

Identifying Idols In Our Lives



Part 4: 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.”



Do You Worship Success?

Is Success An Idol In Your Life?

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Success?

- ▶ We are God's stewards who are specifically entrusted with God-given talents, abilities, money, and other resources with the purpose of multiplying them for the Kingdom.
- ▶ Paul specifically commands people not to steal, but instead, to work so that they can share with those in need (Ephesians 4:28).

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Success?

Common Areas where people look for success:

- ▶ School
- ▶ Economic
- ▶ Political
- ▶ Career
- ▶ Ministry Efforts

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

Success as a Societal Idol

- ▶ Honor: achieved when one fulfills a given role in society regardless of the role (Husband, wife, Dad, Mom, ruler, doctor, teacher etc).
- ▶ Dignity: the right of every individual to develop his or her own identity or self, free from any socially assigned role or category.

= it puts pressure on the individual to achieve worth through personal accomplishment

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

Recovering Success: Mark 10:35-45

Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. “Teacher,” they said, “we want you to do for us whatever we ask.”

“What do you want me to do for you?” he asked.

They replied, “Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.”

“You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said. “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?”

“We can, they answered.”



Do You Worship Love?

Recovering Success: Mark 10:35-45

Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared.”

When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles Lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many.”



Do You Worship Love?

Recovering Success: Phil. 2:5-11

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God
something to be grasped,
but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to death-
even death on a cross



Do You Worship Love?

Recovering Success: Phil. 2:5-11

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Success?

Examine Your Heart

- ▶ Do you frequently have a problem resting or “doing nothing”?
- ▶ Is it a struggle to keep a meaningful form of a Sabbath because you constantly have too much work?
- ▶ Are you shocked or overwhelmed when things don’t go your way or a tragedy occurs?
- ▶ Do you frequently utter the phrase, “How could this happen to ME!?”

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Success?

Examine Your Heart

- ▶ Do you feel less value or worth if other people haven't complemented you or acknowledged something you have done recently?
- ▶ Does a current accomplishment not mean as much as it used to? Is there a diminishing euphoria or sense of accomplishment as you achieve more and more?
- ▶ Do you become jealous or envious when someone in your field of work achieves something great? Do you get angry at their success or can you honestly celebrate with them?



Do You Worship Success?

Examine Your Heart

- ▶ Do you “name drop” or desire to be around other “successful” people at the expense of others or close friends?
- ▶ Do you have to be the “best” at your field or area of influence?
- ▶ Do you or your field of work make messianic claims?

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Success?



Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

2 Kings 5:1

Now Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded, because through him the Lord had given victory to Aram. He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy.

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

2 Kings 5:2-6

Now bands from Aram had gone out and had taken captive a young girl from Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. She said to her mistress, "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy."

Naaman went to his master and told him what the girl from Israel had said. "By all means go," the king of Aram replied. "I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So Naaman left, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold and ten sets of clothing. The letter that he took to the king of Israel said: "With this letter I am sending my servant Naaman to you so that you may cure him of his leprosy."

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

2 Kings 5:7-10

As soon as the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his robes and said, “Am I God? Can I kill and bring back to life? Why does this fellow send someone to me to be cured of his leprosy? See how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me?”

When Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his robes, he sent him this message: “Why have you torn your robes? Have the man come to me and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel.” So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha’s house. Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, “Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed.”

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

2 Kings 5:11-14

But Naaman went away angry and said, “I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. Are not the Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than any of the waters of Israel? Couldn’t I wash in them and be cleansed?” So he turned and went off in rage.

Naaman’s servants went to him and said, “My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he tells you, ‘Wash and be cleansed’” So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.



Do You Worship Love?

Matthew 3:16-17

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him, I am well pleased.”

Identifying Idols



Do You Worship Love?

1 John 3:1-3

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself,
just as he is pure.

Identifying Idols



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