13 B

MDP of God

Our 1st reading today from the OT is a really revolutionary idea.

No other religion in the world—no other philosophy in the world came up with this idea---only Judaism *and Christianity which came from Judaism*

In pagan religions that believed in many gods—they always had gods of death, darkness and destruction as well as gods of life, light and love

Eastern mystical religions like Buddhism and Hinduism taught that the supreme being was either non-existent *or at least unknowable* --and that if he did exist he was beyond “taking sides” **or that he had a dark side as well as a light side [**the ying and yang]

So for instance in Hinduism where Braham manifests himself equally in Vishnu the god of creation and preservation as well as in Shiva—the god of destruction [there god is good and evil at the same time]

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In secular humanism—*the god of modern western civilization*—god either does not exist **or is non-judgmental**

So God *doesn’t have a will and doesn’t take sides—he gives no commandments—he makes no demands---he just doesn’t care*

So the non-judgmental god tolerates death as well as life---evil as well as good----*this non-judgmental god is a god made in our image rather than us being made in the image of the true God*

**But my friends--the true God is the God of life**—*not of death---*as Wisdom said today: “For God formed man to be imperishable; the image of his own nature he made him. But by the envy of the devil, death entered the world, and they who belong to his company experience it.”

 The true God is the creator of all being—not the destroyer of all being

He gives life—He doesn’t destroy it---*that’s why we need to give life*---**not destroy it [valid marriage—open to life…]**

To be indifferent to innocent life is to take the devil’s side who brought death into the world—*human death is the devil’s invention*

God did not make death! Death is our enemy --*and God is not our enemy*

 Sin is what leads to death---why?

Sin is spiritual death---and you and I are a composit of body and soul---of matter and spirit

So sin causes spiritual death which cuts God’s life giving grace from pouring into our bodies---because it would pour into our bodies through our souls---death is the natural consequence of sin---and we should fight against it [even sin that isn’t mortal—damages the soul so it can’t pour God’s life giving grace into our bodies]

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Now some have the attitude of ---well we’re all going to die---shouldn’t we just accept it

 But the fact is we all recoil at death

You’ll remember Jesus –when He came to the tomb of Lazarus---He wept---*He was about to raise Lazarus from the dead,* **but He wept**---why?

Because death repels us---deep down within our inner most core*---we know death is wrong---it always feels wrong*---**because death wasn’t a part of God’s original design for us**—it came as a result of sin---*God did not make human death*

**Sin causes death**---so we should hate sin

But too often folks—we act like sin is our friend—like sin will make us happy—like sin will lead us to fulfillment---*nothing could be further from the truth*

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Our souls are made for God---the true God---every fiber of our being yearns for God

 So sin is what causes all unhappiness in the world

 I’ve given this example before—but I think it bears repeating

{use hands}—It’s like God is here---and we’re here

We yearn to be close to God—we desire to be united to God---we desire His beauty—His power—His love

*That is the deepest desire in every human heart-*--whether we recognize it or not—whether we believe in God or not---every human heart desires union with God

And what happens when we sin?—{use hands} It seperates us further from God---*so after sin we have an even deeper longing for Him because we’re further for Him*

I use the analogy of alcohol when we’re thirsty---if you’re dying of thirst---the worse thing you can possibly do is have a cold beer or a glass of wine or a shot of whiskey

Because alcohol is liquid **it gives us a feeling of temporary relief**---*but alcohol causes dehydration*—so drinking alcohol when you’re dehydrated only makes the dehydration worse [very ill—or even kill you]

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In the same way when we sin---it can give us a feeling of temporary relief---{pull hands apart}--but it pulls us further from the God *that we desire with all our hearts*---so being further from God leaves the desire even less satisfied *which leads to emptiness* --**and heartache** --**and loneliness** and not feeling at ease in our own skin

Why? *Because we desire union with God---*and sin separates us more and more from the God we desire—from the God we long for—from the God we’re made for

So when we sin {demonstrate with hands} –*we die a little* **because we’re further from the God who gives us life**

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God did not make human death---it came into the world from the envy of the devil

Sin causes all unhappiness---it at times gives us a feeling of temporary relief from the emptiness and pain we feel---but sin never makes us better---*it leaves us further from the God we desire*

Jesus came to rescue us from this vicious cycle of sin and emptiness and pain

Let’s embrace Jesus with all of our hearts so that we can overcome the sin that is literally killing us---Amen? Amen