



AMERICAN IDOL(S)

Exodus 20:4-6

The Lord – *“You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. ⁵ You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected - even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me. ⁶ But I lavish unfailing love for a thousand generations on those who love Me and obey My commands.”* (Exodus 20:4-6)

- **Our foundational value in life is to PUT GOD FIRST in our lives (Exodus 20:1-3), and continue to live for and serve Him in spiritual and practical ways.**
- Jesus - *“You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.”* (Mark 12:30)
- **The impulse to worship is universal – because there is a “God-consciousness” in the heart of every human being.**
- **If we’re going to make better decisions and live blessed lives we have to determine that we’re not going to “make and worship any idols” (Exodus 20:4-6).**
- The Lord – *“You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea.”* (Exodus 20:4)
- **This Commandment doesn’t prohibit “art” – but it does prohibit the making of art utilized for worship purposes.**
- The Lord - *“You must not bow down to them (idols) or worship them.”* (Exodus 20:5)
- **There has always been a human tendency to disobey the Lord in this area (Romans 1:23-25, Exodus 32:1-4).**
- **Some people have metal Idols, while others have material, music or mental Idols.**
- *“Idolatry is worshiping anything that ought to be used, and using anything that ought to be worshipped.”* (Augustine)
- ***What are some reasons that I need to get rid of the “idols” in my life?***

We Need To “Get Rid Of Our Idols” Because:

THEY CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR US IN OUR LIVES

- **An “Idol” is anything or anyone other than GOD who is first in our lives - and we’ve all struggled with “Idols” in our lives.**

- “The human heart is a factory of idols. Every one of us is, from his mother's womb, expert in inventing idols.” (John Calvin)
- “They traded the truth about God for a lie. So they worshiped and served the things God created instead of the Creator himself.” (Romans 1:25)

“Idols” Cause Us Problems:

- **WITH OUR SAVIOR**

- **Having Idols In Our Lives Causes Us To Distort The Lord.**
 - Jesus - “God is Spirit, so those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.” (John 4:24)
 - **It’s impossible for a material or even a mental image to represent a spiritual GOD.**
 - Whereas an image is fixed and unchanging, our perspective of GOD expands and matures.
- **Having Idols In Our Lives Causes Us To Degrade the Lord.**
 - To bring GOD down to the level of any human or animal is degrading to Him.
- **Having Idols In Our Lives Disturbs the Lord.**
 - The Lord - “I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods.” (Exodus 20:5)
 - **GOD is very jealous of our relationship with Him.**
 - The Lord - “You must worship no other gods, for the Lord, whose very name is Jealous, is a God who is jealous about His relationship with you.” (Exodus 34:14)

- **FOR OUR SELVES**

- **Having And Worshipping Idols Brings Disappointment To Our Lives.**
 - “Craftsmen are disgraced by the idols they make, for their carefully shaped works are a fraud. These idols have no breath or power. Idols are worthless; they are ridiculous lies!” (Jeremiah 10:14-15)
- **Having And Worshipping Idols Brings Distraction To Our Lives.**
 - “When you were still pagans, you were led astray and swept along in worshipping speechless idols.” (1 Corinthians 12:2)
- **Having And Worshipping Idols Brings Degradation To Our Lives.**
 - “Before you knew Christ, you were controlled by dead idols who led you astray.” (1 Corinthians 12:2 GNB)
- **Having And Worshipping Idols Brings Devastation To Our Family Members.**
 - The Lord - “I lay the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected - even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject Me.” (Exodus 20:5)
 - **The story of Kings Uzziah, Jothan and Ahaz reminds us of what can happen to our children and grandchildren if the Lord is not the GOD of our lives (2 Chronicles 26-28).**

We Need To “Get Rid Of Our Idols” Because:

THEY KEEP US FROM GOD’S PROVISION FOR OUR LIVES

- The Lord – *“But I lavish unfailing love for a thousand generations on those who love Me and obey My commands.”* (Exodus 20:6)
- **How does the Lord “lavish His love upon us” when He is the GOD of our lives?**

When The Lord Is First In Our Lives:

- **HE FORGIVES OUR SINS**

- *“Let all that I am praise the Lord; may I never forget the good things He does for me. He forgives all my sins . . .”* (Psalm 103:2-3)
- **When we surrender to the Lord and put Him first in our lives He wipes out the stain of our sin and forgives us completely (Psalm 103:12, 1 John 1:9).**

- **HE HEALS US FROM OUR SICKNESSES**

- *“He (God) forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases.”* (Psalm 103:3)
- **While the Lord does heal His people from physical illnesses, His greatest work is healing people from emotional, mental and spiritual bondages.**
- Jesus - *“The Spirit of the Lord . . . has sent Me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free.”* (Luke 4:18)
- **When the Lord is first in our lives He will heal us and free us from the hurts, bad habits and “hang-ups” of our lives (John 8:32, 36).**

- **HE GRANTS US ETERNAL LIFE**

- *“He (God) redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies.”* (Psalm 103:4)
- **When we “put God first” in our lives by receiving Jesus as our Savior, He gives us eternal life and a forever home in Heaven (John 14:1-3).**

- **HE BLESSES US IN MANY WAYS**

- *“He (God) fills my life with good things.”* (Psalm 103:5)
- **When the Lord is “first” in our lives He blesses us with His presence (Joshua 1:9), His provision (Philippians 4:19), His protection (Psalm 91), His power (Philippians 4:13), His plans (Jeremiah 29:11), and with godly people (2 Corinthians 7:6-7).**
- Jesus - *“My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.”* (John 10:10)

- The Lord - *“If you obey all the decrees and commands I am giving you today, all will be well with you and your children.”* (Deuteronomy 4:40)

- *“We all know that an idol is not really a god and that there is only one God.”* (1 Corinthians 8:4)

- *“Keep away from anything that might take God’s place in your hearts.”* (1 John 5:21)

- **What are some idols that I have struggled with in my life, and what steps do I need to take to get rid of those “idols” and “put God first” in my life?**