



O Gosh! I Shrunk The Lord!
Exodus 20:4-5

I. Idolatry – What is it?

A. Idolatry in the early days of man's civilization

- Man invented for himself idols and representations of his concept of God to worship
- Exodus 32:1-14 – the Golden calf
- Israel's idolatry turned them away from God
- Look up to Moses as “little god”.

B. Idolatry – Its Evolution

- Biggest danger – the screen of preconceptions that prevents us from seeing what it really is
- It is more than pictures of statues in exotic Far Eastern temples or bizarre ancient sculptures
- When any relative objects becomes for a person something to which he dedicates all his thoughts, time and energies, that object becomes an idol

- Some political ideas, worldly leaders, movie or music stars, pursuit of material wealth, fame, successful career, business venture or recreation
- Strong passions in sex, drugs, smoking,
- drunkenness, gambling, gluttony, greed, vanity, pride etc
- In general, anything material and temporal that becomes most important and detrimental to the soul has become the false god.

C. Idolatry – Its Sophistication

- Modern approach – people want to believe in what they want - Preference for spiritual beliefs that are undemanding – a lifestyle option
- Christianity too narrow and oppressive and makes ethical demands. Too dogmatic
- “When people stop believing in God they don’t believe in nothing, they believe in anything”

GK Chesterton

- Revelation 9:20

II. The Attraction Of Idolatry

A. Idolatry – a universal feature

1. Idols are not basically evil. In fact, the most dangerous idols are actually good things that have been twisted. Example: Money, careers, possessions, holidays, sports, music, sex.
 - They are God given gifts but taken into extreme will become temporary gods
2. Idols are generally tame gods that you can keep at arm's length. They make fewer moral demands, an attractive alternative to the one true God

B. Idolatry – Negative example

- Incident at Mount Sinai
- The attraction of idols is not that they are gods – we know it – but they offer the possibility to men and women of making their own controllable god – one they can deal with on their terms.
- Because we cannot picture God in our minds that we are tempted to create an idol

- People made symbols to represent the things they cannot see.
- Argument: Images help us to worship God
- Aids to worship can easily become objects of worship
- Any image used to portray him would depict him as less than he truly is
- Fall of King Solomon – I Kings 3 - 11

III. The Cost Of Idolatry

A. It cheat and destroys those who practice it

- Jeremiah 10:14

B. It enslaves their followers

- When we worship things, we offer them our service. Idols are cruel masters
- Psalms 115:3-8

C. It steals from us the precious thing we can have: a knowledge of the living God

- We must allow God to be God not a tame idol

IV. How To Confront Idolatry Today?

A. Be honest with your IDENTITY

- Your relationship with God
- Like marriage an exclusive relationship
- Make the choice to remain faithful and not commit sin of spiritual adultery

B. Be true to your COMMITMENT

- I John 5:21 – “Dear children, keep yourselves from idols

Conclusion

- The call to worship the one true God and worship Jesus as Lord
- Acts 17 – Paul in city of Athens
- Images offered by the world are bankrupt.
- If we pursue them, we will find ourselves disappointed, devastated and worthless
- The false god will only take, take and take
- The Living God gives, gives and gives again