



wind

hearted

day one: idol identification

READ Jonah 2:8, Exodus 20:1-6, Psalm 135:15. The dictionary defines idol as:

1. an image used as an object of worship, 2. any person or thing regarded with blind admiration, adoration, or devotion, 3. something visible, but without substance, and 4. a false conception, notion, or fallacy.

Why do you think God hates idols? When you cling to worthless things, which heart (*referring to last week's devo*) do you allow God to express towards you? In this weekend's message, we were challenged to find the idols in our own lives. Review the section entitled *An Air of Idolatry* from the weekend outline. Is there something that has a disproportional amount of importance in your life which has now become an idol? Has it become an obsession - taking up too much thought, time, and money?

ASK God to reveal to you anything that may be inappropriate or out of balance in your life. Allow yourself to be still and quiet before God.

Give God permission to convict you of any idolatrous behaviors or attitudes.

LISTEN and **MEDITATE** on Psalm 24:1-6.

day two: throw it out

READ Hosea 8:5-6. THROW OUT, PUT TO DEATH, FLEE... These words aren't describing a casual debate about getting rid of an old, worn out coat.

THINK about the following statement from the last weekend's message; "God has troubled my spirit because of the questionable attitudes, actions, and relationships in my life." What do you think of that statement?

Are there things in your life you should just throw out?

An attitude? A behavior? An activity? A relationship? A TV show? A credit card?

ASK God to give you the courage to admit if you need to throw something out.

Who could you ask to support you in casting out this idol?

The dearest idol I have known, whate'er that idol be, help me to tear it from Thy throne, and worship only Thee. — Cowper

day three: Strategy for Success

ANSWER each question to help figure out a strategy to minimize the negative effects of idols in your life. **PRAY** for God to guide and speak to you as you think about them.

- * What/who has become an idol in my life?
- * In what/whom do I depend and trust?
- * Is there someone who encourages this idolatry?
- * To whom/what do I run when I feel depressed or distressed?
- * Why do I seek comfort/pleasure/purpose from this idol?
- * When am I most vulnerable and apt to worship this idol?

As you identify patterns or behaviors which lead to idolatry, **WRITE** them down. Consider sharing with someone the behaviors you've identified. Which daily routines might you need to change in your life? Are there especially difficult times when you need encouragement and accountability from a friend?

PRAY for the courage to take the steps to make changes. "For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God. Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name." — Psalm 86:10-11

day four: fasting

It's too bad idols don't come with warning labels: **Warning! Excessive devotion to or infatuation with _____ could result in a serious condition known as idolatry. If _____ becomes the most important thing to you, occupies most of your time and/or thoughts, etc. seek help immediately.** The problem is, anything and everything has *idol* potential. Idols aren't easily identified.

Good things, great things, even Godly things can become idols. My devotion to God can become an idol if my devotion becomes the focus, instead of God Himself. Furthermore, something which has the potential to trip me up may not be an issue for you. What are we to do?

Everything has its place... and everything in its place.

READ Matthew 6:16-17. Fasting is an intentional practice of denying yourself the freedom to behave a certain way so as to stir up spiritual depth and awareness.

We most often associate fasting with abstaining from food, but you can **FAST** from most activities like eating, watching TV, working on hobbies, sex. Fasting is a wonderful way to recenter yourself on God and decentralize even a good thing in your life that has become an idol. It can be a tool to get things back in their rightful place.

ASK God if He would have you fast. What should you give up?

For how long? **CONSIDER** replacing the activity with prayer, scripture memory, service to another person, becoming active in a group or something else.

Whom will you ask to pray and hold you accountable during this fast?

day five: for Students & Singles

READ Hosea 8:5, I Timothy 4:11, I Corinthians 6:18.

One definition of maturity is the ability to delay gratification.

This is easier said than done. In a culture that constantly puts sex front and center, a commitment to sexual purity can seem unrealistic.

- * How committed are you to being sexually pure before marriage?
- * What makes it difficult to remain sexually pure before marriage?
- * Are you in a sexually active relationship right now?
- * How is it possible to be close to God while in such a relationship?
- * What would God want you to do about this relationship?

REVIEW the questions from Day Three. Identify patterns in which you become vulnerable to sexual immorality. Use them to make a plan to protect yourself during vulnerable times. This is especially important if you're in a new dating relationship.