



BIBLE TALK

Mike King

Question: Is the use of sacred images in worship pleasing to God?

Answer: The veneration of the images of Christ and His saints was not a part of the New Testament church, but was introduced several hundred years after its establishment.

Hear God. *"You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God . . ."* (Ex. 20:4-5).

What is the purpose of using images in worship? "The honor which is given them (images) is referring to the originals which they represent, so that by the images which we kiss, and before we uncover our heads, or kneel, we adore Christ and venerate his saints whose likeness they represent" (*General Council of Trent, in Faith of Our Fathers*, p. 235).

Strangely, Peter whose image is often venerated, refused to let a worshipper of God bow down before him, but *"lifted him up, saying, 'Stand up; I myself am also a man'"* (Acts 10:26). John the apostle bowed before an angel to worship at his feet, *"and he said unto (him) see thou do it not; I am a fellow servant with thee . . . Worship God"* (Rev. 22:8-9).

We conclude: Peter while alive would not allow a man to bow to him. John was forbidden to bow before an angel. We are to worship God only. He says to make no graven images to which to bow. The early church used no images. It is sin for it transgresses God's law (1 Jn. 3:4). For it, we must repent or perish (Lk. 13:3). The true church would never disobey God in this manner. It seemed that Israel's demise was because of this practice.

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