



## JULY 14

If you make an altar of stones for me, do not build it with dressed stones,  
for you will defile it if you use a tool on it.

Exodus 20:25

### From the pen of Charles Spurgeon:

God's altar was to be built of uncut stones without any trace of human workmanship upon them. Human wisdom loves to craft and position the doctrines of the cross into a hollow system more compatible with the depraved ideas of the fallen nature, but instead of improving the gospel, our carnal wisdom actually pollutes it until it becomes "a different gospel" (2 Cor. 11:4) and not the truth of God at all. Any alteration or amendment of the Lord's Word defiles and pollutes it.

Our prideful hearts are so anxious to have a role in the justification of our soul before God that we trust in our good works for Christ and in our times of humility and repentance, and then we boast of our natural talents and abilities in a vain attempt to lift these human tools to God's holy altar. But it would be well for sinners to remember that, far from perfecting the Savior's work, our carnal confidences only pollute and dishonor it. Our Lord alone must be exalted in the work of atonement, and not a single stroke of our chisel or hammer will be tolerated. There is an inherent blasphemy in seeking to add to what Christ Jesus, in His dying moments, declared to be finished or in attempting to improve on His work in which the Lord Jehovah finds perfect satisfaction.

Unstable sinner, away with your tools! Fall on your knees in humble prayer and supplication and accept the Lord Jesus as the altar of your atonement, resting in Him alone.

Many professing Christians should take today's verse as a warning against the doctrines they believe. Among believers there is far too much of an inclination to attempt to square and reconcile the truths of God's revelation. This is nothing but a form of irreverence and unbelief, so may we strive against it. May we receive truth

just as we find it, rejoicing that the doctrines of God's Word are uncut stones and, as such, are all the more perfect to build an altar for the Lord.

### From the pen of Jim Reimann:

Why is it many Christians believe they had something to do with their salvation? They may not state it that directly, but as we peel back the layers of their theology, we find they have a sense of acceptance due to something they did — which is works, not faith. They speak of "making a decision for Christ," yet John said we have become God's children, not born "of human decision ... but born of God" (John 1:13). Jesus said, "You did not choose me, but I chose you" (John 15:16). Paul said of becoming God's child, "It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy" (Rom. 9:16). Finally, Solomon, referring to God's sovereign control, wrote, "Every decision is from the LORD" (Prov. 16:33).

Perhaps it is the fact that in nearly every area of society, whether at home, church, school, or work, we often experience performance-based acceptance. Yet God's Word says, "*He [has] made us accepted in the beloved*" (Eph. 1:6 KJV).

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! *All this is from God*" (2 Cor. 5:17 – 18).

