

²⁵ they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. (Rom.1:25)

“Because your heart is proud, and you have said, ‘I am a god’ (Ezek.28:1)

¹⁵ You were in Eden, the garden of God...¹⁵ You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you. (Ezek.28:13,15)

³ “You shall have no other gods before me...⁴ “You shall not make for yourself a carved image...⁵ You shall not bow down to them or serve them (Exod.20:3-5)

³⁵ So they feared the Lord but also served their own gods (2 Kings 17:33)

¹ Then certain of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me. ² And the word of the Lord came to me: ³ “Son of man, these men have taken their idols into their hearts” (Ezek. 14:1-3)

¹⁴ Every man is stupid and without knowledge; every goldsmith is put to shame by his idols, for his images are false, and there is no breath in them. ¹⁵ They are worthless, a work of delusion. (Jer.10:14-15)

¹⁶ Take care lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them (Deut.11:16)

¹⁵ for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water. (Jer. 2:13)

⁹ how I have been broken over their whoring heart that has departed from me and over their eyes that go whoring after their idols (Ezek.6:9)

⁹ you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. (1 Thess.1:9-10)

²⁵ from all your idols I will cleanse you. ²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. (Ezek.36:25)

Truth for Life

SIN

DEFINITION ¹

What is idolatry?

- whatever we worship instead of God
- good things as idols
- self as idol

LOCATION ²

Where do you find idolatry?

- in the world
- in the church
 - syncretistic idolatry
 - functional idolatry
- in the heart

SERIOUSNESS ³

Why be concerned about idolatry?

- root sin
- counterfeit gods
 - trusting a false rescuer
 - serving a false master
 - loving a false lover
- divine judgment

RESPONSE ⁴

What should we do about idolatry?

- identify your idols
- turn from your idols
- turn to the Lord
- renew your heart

¹ Rom.1:25,23; Ezek.28:1,13,15

² Jer.50:38; Acts 17:16; Exod.20:3-4,32; Jer.11:13; 2 Kings 17:15; 1 Jn 5:21; 1 Cor.10:7; Jer.7:9; 2 Kgs 17:33; Ezek.14:1; Jer.13:10

³ Rom.1:21-25; Jer.10:10,14; Deut.11:16; Jer.7:6; 2:13; Matt.6:24; Ezek.6:9; Rom.1:18; 2:5

⁴ Acts 17:30; 1 Thess.1:9-10; Ezek.36:25

QUOTATIONS:

'A god is whatever we expect to provide all good and in which we take refuge in all distress...Whatever you set your heart on and put your trust in, that, I tell you, is your true god.' (*Martin Luther*)

'Our idols are those things we count on to give our lives meaning. They are the things of which we say, 'I need this to make me happy', or 'If I don't have this my life is worthless and meaningless.' (*Tim Keller*)

What is my greatest nightmare? What do I worry about most?
What do I rely on or comfort myself with when things go badly or become difficult?
What makes me feel the most self-worth? What am I proudest of?
What do I really want and expect out of life?
What would really make me happy? (*Tim Keller*)

'man's nature...is a perpetual factory of idols'
(*John Calvin*)

'all our sinful behaviour and negative emotions stem from a failure at a functional level to believe one of these truths:
God is great – so we don't have to be in control;
God is glorious – so we don't have to fear others;
God is good – so we don't have to look elsewhere;
God is gracious – so we don't have to prove ourselves' (*Tim Chester*)

'the only way to dispossess it [the heart] of an old affection is by the expulsive power of a new one...We know of no other way by which to keep the love of the world out of our heart than to keep in our hearts the love of God.'
(*Thomas Chalmers in 'The Expulsive Power of a New Affection'*)

RECOMMENDED READING:

Tim Keller: *Counterfeit Gods*
Tim Chester: *You Can Change*