

1 The Dumbest Idea of All Time!

- How we can avoid making the same mistake?

2 Not so Remarkable Ideas

- The 20th century brought us many remarkable technologies, including the automobile, the space shuttle, and, for better or worse, the Internet.
- But there were other inventions that were just plain dumb as well.
- They perhaps seemed like a good idea at the time.
- But once their novelty wore off their lack of practicality doomed their existence to the dump heap.
- Life Magazine has put together a list of 30 dumb inventions. Let us take a look at a few of them . . .

3 Illuminated Tires

- These Illuminated tires were developed by Goodyear in 1961.
- Pictured – A woman adjusts her stocking by the light of the Goodyear's illuminated tires.
- The tire is made from a single piece of synthetic rubber and is brightly lit by bulbs mounted inside the wheel rim.
- The Goodyear Tire Company intended to produce the tires in a variety of colors.

4 Other Inventions

5 Other Inventions

6 Other Inventions

7 God's Faithfulness & Power

- According to the book of Exodus, The God of Israel has shown himself faithful to his people by delivering them from their enemies.
 - The 10 plagues culminating in Passover.
 - The parting of the Red Sea and the destruction of Pharaoh's army.
 - The provision of manna and water along their route to the Promised Land.
- “You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession.” (Ex 19:4–5 NIV)
- But when Moses goes up to Mount Sinai and is seemingly late in returning what did the people do? What great idea comes to their mind?

8 Dumbest Invention of all Time?

- According to the Bible, the golden calf was an idol made by Aaron.
- It was made to satisfy the fears of the Israelites who believed Moses was dead and that now they were on their own.
- “Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him.” (Ex 32:1 NIV)

9 What was Aaron Thinking?

- With Moses gone, Aaron agrees with the people and builds an altar and constructs a golden calf idol.
- Once everything is ready, Aaron announces to the people, . . .
 - “Tomorrow there will be a festival to the LORD (Yahweh).”
 - So the next day the people rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented fellowship offerings.
 - Afterward they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry. (Ex 32:5–6 NIV)

10 Why a Golden Calf Idol?

- Near Mount Sinai there was a temple dedicated to the goddess Hathor—the divine cow goddess who would give birth for Egypt their Pharaohs (as golden calves).
- She was one of the most important and popular deities throughout the history of Ancient Egypt.
- She was honored with dancing, singing, and drunkenness, even nudity in her festivals.
- So when the Israelites made a calf idol out of gold they were in essence using the religion of Egypt to bring offerings and worship to Yahweh.
- In other words they were creating a worship system that was as dumb as the “Yodel Meter.”

11 The Reaction from God & Moses

- “I have seen these people,” the LORD said to Moses, “and they are a stiff-necked people. Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation.” (Ex 32:9–10 NIV)
- But Moses intercedes and God relents.
- However, when Moses sees for himself the idol and the people acting like fools he becomes so disgusted that he throws the tablets (containing the 10 commandments) to the ground and breaks them.
- He tells the people that they have committed a great sin and then has the idol burned and makes the people drink the ashes.

12 The Great Sin of Syncretism

- The tendency for syncretism (the attempt to reconcile contrary beliefs by blending and combining opposing parts) has always been a major problem with God’s people.
- This problem is also known as compromise.
- The cure is to get rid of those pagan beliefs and practices, and worship the Lord as he has revealed.

- For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession. (Deut 7:6 NIV)

13 Inventing our own gods?

- We humans have been inventing our own god for as long as we've been around, and then tailoring our worship to match our invention.
- Have you said, or heard someone else say something like this?: “Well, if God is a God of love, surely he wants me to be happy and won't condemn me for _____.”
- That blank is usually filled in with some self-centered behavior that God probably wouldn't condone.
- When we do that, we're talking about a god of our own creation.

14 Inventing our own gods?

- Not every god we invent is overly permissive.
 - We may imagine a god who is mostly judgmental -- a cosmic scorekeeper --
 - Or one who is so distant from us that he doesn't care about us individually --
 - Or one who is nothing more than a servant for our every want.
- Any view of God that makes us master and God our servant is error.

15 The Key Issue

- But again the key issue is not worshipping the wrong god, but worshipping the right God in the wrong way.
- We do this when we . . .
 - Substitute virtue with religious rituals.
 - Substitute right practices for right doctrines.
 - Using worship to manipulate God, instead of honoring the Lord for who He is and what He's done.
 - Substitute spiritual growth for spiritual experience.
 - Substitute true riches with vanity.
- As the Apostle Paul says, Be very careful, then, how you live — not as unwise but as wise, . . . [and] do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. (Eph 5:15, 17 NIV)

16 Jeroboam's Great Idea!

- Jeroboam the son of Nebat rebelled against Rehoboam the son of Solomon over taxes and created what was known as 10 Northern Tribes of Israel.
- However, to keep people from wanting reunification with Judah he came up with a great idea and made two golden calf idols—placing one at Bethel and one at Dan.

- Now the people wouldn't have to go to Jerusalem to make their sacrifices and worship the Lord, but could bring them to either Bethel or Dan.
- However, this was against the law of Moses that clearly stipulated that all sacrifices must come to the place God has commanded—the Tabernacle/Temple, which was now in Jerusalem.
- When he tore Israel away from the house of David, they made Jeroboam son of Nebat their king. Jeroboam enticed Israel away from following the LORD and caused them to commit a great sin. (2 Kings 17:21 NIV)

17 Final Thoughts

- The key point of tonight's sermon is that we can worship the right God, but do so in the wrong way and miss the grace he has for us.
- Therefore, we must pay attention to the revelation that God has given us learn how to please Him, so that the promises of his covenant become a reality.
- If we are relying on a form of worship that is popular, but is not directly outlined in the Bible, we may in fact be hurting ourselves instead of helping ourselves.

18 How Then Should We Worship?

- With what shall I come before the LORD and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? (Mic 6:6-7 NIV)
- He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. (Mic 6:8 NIV)
- So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets. (Matt 7:12 NIV)