

## REFLECTIONS

Thoughts on nature and the Christian faith - 8/20/18

*"And I looked, and behold, you had sinned against the Lord your God. You had made yourselves a golden calf."*

- Deut. 9:16



The American goldfinch is one of the most beautiful birds that frequent the bird feeders on our property. Since they feed almost exclusively on seeds, they are a common sight to all who plant flowers around their homes. And they certainly are noticed as well as admired by all of us. Why? Well, it's hard not to be attracted to their brilliant golden color, especially in the males. Gold, in its various forms, has always attracted humans. When the Israelites chose to abandon the worship of the one true God and erect an idol to worship, they could have made that idol out of practically anything. But they chose gold, probably because gold is both precious and attractive. Times have changed, but the desire to worship things of our own creation has not. We don't bow down before golden calves anymore, but we have found many other things to worship. Idolatry seems to be the root of most of our sins. What we worship is what we desire most, what occupies most of our thoughts, what we are most passionate about. We have become a truly materialistic society. We covet the latest technology, the newest car, the most elaborate home, the finest clothing. We are not satisfied with what we have unless what we have is more than what our neighbor has. We are deluded into thinking that the accumulation of things will result in fulfillment. But what we find at the end of our quest is slavery. To worship a golden calf is to rebel against God and submit ourselves to a thing. Our hearts yearn to worship, but we have chosen to worship what we create instead of the Creator of all things. We were created to worship and find fulfillment in God. Anything else is idolatry. A goldfinch can and should point us to God, but any golden calf we create points us only to ourselves. Never forget Soli Deo Gloria - to God alone belongs the glory. - John