

SMASHING IDOLS

Based on the command of Christ #39 – “Love the Lord”

1Sam. 12:21 - Do not turn away after useless idols. They can do you no good, nor can they rescue you, because they are useless.

Ex. 20:4-6

4. "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.

5. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,

6. but showing love to a thousand [generations] of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Ezekiel 14:2-6

2. Then the word of the LORD came to me:

3. "Son of man, these men have set up idols in their hearts and put wicked stumbling blocks before their faces. Should I let them inquire of me at all?

4. Therefore speak to them and tell them, ` This is what the Sovereign LORD says: When any Israelite sets up idols in his heart and puts a wicked stumbling block before his face and then goes to a prophet, I the LORD will answer him myself in keeping with his great idolatry.

5. I will do this to recapture the hearts of the people of Israel, who have all deserted me for their idols.'

6. "Therefore say to the house of Israel, ` This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Repent! Turn from your idols and renounce all your detestable practices!

James 1:13-16

13. When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;

14. but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.

15. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

16. Don't be deceived, my dear brothers.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 - The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the

knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Stronghold = "A mindset that is impregnated with hopelessness that causes a person to accept as unchangeable something in their lives, even though they know it goes contrary to the will of God".

(Literally) a well-fortified place; fortress. A place that serves as the center of a group, as of militants or of persons holding a controversial viewpoint.

Argument = reasoning, imagination, thought

Pretention = a false or unsupportable claim; a specious or unfounded allegation

2 Timothy 3:1-5 - But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God- having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

I. Idolatry is the main problem in the Church today!

Mt. 22:37-40

37. Jesus replied: " ` Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'

38. This is the first and greatest commandment.

39. And the second is like it: ` Love your neighbor as yourself.'

40. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Idolatry = Loving anything or anybody more than God!

2 Kings 14:4 - The high places, however, were not removed; the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense there.

2 Kings 17:6-15

6. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and deported the Israelites to Assyria. He settled them in Halah, in Gozan on the Habor River and in the towns of the Medes.

7. All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of Egypt from under the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They worshiped other gods

8. and followed the practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before them, as well as the practices that the kings of Israel had introduced.

9. The Israelites secretly did things against the LORD their God that were not right. From watchtower to fortified city they built themselves high places in all their towns.

10. They set up sacred stones and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree.

11. At every high place they burned incense, as the nations whom the LORD had driven out before them had done. They did wicked things that provoked the LORD to anger.

12. They worshiped idols, though the LORD had said, "You shall not do this."

13. The LORD warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and seers: "Turn from your evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your fathers to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets."

14. But they would not listen and were as stiff-necked as their fathers, who did not trust in the LORD their God.

15. They rejected his decrees and the covenant he had made with their fathers and the warnings he had given them. They followed worthless idols and themselves became worthless. They imitated the nations around them although the LORD had ordered them, "Do not do as they do," and they did the things the LORD had forbidden them to do.

The #1 hindrance to knowing God, is thinking that knowing about God is enough!

QUOTE: A.W. Tozer calls this the "essence of Idolatry", defining it as "the entertainment of thoughts about God that are unworthy of Him"

1 Cor. 8:1 - Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.

1 Cor. 13:2 - If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

II. How do we get idolatrous?

Jn. 8:44 - You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

1 Cor. 10:13 - No Temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

1Cor. 10:1-21

1. For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea.

2. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

3. They all ate the same spiritual food

4. and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.

5. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert.

6. Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.

7. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry."

8. We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did--and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died.

9. We should not test the Lord, as some of them did--and were killed by snakes.

10. And do not grumble, as some of them did--and were killed by the destroying angel.

11. These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.

12. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

13. No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

14. Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry.

15. I speak to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say.

16. Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?

17. Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

18. Consider the people of Israel: Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar?

19. Do I mean then that a sacrifice offered to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything?

20. No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons.

21. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons.

III. What idols are being passed down to the next generations?

A. We live in a nation that has spiraled out of control!

1. 55 million abortions over the last 40 years
2. Divorce, sexual perversion and promiscuity have steadily increased
3. Relationships are more broken & dysfunctional than ever.
4. Faithfulness is no longer a value, love is cheap and meaningless
5. Commitment only lasts as long as everything is going well

B. The spiritual climate today:

1. Has reduced God to whatever suits the current mood
2. Has worked Him into their agenda & boxed Him into their plans
3. Has man making a god in their own image!

IV. The results of this nation's Idolatry

1. It corrupts our ability to receive the full power of the Gospel!
2. It relegates the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ to powerless stories!
3. God is seen as a weak, impotent, hap-hazard man upstairs that is just glad we show up for church each week

Charles E. Davis – “Carnal-minded man has a picture of what God looks like, whom he will accept and not accept, and what God can and cannot do. This depraved and presumptuous attitude has even crept into the body of Christ.

As a result, many have soiled their garments and alienated themselves from the cleansing power of Jesus Christ.”

Mike Mille – Wrong perceptions give birth to wrong assumptions which give birth to wrong expectations which never originated with God!

Pr. 13:12 - Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 (MSG)

The world is unprincipled. It's dog-eat-dog out there! The world doesn't fight fair. But we don't live or fight our battles that way—never have and never will. The tools of our trade aren't for marketing or manipulation, but they are for demolishing that entire massively corrupt culture. We use our powerful God-tools for smashing warped philosophies, tearing down barriers erected against the truth of God, fitting every loose thought and emotion and impulse into the structure of life shaped by Christ. Our tools are ready at hand for clearing the ground of every obstruction and building lives of obedience into maturity.