

Identifying Idols In Our Lives



Part 3: Love and Relationships



What Do You Worship?

Idolatry Defined

We all struggle with idols that distract us from whole-hearted, single-minded devotion to God.

This series is intensely personal: What idol stands between you and whole-hearted, single-minded devotion to God?

“[An idol] 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 you.”

Identifying Idols



What Do You Worship?

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Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

**Are Romantic Relationships
An Idol In Your Life?**

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

Starting Point...

- ▶ Our desire to love others, and to be loved by them, is hard-wired into the way in which we were created.
- ▶ Being created in the image of God means, in part, that we were created for relationship.
- ▶ But like many things tainted by the fall, we are tempted to replace the Creator with what has been created.
(Romans 1:25-27)

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

Genesis 2:20-24

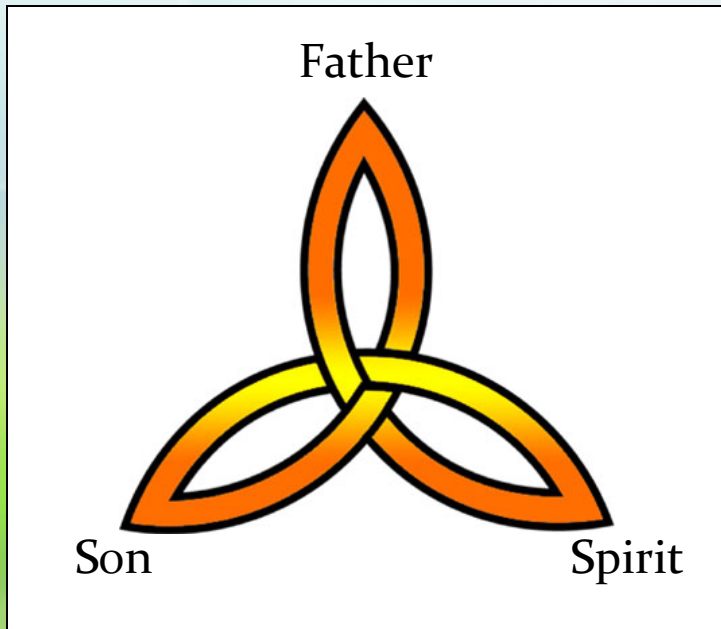
“But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

*The man said,
‘This is now bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called ‘woman,’
for she was taken out of man.’*

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.”

Identifying Idols

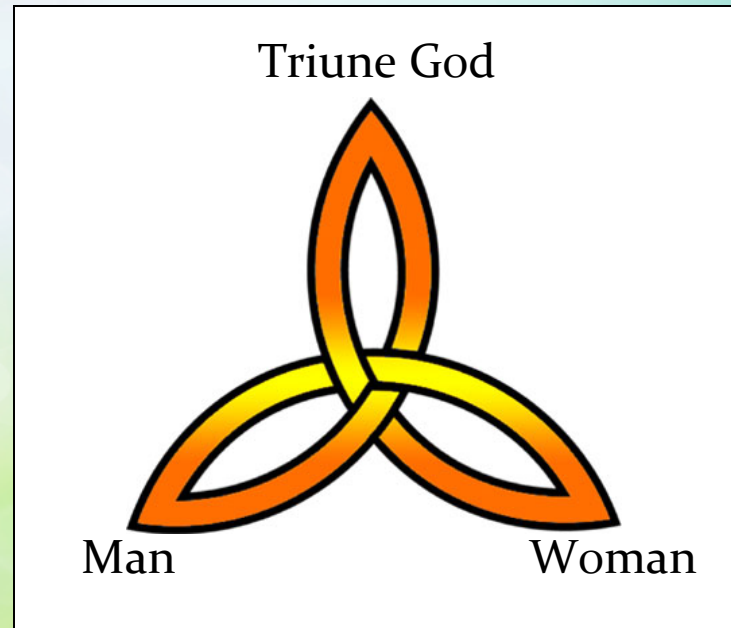
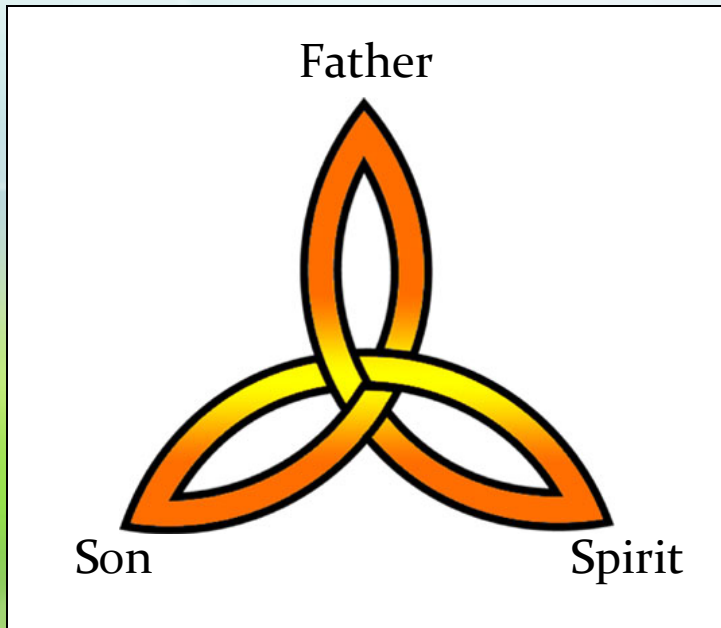
Do You Worship Love?



Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?



Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

<p>Father</p>  <p>Son</p>		<p>Triune God</p>  <p>Woman</p>
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Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

Romans 1:21-25

“For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.”

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

Romans 1:26-27

“Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.”

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

Love & Sensuality as Societal Idols

- ▶ The abundance of Christian literature on singleness and finding a mate.
- ▶ The objectification of men, women and sexual imagery.
- ▶ The prevalence, use and acceptance of pornography.
- ▶ The difficulty of getting couples and married people to develop deep relationships with others.
- ▶ The fact that many married people report a decrease in sexual activity in marriage.

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

Recovering Love: 1 Cor. 13:4-7

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

it is not easily angered

it is not self-seeking,

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love? Self-Seeking

*“Men trade love for sex,
and women trade sex for love.”*

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

Self-Seeking

*“Men trade love for ~~sex~~,
and women trade sex for ~~love~~.”*

intimacy

intimacy

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love? Self-Seeking

“Never before in our culture has love held out such mythic promises of fulfillment. Love is elevated to this ultimate thing and we get the message over and over again, that our lives are simply empty and meaningless without it, and life really beings when we find that special someone.”

Nancy Ortberg
“Make It All About Love”

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

Self-Seeking: Examine Your Heart

- ▶ Do you crave romantic relationships to address a deep sense of loneliness?
- ▶ Do you find your security bolstered by the romantic love of another, and unduly impacted by the loss or absence of that kind of relationship?
- ▶ Do you spend time hoping or imagining a greater sense of fulfillment in your life that might come from being in a relationship?

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

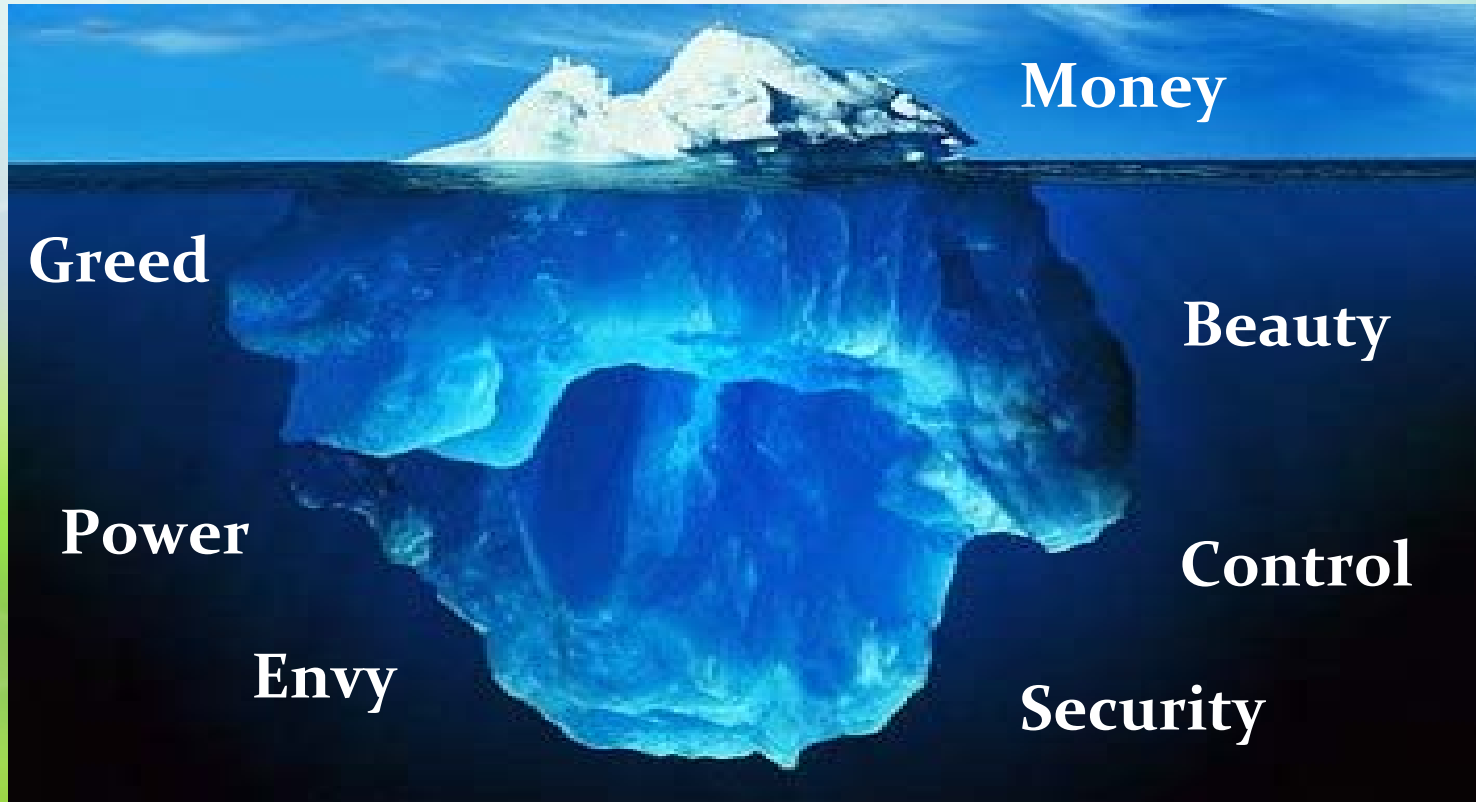
Angry: Examine Your Heart

- ▶ Are you angry towards God for unmet relational needs? Are you angry at others because of unmet relational needs?
- ▶ Regardless of your intent, does your anger have the effect of increasing the amount you are cut off from God and others? Is your anger increasing?
- ▶ Have you had ongoing difficulty in getting over broken relationships and forgiving the other person?
- ▶ Have you had such difficulty with relationships that you have sworn them off entirely?

Identifying Idols



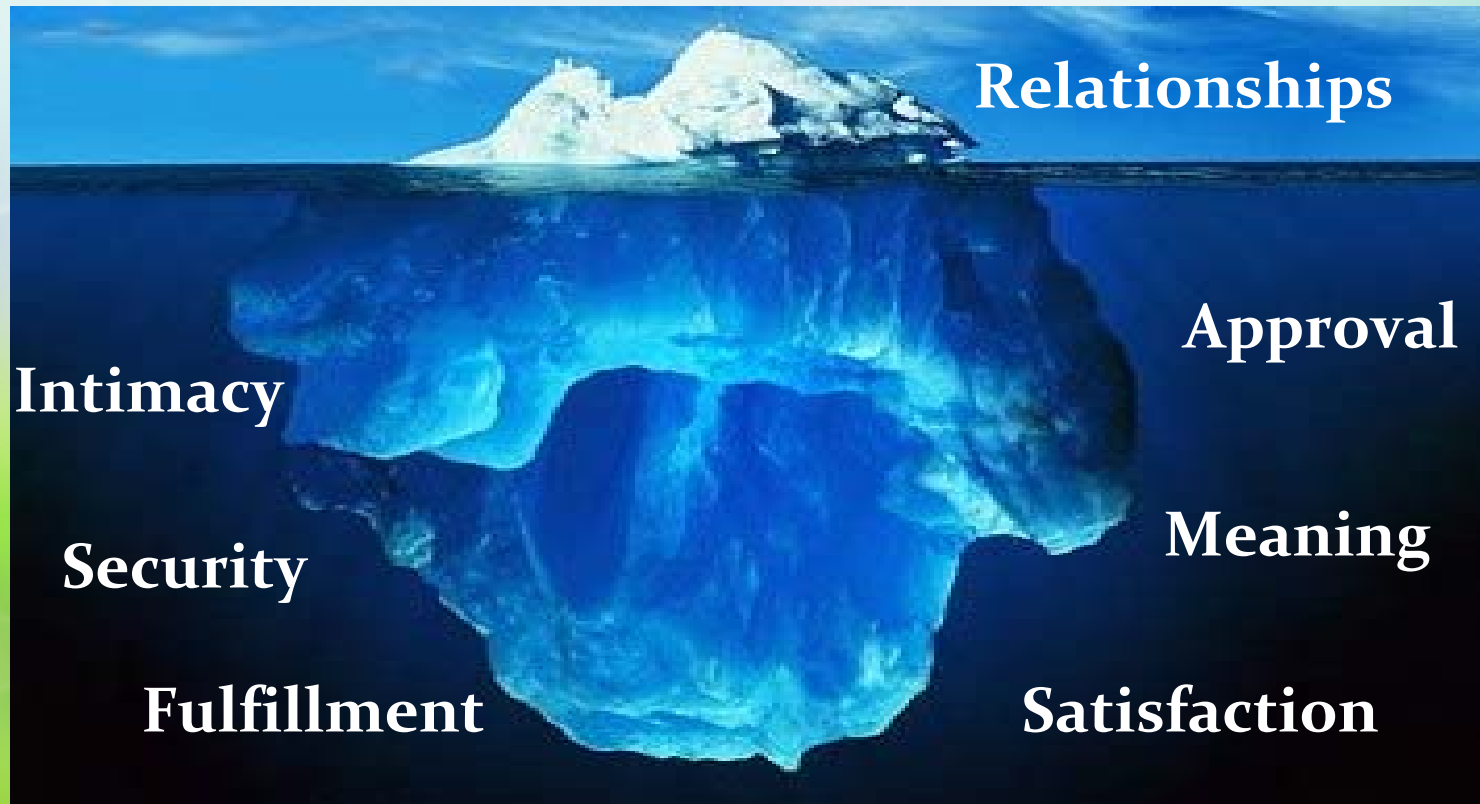
Do You Worship Money?



Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?



Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

Genesis 29

Jacob, Leah and Rachel

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

Genesis 29:26-28

“Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Reuben, for she said, ‘It is because the Lord has seen my misery. Surely my husband will love me now.’

She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son she said, ‘Because the Lord heard that I am not loved, he gave me this one too.’ So she named him Simeon.

Again she conceived, and when she gave birth to a son she said, ‘Now at last my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons.’ So he was named Levi.

She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son she said, ‘This time I will praise the Lord.’ So she named him Judah. Then she stopped having children.”

Identifying Idols



What Do You Worship?

Next Week:

More Idols We Crave

Success & Glory

Identifying Idols