

Cleansing the Temple (Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 John 3:2-3)

Idolatry is: Trying to make something else into God or God into something else. I can worship something as if it were God, or my picture of God, inconsistent with Scripture.

Making Idols: 1. Stop trusting God, 2. Replace God with something else, 3. Use good thing from God for corrupted purpose, 4. Attribute to it God's works, 5. Exalt it with praise due God, 6. Sacrifice valuable things to it, 7. Use inability to judge/command as excuse to sin (*Pattern for every idol; will refer back to it throughout series*)

Questions to ask ourselves to help identify idolatry in our lives:

1. How do I respond to adversity? Where is the first place I turn when something goes wrong? (Philippians 4:6-7)
2. How do I use what God gives me? Selfishly/selflessly? (1 Timothy 6:17-19)
3. Does God get the credit in my life for all good things I enjoy? (James 1:17)
4. How does the way I talk about God compare with how I talk about other things? (Psalm 89:1, 5-18)
5. What things am I willing to sacrifice for? Do I sacrifice everything? Even good things? (1 Chronicles 21:18-27 *sacrifices show value and priority!*)
6. Do I offer excuses when sin is brought to my attention or I feel convicted? (John 3:19-21)

Beware of the Swinging Pendulum

- The answer is not just to "do the opposite"
- The temptation is sometimes to kill the thing that may be of itself good
- E.g. idol worship \implies no worship at all, relationship \implies isolation, gluttony \implies aversion to food, love pleasure \implies refuse enjoyment, bum \implies workaholic (or vice versa)
- This is trusting man's reasoning, not God's purposes and His ways

What do I do now?

Jeremiah 10:23-24

- Resolve to trust only what God says will bring about the change I desperately need
- Do not try to just "worship God harder" to overwhelm the idol
- Get back to God's purpose and His way (Matthew 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-17; Luke 19:45-46)

Tracing Idolatry Back to Desire

- If idolatry is a lifestyle of seeking and responding gone awry via a lack of trust in God, then I need to trace my idol worship back to what my initial desire or issue was and seek God's counsel on how to obtain or deal with it.
- Sin comes about from me seeking to fulfill my desires a way other than God's. (James 1:13-15)
- Retrace my steps and figure out what it was that I wanted in the first place and resolve to obtain it the way God has authorized.
- Understand that everything is ultimately found in Christ! (John 14:6)