

IS IT AN IDOL?

- ▷ I think most of us conclude that an “idol” is not a good thing. But what is it?
- ▷ Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines “idol” as: “an object of extreme devotion; a representation or symbol of an object of worship.”
- ▷ The Old Testament frequently defines an idol as something made by hand, often made out of wood, metal or stone, that is worshipped in the place of God. The New Testament goes on to define idolatry as something more than just worshipping things made by hand. (see Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 3:5-6; James 4:4).
- ▷ Whatever we place on the throne of our lives in the place of God constitutes an idol!

Why is it important to identify idols in our lives?

- 1) They interfere with our relationship with God. We are told for good reasons not to have them. (Exodus 20:4)
- 2) The Lord refuses to give His glory to anyone or anything else. (Isaiah 42:8)
- 3) They keep us from entering into an eternal relationship with God and His kingdom. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 5:5)
- 4) Idols tempt us and we are to flee from them. (1 Corinthians 10:13-14)
- 5) Having idols in our lives is part of our “earthly nature” and we are to “put it to death” because the wrath of God is coming (Colossians 3:5-6). We can only do this if Christ is in us. (vs. 11)
- 6) The very last verse in the Book of 1 John (1 John 5:21), reminds us to keep away from idols. Why?
- 7) Friendship with anything in the world is actually hatred towards God (James 4:4).

The following are questions to help determine what idols may exist in our lives and what can we do about them.

Question #1: How do I know if something is an idol in my life?

What people or things do I have in my life that provide the following qualities, and by removing it, the qualities would be lost?:

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| • Joy | • Meaning | • True and lasting security | • Hope |
| • Purpose | • Peace | | • Personal value |

Question #2:

What things in life can only God provide? (hint: see qualities in question #1)

Question #3:

How do we overcome the idols in our lives?

Hint:

- 1 - We must first give our lives to Christ to receive His power. (Philippians 4:13; 2 Timothy 1:7)
- 2 - We then must be obedient to the Word of God - do what it says now that we have the power to do what we must. (James 1:22)

***What have you placed in the vacuum of your soul,
That only Jesus can fill?***