

**General Topics :: Idol Worship- what does it really mean?****Idol Worship- what does it really mean? - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/3/28 13:52**

The posts about the "Baal" arches spurred this post.

There is a lot of talk about TV, music, sports etc being idols.

At what point does interest turn into worship?

Surely a mere watching of a ballgame on TV does not amount to worship.

What does amount to worship?

Re: Idol Worship- what does it really mean? - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/3/28 13:57

The reason I am asking is that watching TV or listening to an iPod is not the same as sacrificing your child to Molech, or actually praying to an idol.

I don't think people should be accused of doing something they aren't really doing.

Re: - posted by dolfan (), on: 2016/3/28 15:22

My .02 for a shorthand of what an idol is:

"Jesus and ____." Whatever we put into that blank as necessary for our lives, that is an idol. We have lots of things on t his side of the and. Family. Work. Church (oh, boy). Politics. Hobbies. Food. Sex.

I really do agree with Richard Wurmbbrand's tale of "shopping for things you can do without", where you walk into a store and say, "I don't need THAT, I don't need THAT, and I don't need THAT," and walk out thanking Him for all the things yo u can live without.

In the case of the Baal arches, what is on the other side of the and? "Art", as they say, or "cultural history". I'll take their word for their own motives. Is it necessary to life? Is it worth a monument? No? Ok.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/3/28 15:30

Define "necessary." Not trying to be a smarty pants.

AC is not "necessary" even in AL or NC. Is having AC an "idol?"

Re: Idol Worship- what does it really mean?, on: 2016/3/28 15:40

Brother Todd, I understand your question totally. I have wrestled with these things all of my Christian life. Since I came o ut of a highly legalistic religion (Mormonism) I veer towards the law and not grace. However I am so aware of His grace and mercy that sometimes I just don't even want to go back to worldly things which often makes me look like a party poo p or a 'legalistic' in the eyes of fellow Christians. And the balance sometimes mystifies me.

Have you ever noticed that some small enjoyment seems like a blessing from God and then the next time you do it or re peat it, the Lord does not bless it and even convicts you that it is not right time or place. For instance one day (and I don 't have cable tv or an Internet connection in my house but I do have an I-phone which I have to be really careful of becau se I am not interacting with real people who are around me!) anyway one day I was at my daughter's home and watched some Netflix documentaries which gave me insight to some things I was praying about. But the next time I say and watc hed old movie after old movie (classics) and wasted so many hours I knew that was disobedience heading into an old id olatry, you know what mean? I don't care about sports so that is no temptation. One day I knew that the Lord wanted m e to sit and watch soccer with my son-in-law who is an unbeliever.

General Topics :: Idol Worship- what does it really mean?

I absolutely cannot get on you-tube and control it. Lisa posted a link to s very funny song but before long I was clicking o n more, I know my weaknesses and where I'm tempted so I have to decide beforehand, I'm just not going to get near th at idol. An idol replaces our relationship with God. I totally enjoy getting on SI but even that can turn into idolatry. We jus t really have to be in constant and ever increasing awareness of our precious Lord in our daily walk.

PS I do not have this down yet, do any of us? But that is no excuse to ignore the discipline of the Lord and His still small voice. We do have an inner warning light that goes off, wow am I grateful for the Holy Spirit within. Well that is my cents worth as folks say around here :-)

Signing off
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Re: - posted by dolfan (), on: 2016/3/28 15:50

Jesus, I think honestly, set a floor for necessity. Himself, food, clothing. Those are the only things He says we need. No t even in our families do we move, live and have our being. Indeed, Jesus says we must "hate" (His word, not mine) mot her, father, wife, children (not an objective hate that stands on its own bottom, of course, but a hate that commands us t o look at the "and _____" after Jesus and assess, "do I NEED that?". That's hard.

Re: Idol Worship- what does it really mean?, on: 2016/3/28 16:15

Dear children, keep and guard yourselves from idols. From false Gods. Keep away from anything that might take God's place in your hearts. (1 John 5:21 - several translations combined)

When does an interest become worship?

If we cannot give up something, wouldn't that suggest we in essence worship that thing?

Money, possessions, sports, career, entertainment etc.

I don't mean forgoing it every now and then. I mean COMPLETELY give it up. For good. Cut it off. Finito!!!

Isn't that what Jesus was saying to the rich young ruler? But he couldn't. He worshiped, adored, was dependent on - his riches. They had become an idol to him.

If we find ourselves so absorbed in an interest that it has become impossible to tear ourselves away from it, then I would suggest we are obeying that "thing" rather than God. We have made that thing the object of our worship. An idol.

Re: , on: 2016/3/28 16:25

When you love someone or something more than Jesus.

In other words, you do everything too protect your idol, even ignoring the Lord's words.

That is how you know you have an idol in your heart.

We see the example in the Scriptures many times with OT Israel.

It is that part of your life where you are not submitted to God, but would rather serve your idol.

2 Kings 21:21

And he walked in all the way that his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served, and worshipped them:

Turning your heart away from the Lord to another.

2 Chronicles 24:18

And THEY LEFT the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah a

General Topics :: Idol Worship- what does it really mean?

nd Jerusalem for this their trespass.

Re: - posted by dolfan (), on: 2016/3/28 16:30

What scares me is how we sanctify things we don't consider idols.

I won't pick on politics here, but that is one.

Another is church. Not "the church" or the assembly of believers. But our denominational or style preferences of church. Or, within all that, certain ways that *must be* or *must not be* for reasons that really don't meet the same necessity for us as Himself as the bread of life/river of life and the food/water/clothing of our physical self.

We sanctify a lot of things He doesn't. Those things are, I submit with all humility, idols.

Re: , on: 2016/3/28 17:31

No argument there, dolfan.

That is actually a very astute observation. If we "sanctify" it, then we can easily justify it as not an idol when in reality it still is. Spiritual adultery is having many suitors but our God is a jealous God and rightly so. How can idols match up to Jesus Christ and what He has done and is doing, today?

I won't pick on politics either, but it would be an easy one.

Re: , on: 2016/3/28 19:22

Respectfully, brothers. I will pick on politics. It has become idolatrous to the Christians. It seems there are far too many Believers that consider allegiance to a political party or ideology more important than allegiance to Christ.

Simply my thoughts.

Blaine

Re: - posted by Renee_is_His (), on: 2016/3/28 20:18

In addition to what has already been said, I would say an idol is anything we find our fulfillment in or from and defines who we are, instead of Christ. I'm thinking of the idol of ministry, or a husband/wife/children. I know of a young woman whose identity is wrapped up in being a wife and mother, instead of Christ. There are too many who are looking to be married to find happiness. Unless the Lord intervenes, it's a recipe for a disastrous marriage. Having true wholeness and satisfaction and dependency in Jesus is the only thing that will keep us from any kind of idolatry.

Re: Idol Worship- what does it really mean? - posted by Yeshuasboy (), on: 2016/3/29 0:37

Dear TMK,

In all Christian love, I will respond, because of lack of time, to just one of your thoughts,

You wrote, "Surely a mere watching of a ballgame on TV does not amount to worship"

I have witnessed, in my own life and in others, (the Lord knows I lie not as I write these things), that a 'mere watching' as you've said, can lead to a continual watching.

Now, where are my affections - "I want to watch a ballgame"... Then, I may, and rightfully so, use the question, "Do I want to watch the ballgame more than performing some duty...Like say, reading the Scriptures or prayer?" I'm being honest, and taking things from my own experience. It is a "hard" question, nevertheless an honest one. I question what I do quite a bit - "Will this bring me closer to God?"; "Is this well for my soul?"; "Will this profit me in the Christian religion?", etc, etc... Or do I compromise, "Well, other Christians are watching it, so why can't I?" Do I make some kind of excuse?...

I say these things not to judge, nor condemn... In all reality, will I grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ by doing thus and thus? Am I loving the Lord with all my mind when I'm watching a ballgame? A little sleep for the soul, a little folding of the hands... Then I'm watching ungodly commercials... Are my senses to be controlled by the Spirit? Are my eyes

es and ears my own?

Lastly, what does the Word also say besides "Love the Lord your God with ALL your heart, with All your soul, with ALL your mind, and with ALL your strength"? It says many things concerning this. "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth (Col 3:2)"; "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind (1Peter 1:13a); "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise (Psalm 57:7), etc, etc. Does not the body follow the affections?

Now, if I am my brother's keeper, I want to love my brother as myself - therefore, I want you to be everything God is willing to make you to be, by His grace. Let us remember that with His promises there are conditions.

I hope this is of some benefit to the reader. God is able to do all things, yes; although, are we not saved to walk in His ways and glorify Him, and bear much fruit, and let our lights shine? I would suggest doing some studies on the "sluggard" and find out what his end is - spiritual poverty comes on him - and that is not God's will - (Proverbs 20:4; 6:27-28; 6:4-11) The Lord taught me yrs ago, that there is a way that seems right unto a man, but the end thereof is spiritual decay and death. Our hearts can fool us if we keep not a careful watch over them, and guard them with the Sword of the Spirit.

These maybe hard things to grasp for some. I am no legalist; however, I believe in asking myself hard questions and examining my ways and my own heart. I respond to this post in love and not condemnation - for the benefit of the brethren and the glory of Christ Jesus.

Re: , on: 2016/3/29 6:26

Dear brother Richie,

That was probably one of the most important things I have read on this forum for a very long time. At least for me it was, thank you.

Re: , on: 2016/3/29 7:12

Personally, and this is just my opinion, when we take the leap from defining in a general way what idolatry is to then naming specific outward actions as idolatry we are treading on thin ice, and in danger of being legalistic, walking around with a critical eye and judging our brothers.

For instance, if you say that watching a ball game is idolatry (and I don't really care about ball games) what will stop a brother with the same view as you, from then judging something you do as idolatry?

We then make Christianity a rule based, book based religion rather than a life to be lived by another LIFE and everyone then slays each other daily with their metaphorical swords.

I have seen a lot of these threads devolve into judging actions so just to be fair to those who choose to vote for a politician, I will say that I do not judge a person who chooses to do that as engaging in idolatry and none of us should. Only the Lord knows the heart and what is not of faith for one person may not be true for another.

Imagine the carnage in Christianity if every time we judged one another as unfit to be a Christian, how many of us would be left?

You can actually see the carnage as men divide into separate camps and have no fellowship with one another.

Men's doctrines have become idols. And they will do whatever is necessary to safeguard their doctrine even hating their brothers.

So, maybe that is another definition of idolatry, anything or anyone that one loves so much that it causes you to not walk in love towards others.

Idolatry then seems to not only have an effect on God but also man, for in the end it is nothing more than pure selfishness.

The Pharisees loved their doctrine more than God and it caused them to walk around with a critical, judgemental eye, binding burdens on men that they themselves would not carry.

Re: A Distinction , on: 2016/3/29 9:15

Brothers and sisters this thought came to me this morning as I reflected on this thread. Is it possible that we need to make a distinction between idolatry and distraction. For sure a distraction can become idolatrous. But is merely indulging the occasional desire to watch a football game or an old classic movie or a baseball game being idolatrous?

In my own personal life an example comes to mind. Growing up, Highway Patrol with Broderick Crawford was my favorite TV show. This television show was made in the late 1950s when television was very tame. I recently discovered old Highway Patrol television shows posted on YouTube. (For you young Millennial types you'll just have to bear with me here. I am 64 years old. A baby boomer. :-)).

There was a time when I got really absorbed in watching these videos. They brought back memories of my childhood. They reminded me of a more innocent time in which I lived. For a time they became a distraction. But were they idolatrous? I don't think so. Merely a time of distraction. Now I'm not justifying the distraction. But merely making a distinction between distraction and idolatrous.

If I could follow through the example of Highway Patrol. I think the distraction could become idolatrous in this way. I recently heard about a man who was so obsessed with Highway Patrol. He went out and got an old 1956 or 57 Buick that Broderick Crawford would drive in the TV show. This man put thousands of dollars into restoring the car. He wanted it to look like a 1950's style highway patrol car as seen in the TV show. After he restored the car. He admitted in a television interview that he lined up his children. And told him though he loved them, the car was more important to him than the children. Now honestly, I do not know if this man was being serious or not. But I hardly think lining up your children and telling them that the restored car is more important than his family is wise. This is how I think that a distraction can turn into an obsession and become idolatrous.

I do not think to watch a baseball or football game. Or to go see a wholesome movie is idolatrous. And the Spirit will give release to do such. However we must guard our hearts to make sure that a sports game or movie or anything else do not take us away from Jesus.

Brothers and sisters simply my thoughts.

Brother Blaine

Post redited for grammatical clarity and correction. Voice recognition still not listening too well. :-)

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/3/29 9:48

Hi Bear-

I am pretty sure I line up with your thinking on this.

The sin of idol worship seemed to be related to praying and actually worshiping idols. I know that the NT calls things like covetousness as akin to idolatry because coveting is desiring very strongly in your heart (idolizing) what someone else has.

I found the below signs that someone is "addicted" to their mobile phone. The article said if you answer "Yes" to 6 of the 10 questions you may be addicted. I think this would apply to any type of activity. Obviously if I must watch every game by a certain team or I am thrown into a depression, that would certainly seem idolatrous. I have a very dear Christian brother and friend, and who is also probably the strongest Christian I know personally, that has struggled because he is a HUGE fan of Pittsburgh sports teams. He grew up there, has fond memories of watching and listening to games with his dad, and just really enjoys the sports- particularly baseball. He has stated this was a struggle that he has overcome- although he still watches a game now and then.

Here are the questions to see if you may have an addiction to something; I think you could substitute anything for "mobile phone."

** ~~â€œ~~My mobile phone is the most important thing in my life~~â€~~

General Topics :: Idol Worship- what does it really mean?

- **â€œConflicts have arisen between me and my family and/or my partner about the amount of time I spend on my mobile phoneâ€œ
- **â€œMy mobile phone use often gets in the way of other important things I should be doing (working, education, etc.)â€œ
- **â€œI spend more time on my mobile phone than almost any other activityâ€œ
- **â€œI use my mobile phone as a way of changing my moodâ€œ
- **â€œOver time I have increased the amount of time I spend on my mobile phone during the dayâ€œ
- **â€œIf I am unable to use my mobile phone I feel moody and irritableâ€œ
- **â€œI often have strong urges to use my mobile phoneâ€œ
- **â€œIf I cut down the amount of time I spend on my mobile phone, and then start using it again, I always end up spending as much time on my mobile phone as I did beforeâ€œ
- **â€œI have lied to other people about how much I use my mobile phoneâ€œ

Re: Todd, on: 2016/3/29 11:11

Oh boy bro. Ouch! Such good thoughts for thought and reflection. I must admit I'm afraid to apply that test to my use of mobile phone. Or anything else for that matter. But very good questions to consider in prayer before the Lord on any activity that may be questionable.

Thank you for sharing.

Your brother Blaine.

Re: , on: 2016/3/29 11:30

We don't worship what we don't love and if we love the object, then we give it extravagant love and extreme submission.

From Websters 1828 Dictionary
WORSHIP, verb transitive

1. To adore; to pay divine honors to; to reverence with supreme respect and veneration.

Thou shalt worship no other God. Exodus 34:14.

2. To respect; to honor; to treat with civil reverence.

Nor worshipped with a waxen epitaph.

3. To honor with extravagant love and extreme submission; as a lover.

With bended knees I daily worship her.

Re: Dear sister Leslie, your reply resonated with me so much! - posted by Caleb4life (), on: 2016/3/29 13:41

Ever since I read your reply, dear Leslie, I felt compelled to encourage you with a hearty "AMEN" to your post. Thank you and bless you!

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/3/29 14:10

Brother Todd,

The mobile phone was spot on bro!!!

Re: - posted by Man0fG0d (), on: 2016/3/29 21:15

Tmk, i like what you said about the mobile phone. Idolatry can be summed up In the first letter(I). I will ascend above Go d, I will sit on the throne...

Self love. Self preservation. Relying on one's standards instead of God's. I know of many people in church who do not s moke, watch filth, curse, etc. Yet, they trust in themselves instead of God and neglect Scriptures that go against their t heology. Their thoughts (opinions/Beliefs/traditions) take precedence over God's Word. idolatry comes in many forms bu t can always be traced back to one's heart where they sit on the throne and rebel against God. When you tell them what the Word says they respond with excuses such as:

"That is just your interpretation.

"That is not the way I see it. That is not the way I believe it. That is not the way I was raised. That was old testament. Th at was only for the church back then. That scripture doesn't apply to us today. You don't understand my situation. God knows my heart. "

Sadly, they are bound by religion, their opinion means more than the Word of God. The God they serve is self and they li ve by what morals is good in their eyes and imagination and do not the God of the Bible.

Romans 10:3 KJV

For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitte d themselves unto the righteousness of God.

Re: , on: 2016/3/30 10:58

Idol, or idle - both condemned.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/3/30 12:29

Dear children, keep and guard yourselves from idols. From false Gods. Keep away from anything that might take God's place in your hearts. (1 John 5:21 - several translations combined)

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That is excellent brother Mark. Lord keep us in our first love with Jesus and therefore free from idols.

Re: - posted by passerby, on: 2016/3/30 12:50

being a rc then, I use to carry a sort of a medallion of mary for my protection, for provision, as my deity, for forgiveness, f or blessing. later after conversion, I think I had attributed the same for some treasured doctrines and unknowingly what I shared to people were my pet doctrines but not Christ.