

Gospel Treason

What Happens When We Give Our Hearts to Idols

How Do We Get Free and Stay Free?

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / Nov. 11, 2012

Three Ways you can do battle with the idols of your heart without LOSING heart in the process!

I. Reorient Your Entire Struggle around the Finished Work of Christ!

You don't want to just FIGHT against the idols of your heart; you want to fight smart. So you have to reorient yourself and refocus the particular struggle of your heart back into the light of what Christ has already done for you.

Titus 2:11-14 "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, ¹² teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, ¹³ looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works."

"Where the Lord calls for change, connect those specific changes to what God is doing. Whenever you need to change, put the Redeemer in the center of the picture... Don't ever degenerate into giving advice unconnected to the good news of Jesus crucified, alive, present, at work, and returning." *Seeing With New Eyes*, David Powlison, page 43

Colossians 2:6 – 3:1

EXAMPLES of how to reorient your thinking back into the light of Christ's finished work on the cross.

- **Approval:** I don't need to live for the approval of other people and fear rejection because I am accepted in the Beloved (Eph. 1:7) – I'm completely accepted by the One in whom the God of the entire universe has already said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And so when He's pleased with Christ, He's pleased with me. And on the cross Jesus faced the ultimate rejection and humiliation for me so that I could be accepted forever by the One that matters most – my Creator God and Judge! Jesus took my humiliation and shame – and gives me His favor.
- **Power / Control:** I don't need to jockey for position of power and control. And I don't have to feverishly cling to it when I have it because in Christ my future is secure. I don't have to chase after it now because Christ didn't cling to power, but laid aside all of His power and rights at the cross and is now exalted (Phil. 2) above all authority and power – so that in my weakness now His strength and power is made perfect (2 Cor. 12) so that when I'm weak – then I'm strong.
- **Money / Material Things:** I don't have to build my life around money and all the stuff that it can buy as my source of security, because I've already been given the real wealth of what matters most that can never be taken or shaken in Christ, who became poor so that we could be rich in what matters most – spiritual riches (2 Cor. 8:9). And in Him now I am blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 1). I don't have to chase after the vaporous stuff of this world.
- **Success / Recognition:** I don't have to be a 'big deal' and chase after success or achievement in order to prove myself or justify my existence in this world. I don't have to do something great to get my name on somebody's list of 'Who's Who' because Christ, who has been given the name above all names (Phil. 2), knows me and calls me by name (John 10:27) and assures me that my name is already on a list that is far more important than any earthly list – that my name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. I'm not on my way to hell; I'm on my way to heaven – and that status can never be taken or shaken!

That's how you do battle with the idols of your heart. You bring that struggle back into the light of what Christ has already done. And you fight with Gospel fervor, knowing that what you have in the Gospel is so much better than what this idol promises.

II. Renew Your Mind with the Unchanging Truth of God's Word

You're going to have to do the hard work – by God's Spirit and grace working in you – to take your thoughts captive and to redirect them back into God's truth, so that you can really change and repent of your idolatry.

Colossians 3:1–2 “If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.”

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NIV “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ”

See also: Philippians 4:8-9; Prov. 23:7; Romans 12:2; Eph. 4:22-24

III. Refuse to Make the Focus of Your Battle all about Your Own Performance

Our sinful heart finds a way to make it all about us no matter what. But you will not get free from idols of the heart when your focus is all about you!

If you make it all about your own personal performance in your fight against idols you will either...

- Be puffed up with self-righteous pride
- Or wallow in a pit of self-deprecating despair because you've failed yet again

We do have to fight, and fight hard, but the focus of our fight should be on Christ and not us.

Hebrews 12:1–2 “Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus [‘fixing our eyes on Jesus’ NASB], the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Colossians 2:13–14 “¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

Jesus did everything necessary to crush the power of idolatry in our lives!