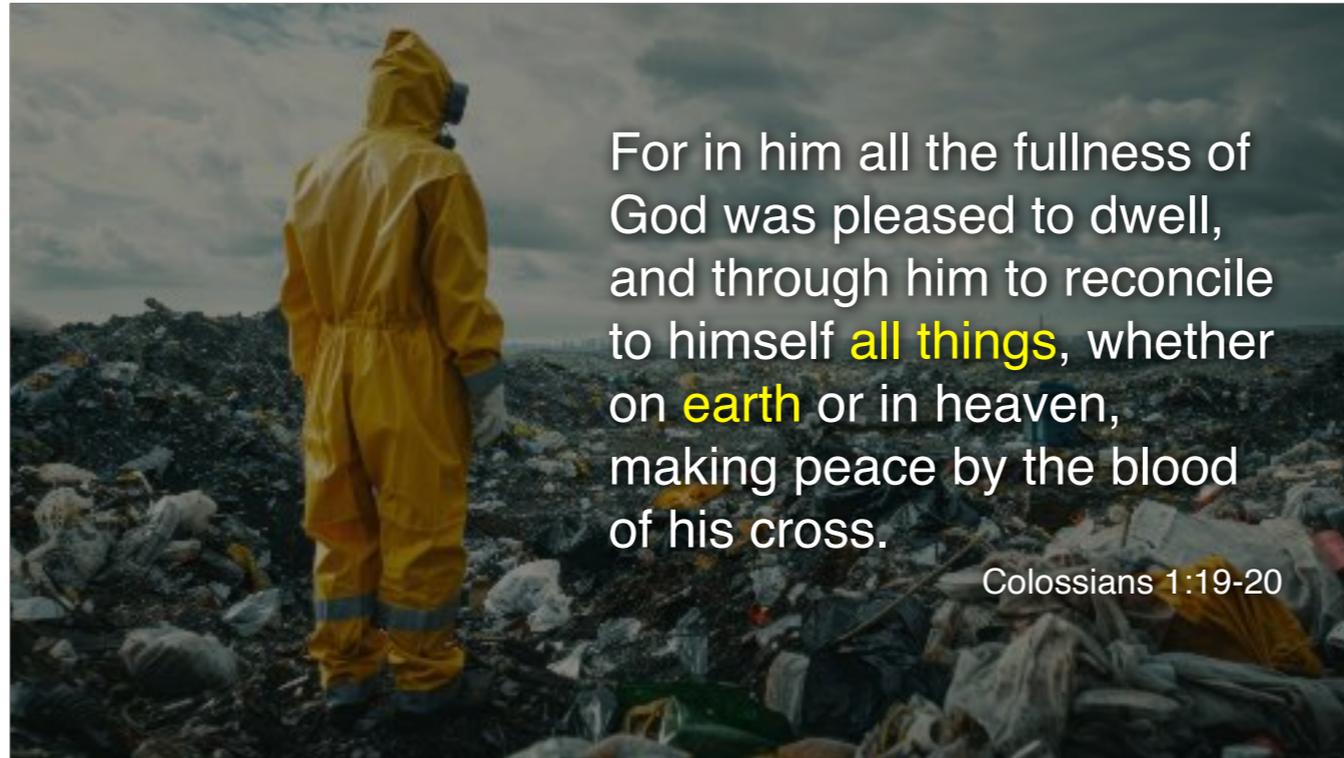
- Am I as oblivious as Balaam?
- Are most in the world ignorant to Jehovah's wrath?
 - As the world looks at itself, it recognizes that things are not as they should be... some thing is terribly wrong.



- Man Recognizes that there are great problems in this world...
- Constant war
- Civil unrest
- Hunger, Abuse, Slavery
- Disease, pandemics
- Family in crisis
- Depression, Grief, Hopelessness



- Don't always know what to call it, but God does: SIN
- Sin is pervasive in His world.
- AoJ: "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? I have come out to oppose you because your way is perverse (reckless) before me."

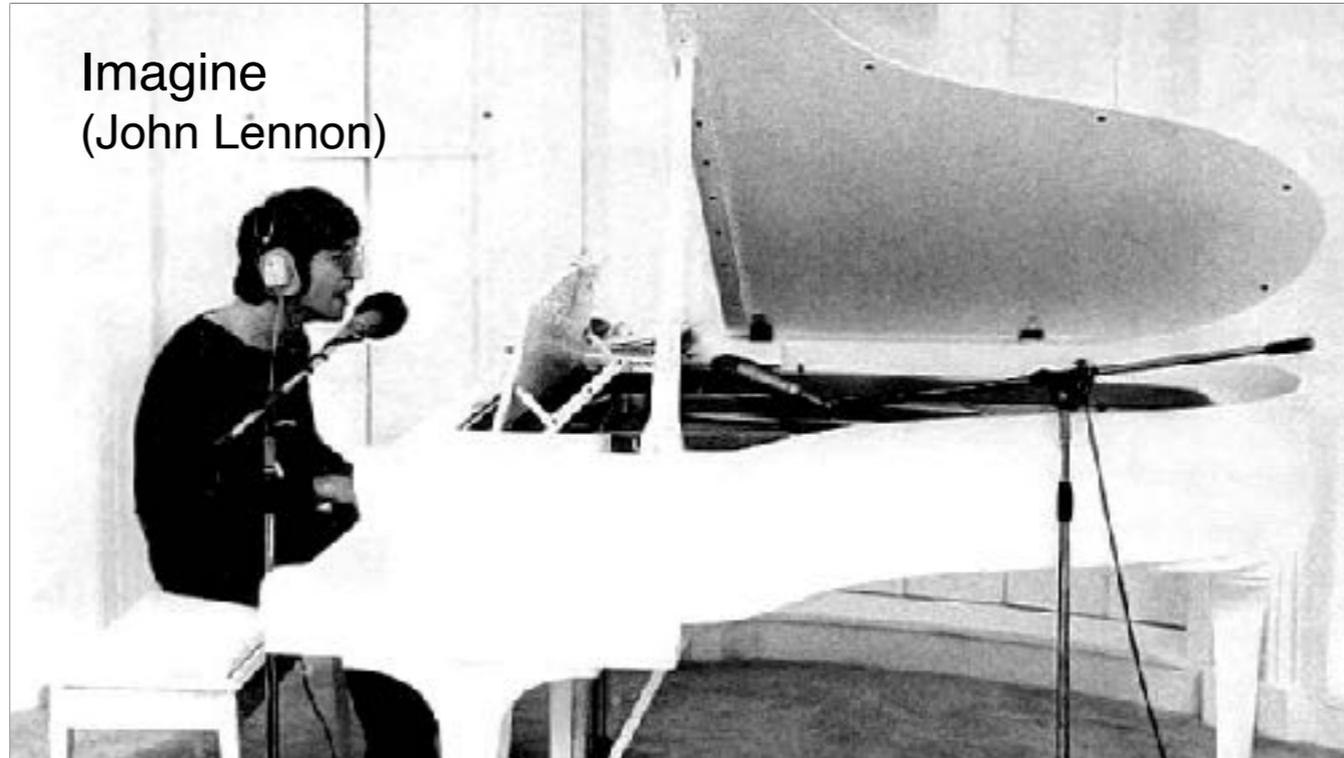


- Colossians 1:19-20: For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.



- The problem of sin is not just about individuals, it is much bigger.
- What Solutions has Man tried to make things right?
- HAS IT WORKED?

Imagine
(John Lennon)



- Imagine by John Lennon
- One of most popular modern songs
- Released in October 1971... played over and over.

Imagine
(John Lennon)



No Heaven
No Hell
No Countries
No Religion
No Possessions

- No heaven
- No hell
- No countries
- No religion
- No possessions

Imagine
(John Lennon)



No Heaven
No Hell
No Countries
No Religion
No Possessions



Living for today
Living life in peace
Brotherhood of man
Sharing all the world

- Living for today
- Living life in peace
- Brotherhood of man
- Sharing all the world



Imagine
(John Lennon)

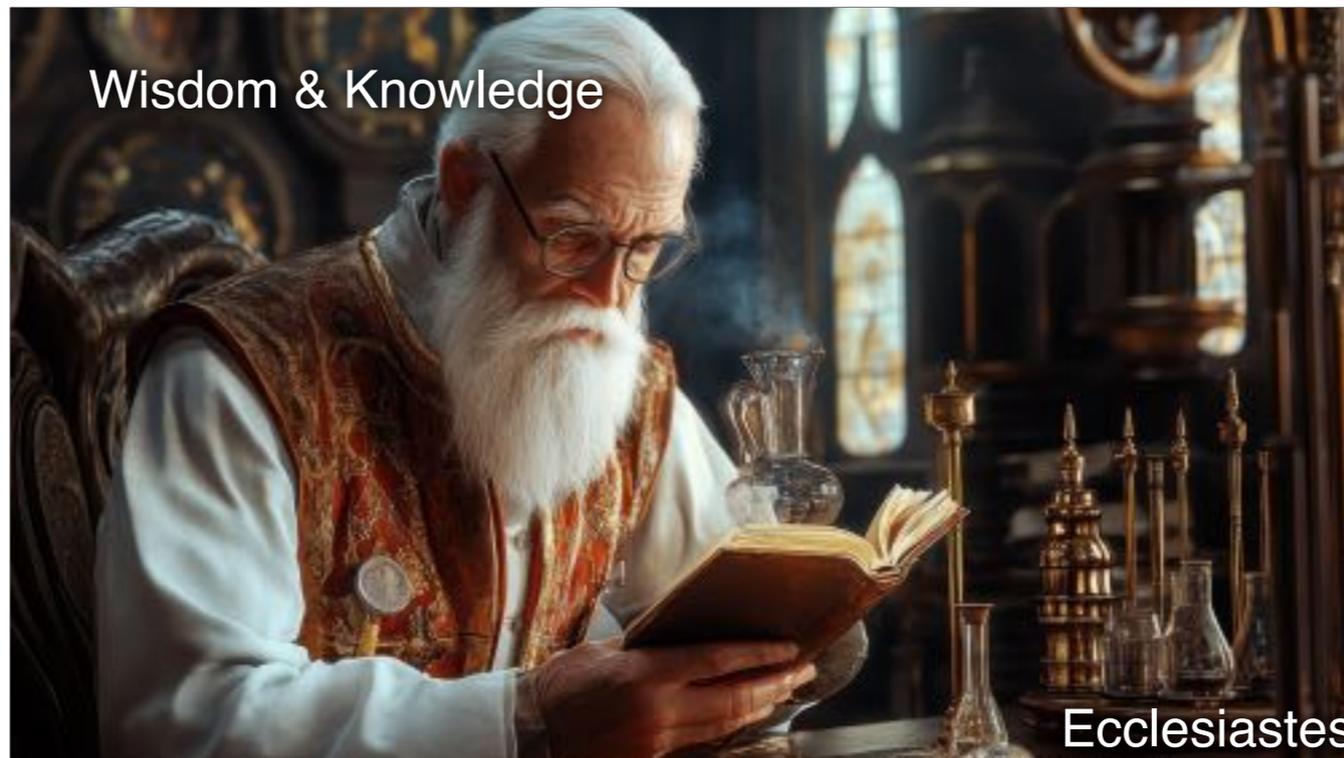
No Heaven
No Hell
No Countries
No Religion
No Possessions

Living for today
Living life in peace
Brotherhood of man
Sharing all the world

- Message...
- Man can solve all his own problems... all we have to do is change
- Just decide to make the problems go away and all of us will start to behave, kindness, progress.
- But has it worked?
 - It's still just imagination



- Solomon, through the Holy Spirit, provides us with the results of a brave experiment in the book of Ecclesiastes.
- What if there is no God?



- If no God, what is the purpose/meaning of my life?
- Try Wisdom and Knowledge... do these provide meaning to my life?
- Late 1800's Enlightenment... lead to two world wars, genocide, etc.
- **Ecclesiastes 1:16-18**: What is crooked cannot be made straight, and what is lacking cannot be counted. 16 I said in my heart, "I have **acquired great wisdom**, surpassing all who were over Jerusalem before me, and my heart has had **great experience of wisdom and knowledge**." 17 And I applied my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is but a **striving after wind**. 18 For in **much wisdom is much vexation, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow**.



Wisdom & Knowledge

Pleasure

Laughter

Wine

Great Works

Slaves

Herds & Flocks

Silver, Gold, Treasure

Singers

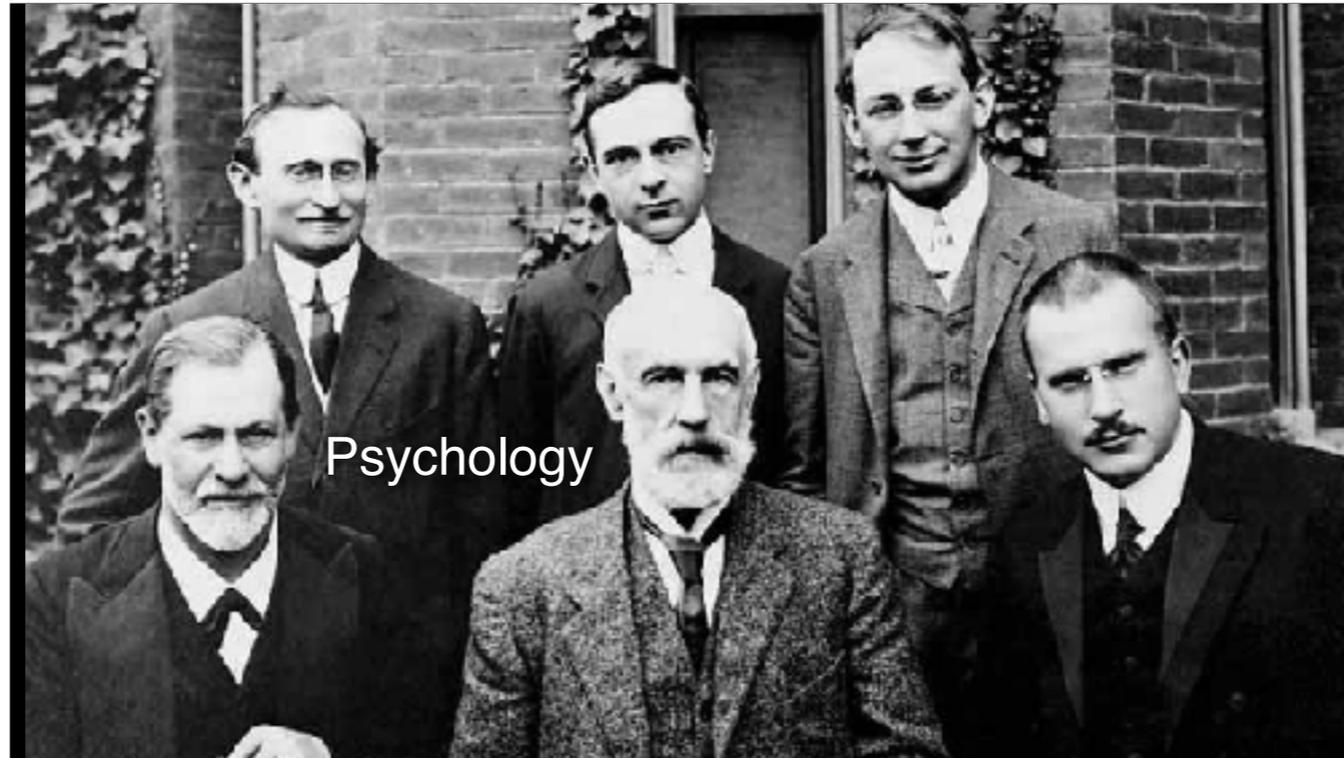
Work

Ecclesiastes

- Pleasure, Laughter, Wine
- Great Works
- Slaves, Herds and Flocks
- Treasure
- Singers
- Work



- Has it worked?
- All is Vanity!: Ecclesiastes 1:2: Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.
- If there is no God... no afterlife (death ends all); no real justice; no purpose in life.
- You will not find meaning in Wisdom, Pleasure, Possessions, Money, or Work.
- If there is no God then how do we cope with our failure and sin, death ends all things.



- Psychiatry, psychology
 - The word [psychology](#) literally means, “study of the [soul](#)” ([ψυχή](#) psukhē, “breath, spirit, soul” and -λογία [-logia](#), “study of” or “research”).
 - Modern beginnings in 1879... (135 years ago... still wars, murders, mental issues, depression)
 - Freud, Jung, Skinner, etc. All different ideas...sexual, repression, environment, conditioning, behavior
- Has it worked?



- Drugs, altering reality.
 - Legal and Illegal.
 - Alcohol, e.g.
 - helps me deal with problems (escape, forget, drown sorrows)
 - good time, happy (lose control, depressant)
 - cool, social (popular, follow crowd)
- Has it worked???



- “Abraham Lincoln once asked a group, ‘If you call a sheep’s tail a leg, how many legs would he have?’ They promptly answered, ‘Five.’ Lincoln responded, ”Wrong, Calling it a leg doesn’t make it one.’ And whitewashing sin doesn’t change it from what it really is.“ (Ibid.)



- Excuse and Redefine
 - Isaiah 5:20: Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!
- Fornication, Sexual Immorality: Sexual Freedom
- Adultery: Affair
- Homosexuality: Alternate lifestyle —> Homophobia
- Marriage: anything goes
- Dishonesty in business: Shrewdness



- Deny there is a God
- Change What God has said:
 - Judgment, wrath, sin, hell
- Change who God is:
 - Love ...



- Judges 17:6: In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.
 - Situation Ethics... what is right and wrong depends on the circumstances.
- Has it worked?



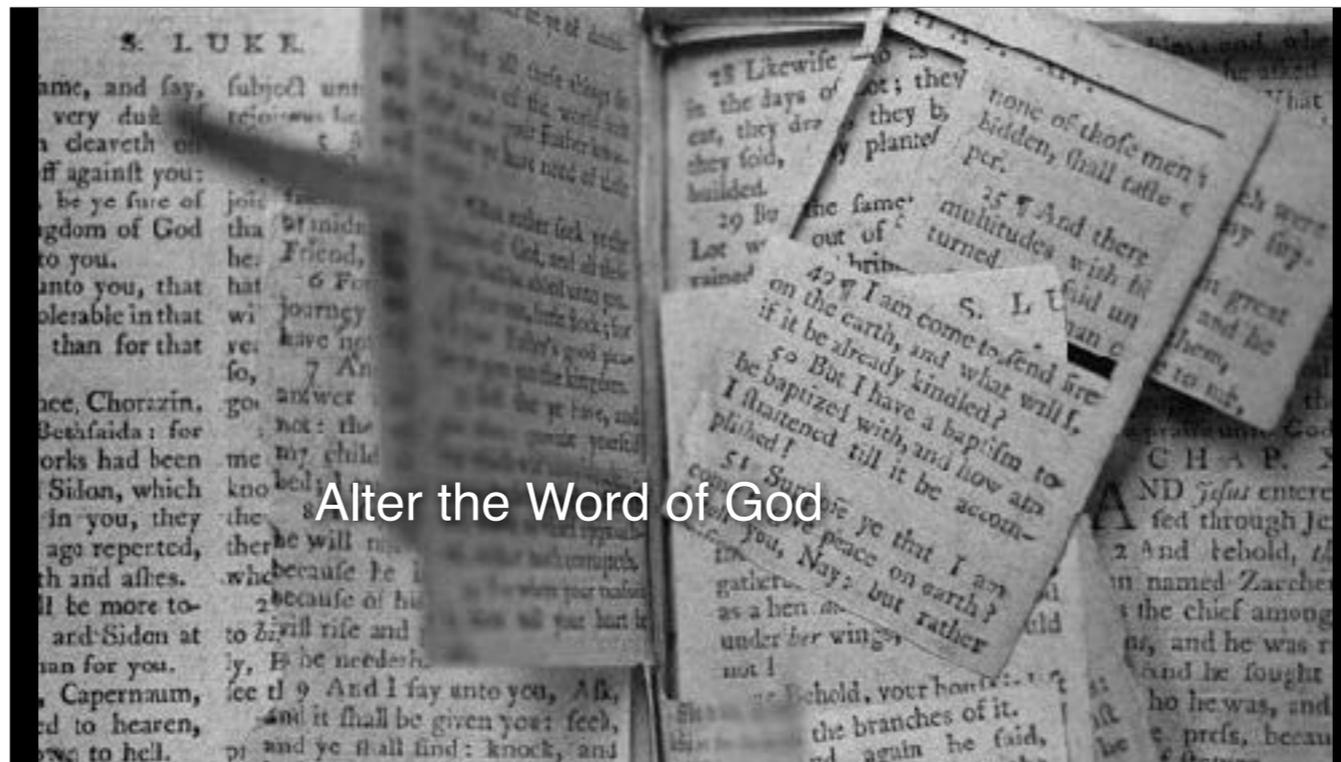
- False God's and false worship

- Baal at Carmel

- 1 Kings 18:26-29: And they took the bull that was given them, and they prepared it and called upon the name of Baal from morning until noon, saying, "O Baal, answer us!" But there was no voice, and no one answered. And they limped around the altar that they had made. 27 And at noon Elijah mocked them, saying, "Cry aloud, for he is a god. Either he is musing, or he is relieving himself, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened." 28 And they cried aloud and cut themselves after their custom with swords and lances, until the blood gushed out upon them. 29 And as midday passed, they raved on until the time of the offering of the oblation, but there was no voice. No one answered; no one paid attention.



- Even Israel
 - Micah 6:6-8: “With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? 7 Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” 8 He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.
- Has it worked?



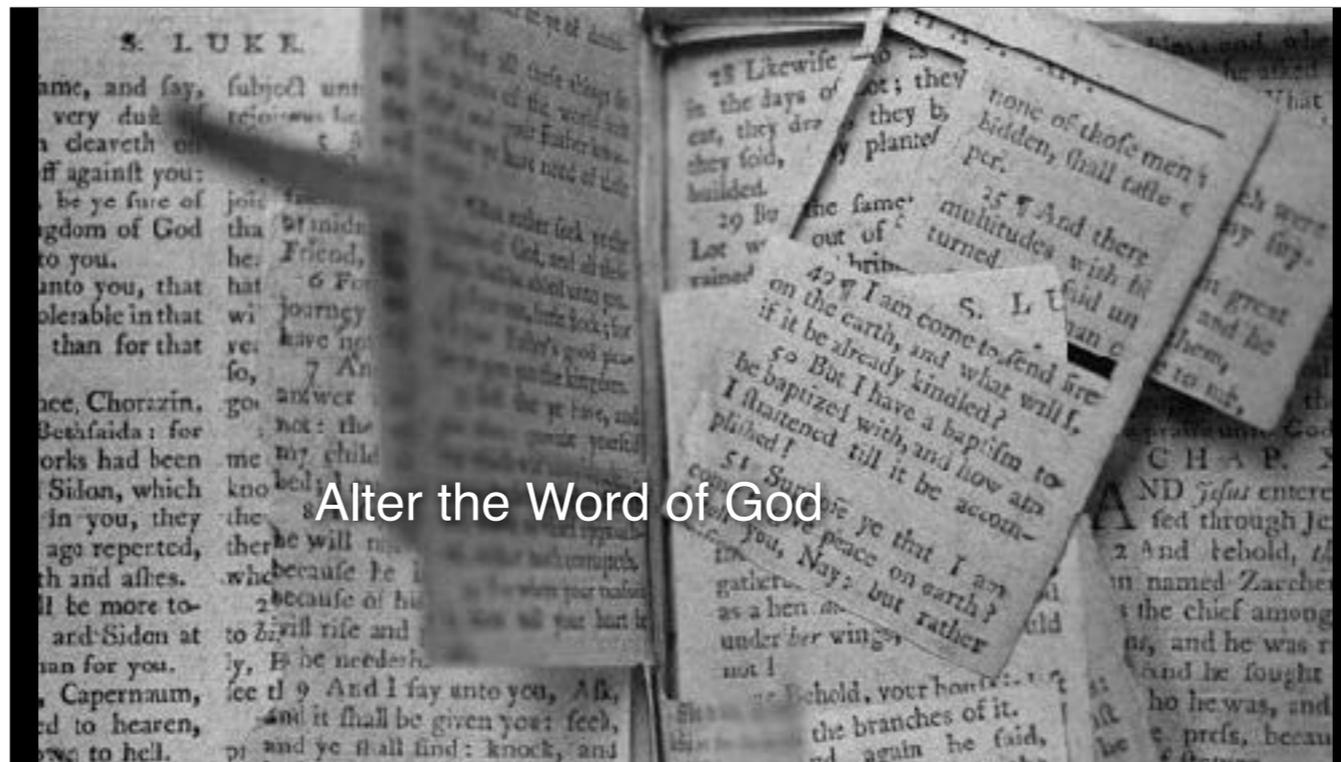
- Alter God's Word

- Serpent: "Has God really said"

- Pharisees

- Prayer

- Luke 18:11-12: The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get



- Righteousness
 - Romans 10:3: For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.
- Changing plan of salvation, worship
- Has it worked?

When find yourself riding
a dead horse — dismount.
—Dakota proverb



- The Dead Horse...

- Someone recently sent me a piece of Dakota Indian wisdom that said when you find yourself riding a dead horse you should recognize that that's the case and get another horse.
- He went on to say that the big, modern and wise Western world ignores this.

When find yourself riding
a dead horse — dismount.
—Dakota proverb



- Instead we flog the dead horse harder or buy a new whip or try a new rider or redefine “dead”.
- Or we harness several dead horses together to see if they’ll go faster or do studies about how other countries ride horses or we lower the expectations so that the dead horse can be included in whatever structure we come up with.
- Depending on ourselves without God for a better world is to sit astride a dead horse and whip him harder.
 - Page(s): 170-170, The Dragon Slayer by Jim McGuiggan, Jim McGuiggan
 - NOOKstudy (David Stewart, fcor1614@yahoo.com). This material is protected by copyright.

When find yourself riding
a dead horse — dismount.
—Dakota proverb



- We can solve our own problems.
 - Yet we seem to make things worse... despite optimism, enlightenment, etc.)
- All we need is man.
- But the root of the problem is man without God.



- How do YOU deal with YOUR sin???
- How do you cope with the guilt, sorrow, suffering?
- God provides a wonderful solution for sin!
- Jesus!
 - Acts 4:11-12: This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. [12] And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”



- Hebrews 7:25: Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.
- Full forgiveness is only in Christ... He is your only hope. He is the only hope of this world!
- We preach Christ Crucified!

We implore you
on behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 5:20

Call to Action

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I Have Come Out To Oppose You

Numbers 22

Synopsis: Balaam was facing the wrath of God but didn't know it. His donkey saved him three times, yet Balaam beat him each time. Each of us is facing the wrath of God, because of our sin. How has mankind tried to deal with their sin? Wisdom, pleasure, work, psychiatry, drugs, denial, blame, redefining, false gods, and altering the scriptures. Have any of these worked? No. Sin is pervasive in the world. When we try to cope with sin by our own might, we are part of the problem. There is only one solution: Jesus Christ. Previous title: What Would a Donkey Say to You?

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“Let all that you do be done with love.”