

Gospel Treason

What Happens When We Give Our Hearts to Idols ***What Would an Idol-Free Life Look Like?***

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / Nov. 18, 2012

The conflict and disappointment that we have so many times with other people around us is, more often than not, rooted in the idols of our own heart. Our biggest problem is not the people around us... it's us.

James 4:1-3 “What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.”

An idol = **Anything** or **Anyone** that begins to **Capture** our **Hearts** and **Minds** and **Affections** more than God.

When you begin identifying and repenting of the idols of your heart:

I. You'll Start to Really Get Free Maybe for the Very First Time!

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, the author and finisher of our faith...”

Ezekiel 14:3,5 “... these men have set up their idols in their hearts, and put before them that which causes them to stumble into iniquity... they are all estranged from Me by their idols.”

Living with idols is like trying to run with your hand in front of your face. You can do it – but not very effectively.

II. You'll Have a Revival of Gratitude for the Gospel

You'll see your great need for the Gospel because when you get after idols of the heart, you start to see the sin BENEATH the sin... and you realize even more your desperate need to be rescued by a power greater than your own!

Romans 1:16-17 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

“The path of change goes through the heart and continues on to the Gospel, where God chose to most fully reveal Himself in the death and resurrection of Christ.” –*Ed Welch, Biblical Counselor*

III. You Might Start to See Things Clearly for the Very First Time in Your Life

When your heart is teeming with idols, you don't see things very clearly.

Matthew 7: 3-5 “Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck out of your eye’; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck out of your brother's eye.”

When you start to see the idolatry of your own heart, you begin to realize your depravity far outweighs your deprivation. So your focus needs to be on your own sin, your own depravity and idolatry – rather than constantly

rehearsing the way other people have sinned against you or not met your ‘felt needs’ for love, acceptance, approval and affirmation.

IV. You’ll have a Better Perspective on Trials and How God Uses them for Our Good

"If God told me some time ago that He was about to make me as happy as I could be in this world, and then had told me that He should begin by crippling me in all my limbs, and removing me from all my usual sources of enjoyment, I should have thought it a very strange mode of accomplishing His purpose. And yet, how is His wisdom manifest even in this! For if you should see a man shut up in a closed room, idolizing a set of lamps and rejoicing in their light, and you wished to make him truly happy, you would begin by blowing out all his lamps; and then throw open the shutters to let in the light of heaven." John Piper, *A Godward Life*, p. 288-289 on the life of Samuel Rutherford

"O how I pray that when God, in His mercy, begins to blow out my lamps, I will not curse the wind." John Piper, *A Godward Life*, p. 288-289

2 Corinthians 4:3-6 “³ But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴ whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. ⁵ For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus’ sake. ⁶ For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

V. You’ll Start to Feel More Conviction of Sin

Proverbs 28:13-14 “He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy... but he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.”

It’s the idols of our heart that so many times that keeps us from forsaking and truly repenting of our sinful behavior!

Ephesians 4:18-19 NIV “They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.”

“As the inner light increases, you will see the imperfections which you have heretofore seen as basically much greater and more harmful than you had seen them up to the present...But this experience, far from discouraging, will help to uproot all your self-confidence, and to raze to the ground the whole edifice of pride. Nothing marks so much the solid advancement of a soul, as this view of his wretchedness without anxiety and without discouragement.” - Francois Fenelon

As you get free from the idols of your heart – you’ll start to have some true conviction of sin that doesn’t leave you just wallowing and paralyzed in your own prideful self-condemnation – unable to get past it... but RATHER appropriately stung and invigorated to look up to your Savior for help and hope to forsake that sin with the power of Jesus Christ working in you.

John 8:31-36 “Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.’ They answered Him, ‘We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, “You will be made free”?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.’”

Go to war against the idols of your heart!