

Hollow gods-- Hollow souls!
(Rev. Dr. John Bartol)

"If within my heart I find a desire for something which nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world."

C. S. Lewis

We are living in a world out of control, torn and divided, where we are pressed on every side. We must find ways to live together peacefully or else self-destruct. Carl Jung, noted Swiss psychiatrist concluded: "The central neurosis of our time is emptiness. The reason why some people go to pieces today is that they have little on the inside to resist the pressures from outside. They are hollow, empty, with few inner resources to hold them together"

Every year we spend billions of dollars on new fads, amusements, sports equipment and other gadgets – all designed to make life more comfortable and pleasurable. Yet on every side we face the tragedy of broken hearts and homes, drug addictions, suicides, mental and moral breakdowns. A Hollywood psychiatrist concluded, "All these patients of mine need is a mourners' bench, which is another way of saying their basic need is spiritual."

Let us look at three basic laws of life:

1. Man is instinctively religious. There is a God shaped vacuum in every life that only God can fill. This spiritual hunger for more than this world offers must not be ignored. We are made in the image of God. Anthropologist Lionel Tiger reports that research shows that 80% of human beings have some religious identification. To me, this could be giving evidence that there is a God whom people are created to worship.
2. There is something in human nature that inclines us away from the one true God to substitutes-idols. Living without God we soon discover that we can never be satisfied with any substitute of our own choosing. The Bible predicts that as history draws to a close, people will be deceived and believe strange lies. The soul will be invaded by half-god's and perversions of truth that rush in to fill the void. Strange substitutes that cannot save, making promises they cannot deliver.
3. Furthermore we tend to become like the god we follow. If we worship money, pleasure, popularity we become like them – hard, cold, shallow, giddy, cocky. It takes more and more of the substitutes to give less and less satisfaction. Like the restless sea, we find peace and pleasure here and there but nothing permanent or that really satisfies. An inner voice keeps appealing, "You were not meant to be this way. You were meant for something higher and more meaningful."

We are in essence, worshiping an idol when we substitute, for the one true God of biblical Revelation, a God of our own choosing. A great Hebrew prophet issues this warning: "Following after hollow god's they became hollow souls (Jeremiah 2:5).

"Unless there is within us, the God who is above us, we will soon yield to that which is around us."

Anonymous .