



IDOLATRY

GODS THAT FAIL

3. Reflecting What We Worship



Worship is about giving ourselves to that which we long for and value most.

EXODUS
20:3-6

“You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them,

EXODUS
20:3-6

for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

DEUT
6:4-5

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God,
the LORD is one. Love the LORD
your God with all your heart and
with all your soul and with all your
strength.

ISAIAH
29:13

The Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on merely human rules they have been taught."

PROVERBS
4:23

Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

PROVERBS
27:19

As water reflects the face, so one's life reflects the heart.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

- 1. You shall have no other gods before me**
2. Don't make/worship images
3. Don't misuse the name of God
4. Remember the Sabbath
5. Honor your father & mother
6. Do not murder
7. Do not commit adultery
8. Do not steal
9. Do not give false testimony
10. Don't covet your neighbor's wife, servants, animals, etc.

What do you *want*?

What do you *love*?



A man in a dark pinstriped suit and tie is sitting in a purple armchair on a television set. He is smiling and holding a small object in his hands. To his left is a round wooden table with a black mug, a pen, and some papers. The background features a large screen with the show's title and a wooden wall. To the left, there is a glass display case containing various sports memorabilia like trophies and a soccer ball.

REAL SPORTS

WITH BRYANT GUMBEL

Idols are almost always good things that become harmful to us when we make them ultimate things.

KYLE
IDLEMAN

Seeing my faith and life through the lens of idolatry has rebuilt my relationship with God from the ground up. ... As we look at life through this lens, it becomes clear that there's a war going on. The gods are at war, and their strength is not to be underestimated. These gods clash for the throne of your heart, and much is at stake. Everything about me, everything I do, every relationship I have, everything I hope or

KYLE
IDLEMAN

dream or wish to become, depends upon what god wins that war. ... Idolatry isn't just one of many sins; rather it's the one great sin that all others come from. So if you start scratching at whatever struggle you're dealing with, eventually you'll find that underneath it is a false god. Until that god is dethroned, and the Lord God takes his rightful place, you will not have victory.

ALBERT
CAMUS

For anyone who is alone without God and without a master, the weight of days is dreadful. Hence, one must choose a master, God being out of style.

SURFACE IDOLS

- money
- marriage
- children
- career
- sex
- beauty

DEEP IDOLS

- power / influence
- approval of others
- comfort
- security
- control



MONEY



security

live modestly, saves a lot,
stingy toward others

approval

generous spending on
others, materialistic

UNMASKING OUR IDOLS

- What disappoints you?
- What do you complain the most about?
- Where do you make financial sacrifices?
- What worries you?

UNMASKING OUR IDOLS

- Where is your sanctuary?
- What infuriates you?
- What are your dreams?

ISAIAH
46:1-7

Bel bows down, Nebo stoops low; their idols are borne by beasts of burden. The images that are carried about are burdensome, a burden for the weary. They stoop and bow down together; unable to rescue the burden, they themselves go off into captivity.

“Listen to me, you descendants of Jacob, all the remnant of the people of Israel,

ISAIAH
46:1-7

you whom I have upheld since your birth,
and have carried since you were born.
Even to your old age and gray hairs I am
he, I am he who will sustain you. I have
made you and I will carry you; I will sustain
you and I will rescue you.

“With whom will you compare me or count
me equal? To whom will you liken me that
we may be compared? Some pour out

ISAIAH
46:1-7

gold from their bags and weigh out silver on the scales; they hire a goldsmith to make it into a god, and they bow down and worship it. They lift it to their shoulders and carry it; they set it up in its place, and there it stands. From that spot it cannot move. Even though someone cries out to it, it cannot answer; it cannot save them from their troubles.

TIM
KELLER

If we look to some created thing to give us the meaning, hope, and happiness that only God himself can give, it will eventually fail to deliver and break our hearts.

2 COR
3:18

And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

GREG
BEALE

All humans have been created to be reflecting beings, and they will reflect whatever they are ultimately committed to, whether the true God or some other object in the created order. ... *What people revere, they resemble, either for ruin or restoration.*

ISAIAH
6:9-10

“Go and tell this people:” ‘Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.’ Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.”

PSALM
115:4-8

But their idols are silver and gold, made by human hands. They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see. They have ears, but cannot hear, noses, but cannot smell. They have hands, but cannot feel, feet, but cannot walk, nor can they utter a sound with their throats.

Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them.

HEBREWS
12:1-2

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

1 PETER
5:6-7

Humble yourselves, therefore,
under God's mighty hand, that he
may lift you up in due time. Cast
all your anxiety on him because
he cares for you.

Summary

Whether an idol or Jesus, we will resemble whatever we fix our gaze on.