

Gospel Treason

What Happens When We Give Our Hearts to Idols

How Do I Look for Idols in My Heart?

Correlates with Ch. 7 & 8 of *Gospel Treason* book
Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / Jan. 29, 2023

An idol = **Anything** or **Anyone** that begins to **Capture** our **Hearts** and **Minds** and **Affections** more than God. It's living on substitutes. It's exchanging the one true living God for a counterfeit.

Idolatry is not so much wanting the **wrong** thing, but wanting even good things **too** much.

Four Ways to track down idols in your life:

I. Follow the Trail of Your Time, Money, and Affection

"Some of us attend the church on the corner, professing to worship the living God above all. Others, who rarely darken the church doors, would say worship isn't a part of their lives because they aren't 'religious.' But everybody has an altar. And every altar has a throne.

So how do you know where and what you worship? It's easy. You simply follow the trail of your time, your affection, your energy, your money, and your allegiance. At the end of that trail you'll find a throne; and whatever, or whomever, is on that throne is what's of highest value to you. On that throne is what you worship.

Sure, not too many of us walk around saying, 'I worship my stuff. I worship my job. I worship this pleasure. I worship her. I worship my body. I worship me!' But the trail never lies. We may say we value this thing or that thing more than any other, but the volume of our actions speaks louder than our words. In the end, our worship is more about what we do than what we say."

~ Louie Giglio, *The Air I Breathe*

Whenever idolatry kicks in, you will:

- a. **Sacrifice** for it
- b. **Spend Time** on it
- c. **Spend Money** on it
- d. **Talk** about it (Matt. 12:34 "...out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.")
- e. **Serve** it
- f. **Protect** it
- g. **Perfect** it
- h. **Think** about it
- i. **Build your schedule** around it
- j. **Worry** about it
- k. **Get Angry** when someone blocks you from it
- l. **Live in Fear** that you might lose it

One of the biggest indicators that a person or object is functioning as an idol in your life is that fear becomes one of the chief characteristics of your life.

II. Take Note of Your Heart During Suffering

Suffering exposes our hearts.

No matter how long you've walked with the Lord, when you face deep disappointment and suffering, it pushes to the surface what's really going on in the heart.

You find out 3 things in the heat of suffering:

1. What you really love
2. What you really believe – not just what you say you believe
3. What you really run to as your ultimate security and greatest treasure

2 Corinthians 1:8–9 “For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. ⁹ Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead.”

Don't waste your suffering. It's a great time to see some of the stuff that's been going on in your heart.

III. Look for Chaos!

...because chaos and idolatry run hand in hand.

James 3:16 “For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing will be there.”

If you have idols in the heart, you have chaos to some degree or another, but it doesn't jump right out at you. We don't usually make that connection. Our sights are set somewhere else. Our first thought is that the people around us are just getting in our way and being so difficult and unreasonable.

Ephesians 4:31 “Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking (slander) be put away from you, with all malice.”

IV. Ask Yourself Some Heart Diagnostic Questions

1. Am I willing to sin to **Get** it?
2. Am I willing to sin if I think I'm going to **Lose** it?
3. Do I run to it for **Refuge** instead of turning to God?

V. Repenting and Rejoicing is the Way to Get Free!

Colossians 3:1–4 NIV “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ **When Christ, who is your life, appears**, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”

Philippians 1:21 “For to me to live is Christ...”

How would you honestly finish that sentence in your own life?

“For me to live is _____.”

Homework

1. “**Identifying Personal Idols**” worksheet – several times.
2. **Read “Gospel Treason” book:** Ch. 7 & 8
3. **Ask God** to show you who or what your idols are.
4. **Pray Psalm 139:23-24** - “Search me, O God, and know my heart; ²⁴ test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”