



August 12, 2018
“The One True God”
Isaiah 44 - 46
Pastor Gary Hamrick

In response to Israel’s idolatry, God emphasized his reality – that he is the only God and there is none like him (Isaiah 46:9). Today, there is a plurality of gods among various world religions. It’s the equivalent of modern idolatry. And yet, many Christians remain silent about their faith for fear that they might be offending another religion. But how is it a loving thing to withhold information about the true and living God from those who are caught up in modern idolatry? Pastor Gary’s message today will encourage Christians to be courageous about their faith so that others may know about a God in heaven – unequalled and incomparable – who loves them and gave his Son, Jesus, to die for them.

Historical Background

1. Pastor Gary said: “Well, as you no doubt noticed, between chapters 44 and 46, there is [a] repetition [about] how the Lord is unique in all the universe and there is no God like him. [He] is unmatched and unequalled compared to other gods (small ‘g’), and that all other gods are fabrications or imitations or deceptions. Only the God of the Bible is the true God, who is exclusive, distinct, and without equal in the universe. And the reason why God [was] saying this over and over again through Isaiah the prophet, [was] because at this particular time in Jewish history, the Jews [had] replaced the worship of the true and only God, for the worship of idols made of wood and metal.”
2. God pointed out the foolishness of idols in a number of ways!
 - a. [Isaiah 44:12](#) - *“The blacksmith takes a tool and works with it in the coals; he shapes an idol with hammers, he forges it with the might of his arm. He gets hungry and loses his strength; he drinks no water and grows faint.”*
 - b. [Isaiah 44:13](#) - *“The carpenter measures with a line and makes an outline with a marker; he roughs it out with chisels and marks it compasses. He*

shapes it in the form of man, of man in all his glory, that it may dwell in a shrine.”

- c. **Isaiah 44:14-17** - *“He cut down cedars, or perhaps took a cypress or oak. He let it grow among the trees of the forest, or planted a pine, and the rain made it grow. It’s man’s fuel for burning; some of it he takes and warms himself, he kindles a fire and bakes bread. But he also fashions a god and worships it; he makes an idol and bows down to it. Half of the wood he burns in the fire; over it he prepares his meal, he roasts his meat and eats his fill. He also warms himself and says, ‘Ah! I am warm; I see the fire.’ From the rest he makes a god, his idol; he bows down to it and worships. He prays to it and says, ‘Save me; you are my god.’ ”*
 - d. **Isaiah 44:19** - *“No one stops to think, no one has the knowledge or understanding to say, ‘Half of it I used for fuel; I even baked bread over its coals, I roasted meat and I ate. Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?’ ”*
 - e. **Isaiah 46:5-7** - *“To whom will you compare me or count me equal? To whom will you liken me that we may be compared? Some pour out gold from their bags and weigh out silver on the scales; they hire a goldsmith to make it into a god, and they bow down and worship it. They lift it to their shoulders and carry it; they set it up in its place, and there it stands. From that spot it cannot move. Though one cries out to it, it does not answer; it cannot save him from his troubles.”*
 - f. **Isaiah 46:9** - *“... I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me.”*
3. Pastor Gary said: “Mankind has been created by God, with an innate need to worship something, and if you are not worshipping the one true God, I guarantee you, you are worshipping a fabrication, imitation, or deception. Everybody worships. It’s not a question of whether you do, or you don’t. ... [When] you are the center of your universe, and you are accountable only to [yourself], and there is no higher authority in your life, you have, by default, made [yourself] the center of your worship and your theology or your me-ology is that self is god and you worship you.”
4. Isaiah proclaimed the one true God in his day, and we should be willing to do the same.
5. Pastor Gary said: “I submit that we have accepted cultural idolatry by remaining silent about the one true God. [There] are a whole host of other gods that people are worshipping. [To] remain silent is not only doing a disservice to [others], but it’s an unloving thing. It’s the equivalent of Isaiah saying, ‘I don’t really care if you’re worshipping these idols of wood, gold, and silver. I know who the one true God is, but if that’s your system then that can be your system. I mean, if we really

love people, do we not want them to know the one true God? The passion of Isaiah should be [our] passion in our generation. ... If we remain silent, then that is tolerance to a lethal level. ... It's not intolerant or unloving to want to introduce someone to the one true God who loves them and sent his son Jesus to die for them. It's an unloving thing to remain silent about the most incredible gift that's been given to mankind. And we, as an extension of the Church have that opportunity to share that with people! And so, we put up with idolatry, because we don't want to offend people. Is it really offensive? Is it really unloving to want someone to know the one true and living God? Is it really unloving to want someone to be forgiven of their sins and free from the guilt associated with it? Is it really unloving to want people to come to salvation? [Do you have a] burden for souls? We need to be burdened for souls around us."

The One True God Created The Universe

6. [Isaiah 44:24](#) - *"This is what the LORD says - your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: I am the LORD, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself..."*
7. [Isaiah 45:12](#) - *"It is I who made the earth and created mankind upon it. My own hands stretched out the heavens; I marshaled their starry hosts."*
8. [Isaiah 45:18](#) - *"For this is what the LORD says - he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited - he says: 'I am the LORD and there is no other.' "*
9. [Psalm 19:1-2](#) - *"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge."*
10. [Romans 1:20](#) - *"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature - have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."*
11. "In his 1988 book, A Brief History of Time, [Stephen] Hawking had seemed to accept the role of God in the creation of the universe. But in the new text, co-written with American physicist Leonard Mlodinow, he said new theories showed a creator is 'not necessary.' The Grand Design, an extract of which appears in the Times today, sets out to contest Sir Isaac Newton's belief that the universe must have been designed by God as it could not have been created out of chaos. 'Because there is a law such as gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing,' [Hawking] writes. 'Spontaneous creation is the reason there is

something rather than nothing, why the universe exists, why we exist. It's not necessary to invoke God to light the blue touch paper [i.e. fuse] and set the universe going.' ” – Stephen Hawking¹

12. “The most beautiful System of the Sun, Planets, and Comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful being. ... This Being governs all things, not as the soul of the world, but as Lord over all: And on account of his dominion he is wont to be called Lord God or Universal Ruler.” – Sir Isaac Newton²

The One True God Predicts The Future

13. **Isaiah 44:24-28** – *“This is what the LORD says – your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: I am the LORD, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself, who foils the sings of false prophets and makes fools of diviners, who overthrows the learning of the wise and turns it into nonsense, who carries out the words of his servants and fulfills the predictions of his messengers, who says of Jerusalem, ‘It shall be inhabited,’ of the towns of Judah, ‘They shall be built,’ and of their ruins, ‘I will restore them,’ who says to the watery deep, ‘Be dry, and I will dry up your streams,’ who says of **Cyrus**, ‘He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say of Jerusalem, “Let it be rebuilt,” and of the temple, “Let its foundations be laid.” ”* (Emphasis added)
- a. God mentioned Cyrus’ name and his role in world history 150 years before he was born!
 - i. **Isaiah 45:1** – *“This is what the LORD says to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I take hold of to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their armor...”*
 - ii. **Isaiah 45:13** – *“I will raise up Cyrus in my righteousness; I will make all his ways straight. He will rebuild my city and set my exiles free, but not for a price or reward, says the Lord Almighty.”*
14. Pastor Gary commented on the fact that liberal theologians declare that Isaiah wrote the first 39 chapters, but the last 27 chapters were written by someone as history, not prophecy.
- a. In the Bible we see that Jesus quoted from Isaiah and attributed all of the book to Isaiah, which gives concrete evidence to refute any theological argument to the contrary.
 - b. Pastor Gary said: “Josephus [wrote] that Daniel the prophet, who was kept in Babylon as part of the exiles [who were] taken captive, [was] retained

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2010/sep/02/stephen-hawking-big-bang-creator>

² <https://online.hillsdale.edu/document.doc?id=392>

by Cyrus, when Cyrus became king of Persia. And we know that part is true, because in the book of Daniel, Daniel also [prophesied] to Cyrus. Josephus [wrote] that Daniel read [Isaiah's prophecy] to Cyrus!"

- i. **Ezra 1:1-4** - *"In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and to put it in writing: 'This is what Cyrus king of Persia says: "The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Anyone of his people among you - may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem in Judah and build the temple of the LORD, the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem. And the people of any place where survivors may now be living are to provide him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with freewill offerings for the temple of God in Jerusalem." "*

The One True God Made A Way Of Salvation For Humanity

15. **Isaiah 45:20b-22** - *"Ignorant are those who carry about idols of wood, who pray to gods that cannot save. Declare what is to be, present it - let them take counsel together. Who foretold this long ago, who declared it from the distant past? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no God apart from me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none but me. 'Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other.' "*
16. Everyone needs a Savior because sin is a 'disease' everyone has, and sin is without remedy other than the salvation God offers through Jesus Christ.
 - a. **Romans 3:10** - *"There is no one righteous, not even one..."*
 - b. **Acts 4:12** - *"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to me by which we must be saved."*

Discussion Questions

1. Read **Isaiah 44:8; 45:5-6, 18, 21-22; 46:9** to provide a foundation for your Bible study time.
2. Read and discuss the Scriptures Pastor Gary shared concerning the foolishness of worship idols. (See #2 above)
3. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary's remarks concerning the fact that we were created with a need to worship. (See #3 above)

4. Allow the people in your group to share their thoughts about Pastor Gary's comments about cultural idolatry. (See #5 above)
5. Read and discuss the Scriptures Pastor Gary shared concerning God the Creator. (See #6 through #10 above)
6. Spend time talking about the contrast between Sir Isaac Newton's view of creation and Stephen Hawking's view of creation. (See #11 and #12 above)
7. Read and discuss Isaiah 44:24 -28 and focus on the fact that the One True God knows about and predicts the future. (See #13 and #14 above)
8. Close your Bible study time by reading and talking about [Isaiah 45:20b 22](#), [Romans 3:10](#), and [Acts 4:12](#). (See #15 and #16 above)
9. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).