

LIGHTHOUSE BAPTIST CHURCH

PASTOR/TEACHER: JERRY W. ARNOLD

IDOLATRY

1 John 5:21

When we think of idolatry our minds immediately go to the Old Testament and the Nation of Israel. Now some feel that idolatry was not a problem in the New Testament; nor is it a problem within the church today. But I disagree with those who hold to that position.

When John closed his first letter he said, “Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

What John is doing here is warning his readers to avoid idolatry, he was not writing about graven images. He was writing about anything that substitutes for God. Idolatry goes deeper than images made by hands; it also pertains to those erected by the heart. When God spoke through Ezekiel to “certain of the elders of Israel,” He said, “these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I be inquired of at all by them?” (Ezekiel 14:1-4).

Furthermore, God said in Ezekiel 14:5, “That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols.”

For those who desire to be used by God, understand this: idolatry has to do with mind and heart. God knows that these two things do not mix: deeply loving Him and devoting the heart to idols.

The true and living God tolerates no rivals. That is why He said to the Nation of Israel, “I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. Thou shalt have none other gods before me. Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me. And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments” (Deuteronomy 5:6-10).

Also it is important to understand that God regards it important that we get our ideas about Him from His lips rather than ours. Therefore, it is imperative that we read and study the Bible.

Scripture teaches that God is incomprehensible. He has secret things that are not revealed and belong to Him alone (Deuteronomy 29:29). His ways and thoughts are immeasurably higher than ours (Isaiah 55:8-11). His judgments are unsearchable and His ways past finding out (Romans 11:33-36). And now, we come to one that simply makes me stand back in great wonder. He dwells in unapproachable light (1 Timothy 6:16).

I cannot explain in words what preparing for church means to me! I feel very much honored that God would even allow me in His presence. But yet, I understand that this is God's desire to commune with me through His Son Jesus Christ. It is my conviction that we all who call ourselves Christians should see our worship as an honor and not a duty. Imagine, God desires to meet with us.

Therefore, let us put aside these idols of the heart and put God and His service first in our lives. I can assure you that much will improve in your life. I remember one seminary professor who put it something like this, "God doesn't play games, and He sure doesn't play your game. He knows your mind and your heart."

Jerry W. Arnold
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