

Are There Idols on My Mantle?

God's Commandments to His Covenant People

Exodus 20:3-4 (& Deuteronomy 5:7-8)

- "You shall have **no other gods** before me. ⁴ You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below."

Commandment from Jesus to His Disciples

Matthew 6:24

- "**No one can serve two masters.** Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

Commandment to the "Ekklesia" in the Gentile World

Acts 15:29

- "You are to **abstain from food sacrificed to idols**, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things."

Commandment to the Corinthian "Ekklesia"

- 1 Corinthians 10:6-7 — *Do not be an idolator* (v. 7)
- 1 Corinthians 10:14-20 — *Flee from idolatry* (v. 14)

Idolatry is a _____ for the Almighty God.

The Lies We Often Believe

- I have an infinite _____ to spend on my sin.
- I can _____ — because of God's grace.
- Man-made "gods" _____, so it doesn't matter.

The Truth from God

- God is a _____, and I can test him.
— 1 Corinthians 10:9 *We should not test Christ, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes.*
- I can _____!
— 1 Corinthians 10:12 *So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!*
- The "toy gods" of idolatry are not real — but the altar of the _____ is very real.
— 1 Corinthians 10:6-7 *Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. ⁷ Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry."*
— 1 Corinthians 10:21 *You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons.*
- Idolatry forfeits the _____ of God.
— Jonah 2:8

1 Corinthians 12:27 *You are the Body of Christ, and each one of you is part of it.*



Digging Deeper

(for group study and conversation, and for personal reflection)

As a group, read and reflect on the following paragraph. *(10 minutes)*

Understanding the idolatry we flirt with and buy into with our lifestyle is not just an exercise in knowing about pagan carved statues from eastern religions. Even though those “gods” are examples of the graven images God instructed us to flee from in the 10 Commandments, our divided loyalty to idolatry runs far deeper than an idol we might put on a mantle. Just as the Corinthian Ekklesia was instructed to “be holy” in their behavior and worship because they were the set-apart, holy Body of Christ, so are we today. If we don’t, his Church (that’s us) will erode and become null and void. This demands that we **recognize** and **shed** those “cultural gods” that we often integrate into and cling to as our worship. This is a non-negotiable for the Almighty God. This is a deal-breaker for the Sovereign God.

Read and carefully examine some the following scripture passages. Discuss and write down what our singular devotion to God looks like, and how our singular devotion to God needs to be reshaped. *(40 minutes)*

(As a group, you will likely not have time to examine all of these scriptures. Pick a few to walk through as a group, and take home the rest for personal study and reflection. As you find more passages that speak to this subject, add them to the list—there are plenty more throughout the Bible!)

- Instructions from the 10 Commandments to His Covenant People
 - Exodus 20:3-4
- Instructions from Jesus to His Disciples
 - Matthew 6:24
 - Matthew 6:33
- Instructions from Letters to the Ekklesia in the Gentile World
 - Romans 1:18-32
 - Colossians 3:1-11
 - 1 Peter 4:1-7
- Instructions from the Corinthian Ekklesia
 - 1 Corinthians 10:14-33

ESTABLISHING SINGULAR WORSHIP OF THE ONE TRUE GOD IN MY LIFE

Discuss the following important questions as a group, then take them home for personal examination. These questions are intended to probe your heart and help you find alignment with the only God. *(10 minutes)*

- To what **altar(s) of worship** do I devote my life, other than to Christ?
- Who and/or what are the competing **masters** of my life with which I struggle, other than Christ?
- What needs to be adjusted and changed for me to keep God as my only devotion of worship?