

Exposing Idolatry in our Lives

IDOLATRY
IS DISTORTED WORSHIP

THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

ALL SIN FINDS ITS ROOT IN IDOLATRY

christ church

Idolatry isn't just one of many sins; rather it's the one great sin that all others come from. So if you start scratching at whatever struggle you're dealing with, eventually you'll find that underneath it is a false god. Until that god is dethroned, and the Lord God takes his rightful place, you will not have victory. - Kyle Idleman

Identifying Idols -

1. What disappoints you?
2. What do you complain about most?
3. Where do you make financial sacrifices?
4. What worries you?
5. Where is your sanctuary?
6. What infuriates you?
7. What are your dreams and aspirations?

CHRIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL

Introduction

When we hear, "Thou shalt have no other god's before me," we tend to think that God wants to be first place in our lives. But, God doesn't want first place among all the other places, He wants all the spots Himself. He wants to be God over the whole life.



There isn't anything inherently wrong with money, fun, health, etc. But, the instant something takes the place of God, the moment it becomes an end in itself rather than something to lay at God's throne, it becomes an idol.



Today, it is common to replace God with many idols. It could be a house we constantly upgrade, a promotion at our job, acceptance into a certain group, our team winning the championship, a fit body, etc.

Anything can become an idol when it takes God's place. Now you may immediately say, "God is first in my life!" But, idols are very sneaky.

Whatever you need to bring you joy, happiness...whatever you are pursuing in life...whatever depresses you when you don't have it...these are our idols.

These things have taken God's place in being our source of joy and fulfillment.

Do you find yourself struggling with certain things regularly?

If you have been saved, you have the Holy Spirit dwelling within you. Yet our hearts are still sinful and prone to idolatry.

Do you have certain things in your life that you just can't seem to shake? Maybe an addiction, a problem with anger, lust, or pride? Maybe your joy and happiness depends on your family, job, or the amount of entertainment you experience.

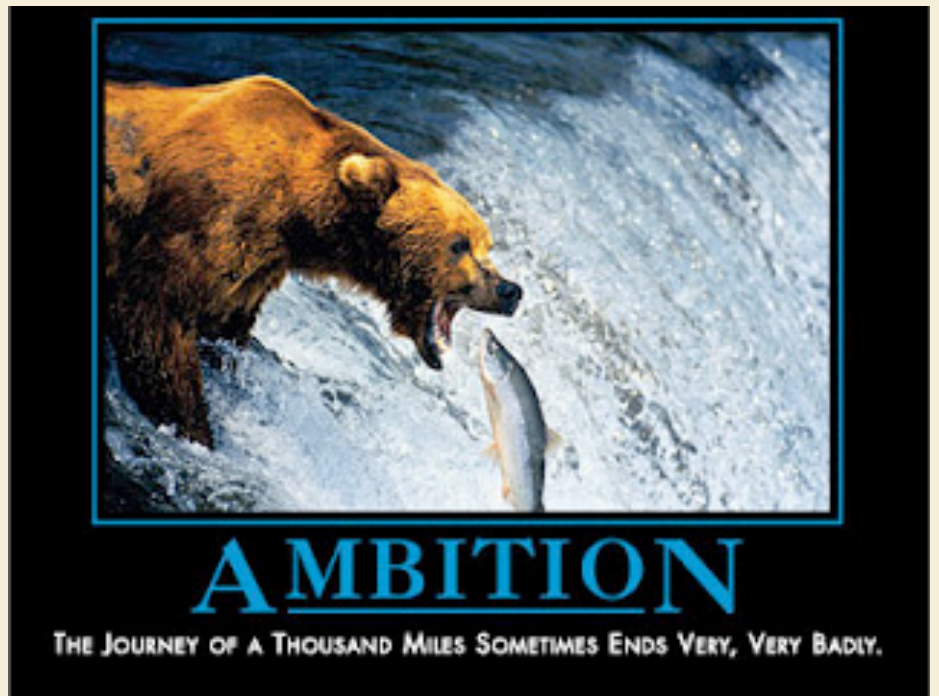
Whatever that particular area that continually plagues you, most often, it is simply a symptom of a greater problem.

The question we must ask is "why?" If you have a food addiction, why? If you constantly struggle with certain sins, why? Why do certain things continually worry you or make you angry?

What is the real problem causing all these symptoms?



Can you name the multiple things in this picture which can become an idol in someone's life?



The things we pursue relentlessly are the things that define us. They are the things we worship, the things we can't live without.

“The instant something takes the place of God, the moment it becomes an end in itself rather than something to lay at God’s throne, it becomes an idol.” - Kyle Idleman

Believers often struggle with specific sins and areas of disobedience in our lives. In fact, this struggle is the evidence of God's sanctifying work. However, believers often commit to never fall prey to the same sin again, yet the compulsion returns and, once again, he fails to hold out.

To combat this pattern, there are literally thousands of “christian” books and programs that say they have the answer. Believers are given practical advice on how to battle their sin. Yet, the idolatry behind the sin is never addressed. So, when temptation again comes calling, the believer is not only fighting the external temptation, he is also fighting his own internal desire. Instead dealing with the source of the problem (idolatry), believers continually treat the symptoms as the illness continues to grow.

The Root of All Sin is Idolatry

Take a moment and envision this in your mind: one of those great oak trees that seem older than time itself, one with impressive branches reaching out in every direction, branches growing from branches. And when erosion sets in, down the bank or beside the waters, you can see just how deep and far flung its roots are.

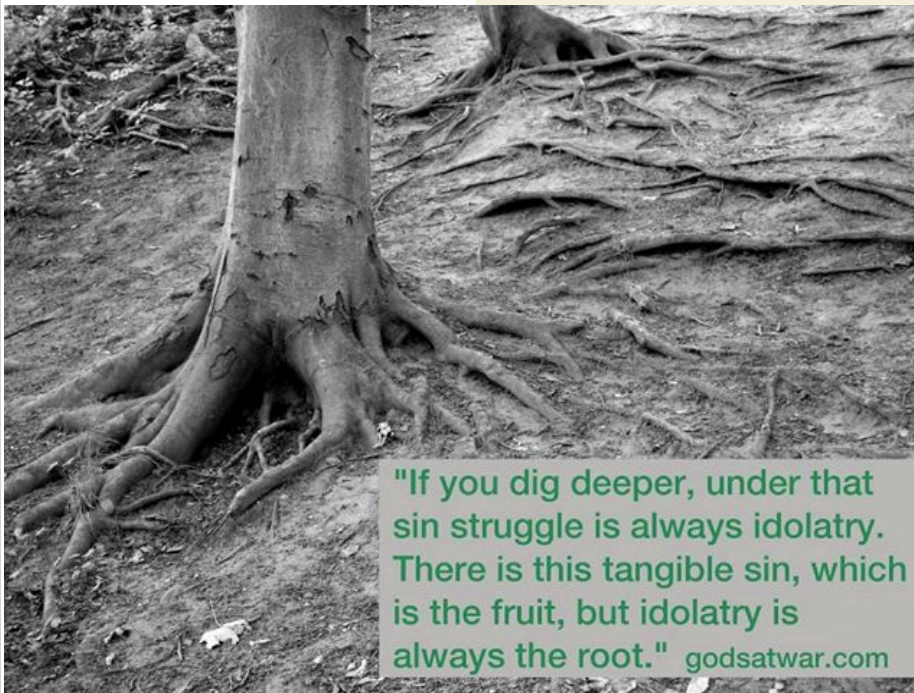
Imagine this tree of idolatry with many branches, each with something tied to it. From one of the branches dangles a pot of gold. Another branch grows food of all kinds; every delicious food imaginable seems to sprout from a different section of that branch. Another branch widens into a flat, round ending, and when you move closer, you can

see that it is really a mirror that shows an idealized reflection of yourself.

Yet another branch is carved with beautiful craftsmanship. You follow its sinuous lines and realize it is the image of two human figures, entwined in a sensuous embrace. One branch has, as fruit, different sets of keys — one set to a luxury car, another to a beach house in Florida. Quite a peculiar tree. It has many other branches, each one with a curious item attached to it. Here's the point: idolatry is the tree from which our sins and struggles grow.

Idolatry is always the issue. It's the trunk of the tree, and all other problems are just branches.

- Kyle Idleman, *gods at war*



"If you dig deeper, under that sin struggle is always idolatry. There is this tangible sin, which is the fruit, but idolatry is always the root." godsatwar.com

Examples of some Modern Idols

A house that we constantly upgrade.

A promotion that comes with a corner office.

Acceptance into the fraternity or sorority.

A team that wins the championship.

A body that is toned and fit.

A perfect spouse.

A perfectly behaved child.

Leisure Time

A consuming hobby

Compulsive shopping

Physical Pleasure

We still work very hard at molding and creating our golden calves.

The Woman at the Well

John 4:7-14



There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him,

How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with,

drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?



Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into

and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

everlasting life

Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and

- John 4:7-14



WHAT ARE YOU THIRSTY FOR?

What Jesus says to this woman he also says to you and to me. "But whosoever drinketh of the water I shall give him shall never thirst" (John 4: 14). So what are you thirsty for? Are you stressed out and thirsty for peace? Are you lonely and thirsty for love? Are you bored and thirsty for purpose? Are you thirsty for acceptance? For validation? For significance? Are you just thirsty for something more? The God of me relentlessly calls us to chase after all these things. But ultimately we're left more thirsty than ever. So here's the invitation from Jesus: "Drink from me, and you'll never thirst again."