

Smashing Idols

1 Sam. 12:21 (ESV) - And do not turn aside after empty things that cannot profit or deliver, for they are empty.

Ex. 20:4-6 (ESV)

4 "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

5 You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me,

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

Ezekiel 14:2-6 (ESV)

2 And the word of the Lord came to me:

3 "Son of man, these men have taken their idols into their hearts, and set the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces. Should I indeed let myself be consulted by them?

4 Therefore speak to them and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: Any one of the house of Israel who takes his idols into his heart and sets the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and yet comes to the prophet, I the Lord will answer him as he comes with the multitude of his idols,

5 that I may lay hold of the hearts of the house of Israel, who are all estranged from me through their idols.

6 "Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: Repent and turn away from your idols, and turn away your faces from all your abominations.

James 1:13-16 (ESV)

13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.

14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.

15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 (ESV)

4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy STRONGHOLDS.

5 We destroy ARGUMENTS and every LOFTY OPINION raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey 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

Lofty opinion = Pretention, a false or unsupportable claim; a specious or unfounded allegation

The knowledge of God doesn't so much involve INFORMATION as it does REVELATION...

Which, if we stay the course in on the battlefield, ultimately involves the MANIFESTATION of the life of God in & through us.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 (ESV)

1 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.

2 For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,

3 heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good,

4 treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

5 having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

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

Mt. 22:37-40 (ESV)

37 And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

38 This is the great and first commandment.

39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

40 On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

What is Idolatry?

Idolatry = Loving anything or anybody more than God!

2 Kings 14:4 (ESV) - But the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and made offerings on the high places.

2 Kings 17:6-15 (ESV)

6 In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria, and he carried the Israelites away to Assyria and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

7 And this occurred because the people of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods

8 and walked in the customs of the nations whom the Lord drove out before the people of Israel, and in the customs that the kings of Israel had practiced.

9 And the people of Israel did secretly against the Lord their God things that were not right. They built for themselves high places in all their towns, from watchtower to fortified city.

10 They set up for themselves pillars and Asherim on every high hill and under every green tree,

11 and there they made offerings on all the high places, as the nations did whom the Lord carried away before them. And they did wicked things, provoking the Lord to anger,

12 and they served idols, of which the Lord had said to them, "You shall not do this."

13 Yet the Lord warned Israel and Judah by every prophet and every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, in accordance with all the Law that I commanded your fathers, and that I sent to you by my servants the prophets."

14 But they would not listen, but were stubborn, as their fathers had been, who did not believe in the Lord their God.

15 They despised his statutes and his covenant that he made with their fathers and the warnings that he gave them. They went after false idols and became false, and they followed the nations that were around them, concerning whom the Lord had commanded them that they should not do

like them.

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

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. 8:1b (ESV) - This "knowledge" puffs up, but love builds up.

1 Cor. 13:2 (ESV) - And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

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II. How do we get idolatrous?

Jn. 8:44 (ESV) - You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he SPEAKS OUT OF HIS OWN CHARACTER, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Jn. 8:44 (NKJV) - You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he SPEAKS FROM HIS OWN RESOURCES, for he is a liar and the father of it.

1 Cor. 10:13 (ESV) - 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 (ESV)

1 For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea,

2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,

3 and all ate the same spiritual food,

4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.

5 Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

6 Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil 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 rose up to play."

8 We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day.

9 We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents,

10 nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer.

11 Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.

12 Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.

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.

14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

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

16 The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?

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

18 Consider the people of Israel: are not those who eat the sacrifices participants in the altar?

19 What do I imply then? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything?

20 No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons.

21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.

1Corinthians10:20-21 (ESV)

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

*There have been more than 66 million abortions over the last 50 years!

*Divorce, sexual perversion and promiscuity have steadily increased!

*Relationships are more broken & dysfunctional than ever!

*Faithfulness is no longer a value; love is cheap and meaningless!

*Commitment only lasts as long as everything is going well!

The spiritual climate today has done three things...

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

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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 (ESV) - Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire 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.

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