

Sunday Celebration (February 7, 2010)  
**"Idolatry and the 2 Great Commands"**

**Personal Idols (Pt. 4)**

**INTRO ...**

**Ex 20:2-3** "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me."

*"What is an idol? It is anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give. ... An idol is whatever you look at and say, in your heart of hearts, "If I have that, then I'll feel my life has meaning, then I'll know I have value, then I'll feel significant and secure." **Tim Keller**, "Counterfeit Gods", p. xvii.*

*"What happens when people who are instinctively and compulsively worshipers fail to worship God? We simply worship something else in His place." **Ted Tripp**, "Dazzle Your Teen", JBC, Summer 2005*

*Men and women offered them material goods and labor and time with the hope that the gods would make their lives better." **Dan Allender & Tremper Longman III**, "Breaking the Idols of Your Heart", p. 15*

***Idols are the things that "DISPLACE GOD" in our lives. They are things that we look to, hope in, and wait for in a way that we were meant to do with God.***

*... In that sense understanding how we are looking to idols will open up avenues of faith through which to trust in and hope in God.*

***Idolatry & the 2 Great Commands***: Idolatry Affects our Horizontal Relationships and our Vertical Relationship

**James 4:1-5**

## Idolatry & Human Relations

v. 1-2 ... Idolatry in the heart serves as the CAUSE ...and sinful actions & attitudes as the EFFECT.

**Idolatrous Desires are at the Bottom of Our CONFLICTS ....**

**1Cor 6:1-8 ....** The conflict that doesn't end in murder—it ends in a Lawsuit!

**(v. 7) ...** Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?

.... Because I WANT SOMETHING and Probably Believe it is ESSENTIAL FOR MY HAPPINESS or my AMBITIONS or to PROTECT Myself from Adversity!

**This is "PANIC BEHAVIOR"** – the GASPING FOR OXYGEN feeling that makes us become reckless

***"PANIC BEHAVIOR" doesn't leave room for Spirit Given Radical & Amazing & Unnatural Responses***

1 Cor 13:4-7 Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, 5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, 6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

**1Pet 3:1-2 ....**

When We Can't Do These Things, It is Because Idolatry has Dislocated God and These People/Events are Now ***Threatening My Oxygen Supply!***

*"Listen to your fears and you hear them speak about things that have personal meaning to you. They appear to be attached to things we value. ...take your top three fears and ask what they say about you. What do you really want? What is important to you? What do you value? What do you love?" Ed Welch, "Running Scared", p. 24, 29*

*"Any time you love or want something deeply, you will notice fear and anxieties because you might not get them. Any time you can't control the fate of those things you want or love, you will notice fears and anxieties because you might lose them." Ed Welch, "Running Scared", p. 28*

*"There is a close connection between what we fear and what we think we need. ...If we need comfort, we will fear physical pain. ...If we need approval from others, we will fear being criticized. ...If we need love, we will fear rejection. ...If we need admiration for our attractiveness, we will fear getting fat. Whatever you need is a mere stone's throw from what you fear." Ed Welch, "Running Scared", p. 41*

*What is the Source of my Need Being Met?*

*GOD is my Source for Every Need my Life Will Ever Contain*

*Enslaving Idolatry Occurs when I Dislocate God and Seek to Make Something/Someone Else the SOURCE of My Need being Met.*

## **Idolatry & Divine Relations**

**v. 3 ...The Effect of Idolatry on our Prayer Lives ... On What we WANT from God**

- Prayer was Meant to have a GOD-CENTERED INTEREST

... "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done..."

Jn 5:30

Lk 22:42

1 Jn 5:14-15

[John Piper quote]

*How Often are We Praying Out of a Posture of Discontent and Desperate Longing for "Something/Someone" that Will Make us Happy—While We Already Have God...the Greatest Treasure and Relationship We Could Ever Possess!!*

#### v. 4 ... This is the Language of Idolatry

- The O.T. Language – Idolatry = Adultery

**Hos 2:2-8**

*"[Hosea's] ministry followed a golden age in the northern kingdom, with a peace and prosperity not seen since the days of Solomon. Unfortunately, with this prosperity came moral decay, and Israel forsook God to worship idols." ESV Bible, notes*

#### v. 5 ...The Ultimate Problem with Idolatry is NOT the HARM it Brings to US ... it is the VIOLATION it Brings to God!

- The language of "Jealousy"

[Douglas Moo quote]

**Ex 20:5** You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God,

*"Jealousy is an attribute of God, a description of the divine nature. By nature, he deserves and demands exclusive worship and allegiance. In Bible's emphasis on God's jealousy, we see that there is a profound analogy between God's covenant and the marriage relationship. Idolatry is like adultery." John Frame, "The Doctrine of God", p. 459*

*"When James says at the end of this text that God 'yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us,' he means: God wants your heart when you pray. God will not be a mere dispenser of gifts for those who have no delight in God himself." John Piper, "God is the Gospel", p. 135*

***What is God Jealous for?*** ... Our Faith; Our Trust; Our Looking to Him in CONFIDENCE & HOPE; our Worship; Our Obedience