

Idolatry

(Colossians 3:5)

Idolatry is the most talked about sin in the Bible. It is the sin that plagued the people of God more than any other.

- After freeing them from a land of idols, God commanded His people (Israel) to stay away from idols (Exodus 20:1-6). And yet, they disobeyed Him by almost immediately building a golden calf (Exodus 32:1-6).
- King Jeroboam lead the nation down a path of idolatry (1 Kings 12:25-33). This would eventually contribute to Israel going into 70 years of captivity.
- The first century Roman world was full of idolatry (Acts 17:16). Many of the cities had pagan temples (Acts 19:23-41).

Idolatry continues to be a problem for many people today. There is more that goes with this sin than statues made of wood, stone, silver, and gold.

I. **Idolatry is a battle for the heart .**

- A. Idols are anything that we put at the center of our lives. They are anything that we put before the Lord.
 1. When Israel got involved in idolatry, they committed spiritual adultery against God (Ezekiel 16:15; Hosea 1:2).
 2. But worshipping things made of wood, stone, silver, and gold are not the only forms of idolatry. Idols can also be found in a person's heart (Ezekiel 14:3; Colossians 3:5).
- B. What is at the center of your life? Where is your trust? Where is your security?
 1. Money? Sports? Stuff? Career? Alcohol? Family?
 2. If your life is centered around these things then you have an idol! You have things reigning in your heart over God!

II. **Idolatry cannot co-exist with authentic discipleship.**

- A. We can have God and our idols! Jesus forces us to make a choice (Matthew 6:24, 33).
- B. God desires to reign first place in our lives (Luke 9:57-62; 18:18-23; 2 Timothy 4:9-10).

III. **Idols always fail !**

- A. The prophets warned Israel of this (Habakkuk 2:18-20; Isaiah 44:9-20). It was foolish for them to put their trust in gods that were not real.
- B. The same is true with us! Idols cannot do for us what God can.
 1. Unlike idols, God is eternal (Psalm 90:2; Hebrews 13:8).
 2. Unlike idols, God offers something everlasting – eternal life (John 10:28).
 3. Unlike idols, God loves and cares about us (John 3:16).

Conclusion: Do you have idols in your life? If so, then it is time to remove them tonight and put God first place in your heart where He belongs!