

## Understanding Idolatry

### I. The Characteristics of Idolatry: (Jeremiah 2:13)

- A. Idolatry is depending on some aspect of life or creation as you should depend on God which in Jeremiah was categorized as broken cisterns. Broken cisterns are man-made unreliable large pits dug in the rock covered with plaster used to gather rainwater. When cracks developed in the cisterns, they would hold no water unlike the reliable natural springs of living water which always provided water no matter the situation which was symbolizing God. (Bible Knowledge Commentary /The Book of Jeremiah)
- B. Idolatry is dependence of some aspect of life creation at the level of worship above God to get what we treasure above God.
- C. Idolatry is the dependence on certain aspects of life or creation at the level of worship above God making them the avenue to of our satisfaction and solutions to our problems.
- D. Idolatry is the preoccupation with some aspect of life or creation above and apart from the Creator to bring some longing(s) of our hearts that have become the lusts of our hearts.

### II. The Creation of Idolatry: (Jeremiah 2:13)

- A. Idols are created when we no longer look to God as the source of our satisfaction.
- B. Idols are created when we no longer look to God as the solution to our problems.
- C. When we no longer look to God as the source of our satisfaction, we look to His creation to bring it us.
- D. When we no longer to look to God as the solution to our problems, we look to His creation to bring it to us.

### III. The Criticism and Consequences of Idolatry: (Jeremiah 2:13, Ezekiel 14:3)

- A. Idolatry is evil in the sight of God.
- B. Idolatry leads you away from serving God to serving His creation.
- C. Idolatry leads you to stumbling into further sin.
- D. Idolatry leads God to address you according to your sin of Idolatry instead of the request you bring to Him.

**IV. The Categories of Idolatry: Remember,** Idolatry is the dependence on certain aspects of life or creation at the level of worship above God, making them the avenue to of our satisfaction and solutions to our problems. Idolatry is the preoccupation with some aspect of life or creation above and apart from the Creator to bring some longing(s) of our hearts that have become the lusts of our hearts. **Idolatry** could be:

- A. ***Depending on People as the source to our satisfaction and the solution to our problems*** above and apart from God to bring some longing(s) of our hearts that have become the lust(s) of our hearts making the lust(s) the source of our satisfaction and the end our problems.
- B. ***Depending on Places as the source to our satisfaction and the solution to our problems*** above and apart from God to bring some longing(s) of our hearts that have become the lust(s) of our hearts making the lust(s) the source of our satisfaction and the end of our problems.
- C. ***Depending on Products as the source to our satisfaction and the solution to our problems*** above and apart from God to bring some longing(s) of our hearts that have become the lust(s) of our hearts making the lust(s) the source of our satisfaction and the end of our problems.
- D. ***Depending on Perspectives as the source to our satisfaction and the solution to our problems*** above and apart from God to bring some longing(s) of our hearts that have become the lust(s) of our hearts making the lust(s) the source of our satisfaction and the end of our problems.
- E. ***Depending on Positions as the source to our satisfaction and the solution to our problems*** above and apart from God to bring some longing(s) of our hearts that have become the lust(s) of our hearts making the lust(s) the source of our satisfaction and the end of our problems.
- F. ***Depending on Power as the source to our satisfaction and the solution to our problems*** above and apart from God to bring some longing(s) of our hearts that have become the lust(s) of our hearts making the lust(s) the source of our satisfaction and the end of our problems.
- G. ***Depending on Platforms of influence as the source to our satisfaction and the solution to our problems*** above and apart from God to bring some longing(s) of our hearts that have become the lust(s) of our hearts making the lust(s) the source of our satisfaction and the end of our problems.
- H. ***Depending on Politics as the source to our satisfaction and the solution to our problems*** above and apart from God to bring some longing(s) of our hearts that have become the lust(s) of our hearts making the lust(s) the source of our satisfaction and the end of our problems.
- I. ***Depending on Money as the source to our satisfaction and the solution to our problems*** above and apart from God to bring some longing(s) of our hearts that have become the lust(s) of our hearts making the lust(s) the source of our satisfaction and the end of our problems.
- J. ***Depending on Medication as the source to our satisfaction and the solution to our problems*** above and apart from God to bring some longing(s) of our hearts that have become the lust(s) of our hearts making the lust(s) the source of our satisfaction and the end of our problems.
- K. ***Depending on Media as the source to our satisfaction and the solution to our problems*** above and apart from God to bring some longing(s) of our hearts that have become the lust(s) of our hearts making the lust(s) the source of our satisfaction and the end of our problems.
- L. ***Depending on Ministry as the source to our satisfaction and the solution to our problems*** above and apart from God to bring some longing(s) of our hearts that have become the lust(s) of our hearts making the lust(s) the source of our satisfaction and the end of our problems.

**The Discipline**

We can expect God to address our sin of idolatry as He sees fit while not addressing our prayer request as we desire. If we keep resisting God's discipline we fall further away from God resulting in further negative consequences to experience as a result.

**The Dilemma**

We no longer accept and embrace God as the source of our satisfaction and the solution to our problems.

**Cycle of Idolatry**

**The Direction**

When God is no longer the source of our satisfaction and the solution to our problems we make man and creation big and God small resulting in a lack of fellowship with God leading to deeper sin in our lives.

**The Downfall**

We turn from God and turn to His creation as the source to our satisfaction and the solution to our problems.

## Understanding Lust

### V. The Characteristics of the Lusts of Our Hearts: (James 1:13-14)

- A. Lusts of the hearts are longings that have become constant cravings of our hearts in an evil or wrong way.
- B. Lusts of the hearts are longings that have moved from something we want to something we must have making something that was once a good thing now an evil thing; making it a sin in our lives because we are consumed with it above God and His will.
- C. Lusts of the hearts are longings that have become such a preoccupation of our hearts that we are easily enticed by the devil when it comes to them because they have become inordinate, sinful affections of our soul.
- D. Lusts of the hearts are longings that have become such a preoccupation of our hearts that we are willing to sin to obtain them, sin to keep them, sin when do not receive them, or sin when we loose them making those longings a worship in our lives above worship and obedience to God.

### VI. The Commitment to the Lusts of Our Hearts: (Ezekiel 33:31)

- A. When we are committed to the lusts of our hearts, we will still listen to truth and delight in the truth we hear, but we will not obey that truth because we are preoccupied with the lusts of our hearts.
- B. When we are committed to the lusts of our hearts, they become a constant topic of discussion.
- C. When we are committed to the lusts of our hearts we are in constant pursuit of obtaining them.
- D. When we are committed to the lusts of our hearts, we do not find obedience to God something to be treasured above those lusts we have treasured in our hearts.

### VII. The Cancer of the Lusts of Our Hearts: (James 4:1-4)

- A. The lusts of our hearts can lead us to kill others or at least be envious of them.
- B. The lusts of our hearts can lead us to create conflict with others.
- C. The lusts of our hearts can lead us to pray selfishly.
- D. The lusts of our hearts can lead us to be friends with the world's system resulting in acting as enemies of God.

### VIII. The Consequences of the Lusts of Our Hearts: (James 1:15, Galatians 6:7-8 )

- A. The lusts of our hearts lead to walking in further sin in our thoughts, words, or actions.
- B. Walking in further sin in our thoughts, words, or actions reveals that one is walking in the flesh which leads to corruption in one's life which ultimately leads to death.
- C. This could be physical death where as a result of a Christian's unrepentant sin one is now disciplined by God by being taken from earth to be with Him resulting in lost rewards for eternity as a result of constant disobedience on earth. (1Corinthians 11:23-32)
- D. This could be eternal death where as a result of an unbeliever's life of sin he/she now faces the consequences of rejecting God and living a life of sin which is burning in hell forever. (Revelation 20:11-15)

**IX. The Categories of The Lusts of Our Hearts: Remember, Lusts** of our hearts are desires we believe we cannot do without being satisfied; We are willing to sin to obtain them, sin to keep them, sin when do not receive them, or sin when we loose them making those longings a worship in our lives above worship and obedience to God. It could be a desire:

- A. ***To be loved*** by others that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- B. ***To be accepted*** by others that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- C. ***To be understood*** by others that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- D. ***To never be hurt or disappointed*** by others that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- E. ***To be respected by others*** that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- F. ***To be served by others*** that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- G. ***To have personal preferences accommodated at all times*** that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- H. ***To be viewed as competent by others*** that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- I. ***To be approved of by others*** that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- J. ***To belong to someone*** that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- K. ***To be held in high regard by others*** that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- L. ***To be significant to others*** that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- M. ***To be satisfied by others*** that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- N. ***To maintain a favorable position with others*** that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- O. ***To be secure/safe with others*** that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- P. ***To never be alone*** that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- Q. ***To have someone exposed for the way they have mistreated us*** that has become a demand or a craving we believe we can't live without.
- R. ***To have someone to suffer the consequences for what they did to us*** that has become a demand or a craving we believe you can't live without.

**The Cycle of The Lusts of Our Hearts, The Devil and The World:**

**The Display of Disobedience**

If we do not resist the temptation to find our delight in this world instead of in Jesus Christ we will walk in a lack of love for God and a lack of love for others revealing a life that is consumed with the lusts of our hearts

**The Dialogue of the World**

Satan uses the world to speak to the desires of our hearts that have become the lusts of our hearts

**The Direction of our Lives**

If we do not resist the temptation to find our delight in the world instead of in Jesus Christ, we will live by earthly, natural, demonic wisdom, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life

**The Deliberation of Our Hearts**

As the world speaks to our hearts appealing to the lusts of our hearts while presenting various delights in the world that will lead us into sin to obtain or maintain the lusts of our hearts, our minds contemplate pursuing or resisting these worldly delights

## **Idolatrous Lust**

**Definition of Idolatrous Lust:** *Something you bow down to that you believe will bring you what you truly treasure while making what you truly treasure something you bow down to in place of the living God. It is the various aspects of life and creation we worship above the Creator as well as the basic ways we worship the creation above the Creator. Romans 1:18-32*

**X. The avenues we pursue and bow down to in the form of worship (Idols) along with these treasures we bow down to in the form of worship (Lusts) make up the idolatrous lust in our lives. (Romans 1:18-25) Examples:**

- A. Bowing down to people (*Idol*) as we should God to receive the acceptance we treasure and crave in an inordinate way (*Lust*) in place of loving God and loving others is *idolatrous lust*.
- B. Bowing down to education (*Idol*) as we should God in order to be viewed as competent which we treasure and crave in an inordinate way (*Lust*) in place of loving God and loving others is *idolatrous lust*.
- C. Bowing down to money (*Idol*) as we should God to receive the comfort we treasure and crave in an inordinate way (*Lust*) in place of loving God and loving others is *idolatrous lust*.
- D. Bowing down to control (*Idol*) as we should God to receive the security we treasure and crave in an inordinate way (*Lust*) in place of loving God and loving others is *idolatrous lust*.

**XI. There is a process by which we are lead into Idolatrous Lust:**

- A. **Mindset:** Your mind is set on things below instead of things above.  
(Philippians 3:17-19)
- B. **Motivation:** You begin to make self- interest a priority above God's will.  
(James 3:13-4:3)
- C. **Meditation:** Your desires become preoccupations resulting in becoming lust.  
(James 4:1-3)
- D. **Methods:** You look for avenues to satisfy your desires which have now become lust.
- E. **Manner:** You bow down and submit to these avenues in order to obtain what you have turned into lust thus making these avenues idols you bow down to in order to get what you lust after. (Philippians 3:17-19)
- F. **Mastered:** You become a servant of your flesh (Galatians 5:16-21)

## **XII. How Do You Repent of Idolatrous Lusts? (Proverbs 28:13-14)**

- A. Identify desires or cravings that have preoccupied your minds to the point of lust.
- B. Identify the avenues you have pursued and thus have bowed down to in the place of God to obtain these desires or cravings that have preoccupied your minds to the point of lust.
- C. Identify the sinful thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors that have come about as a result of these desires or cravings that have preoccupied your minds to the point of lust.
- D. Confess the lusts, idols, sinful thoughts, sinful attitudes, and sinful behaviors you have identified, to God and others accordingly.
- E. Replace your lusts, idols, sinful thoughts, sinful attitudes, and sinful behaviors you have identified, with genuine worship of God, and godly thoughts, godly attitudes, and godly behaviors.
- F. Decide to make God priority over all and everything.
- G. Guard your heart.



**Examining the Heart Journal**

1. What did you want today or what were you expecting to happen today?

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2. Who did you want it from or expect it to come from?

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3. What desire(s) would this fulfill in your life?

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4. How much of your time was spent thinking, speaking, and acting on what you wanted ?

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5. What ways did you sin in thoughts, words, or actions to get what you wanted?

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6. What ways did you sin in thoughts, words, or actions when you did not get what you wanted?

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7. What person(s) did you sin against to get what you wanted?

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8. What person(s) did you sin against because you did not get what you wanted?

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9. What were your attitudes and actions like towards God and others as a result getting what you wanted today?

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10. What were your attitudes and actions like towards God and others as a result of not getting what you wanted today?

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11. What biblical standards or principles could you use to explain your thoughts, words, and actions today?

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12. What biblical standards or principles should you have practiced in thoughts, words, or actions today?

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13. Were you thoughts, words, and actions towards others based primarily on how you felt or what God commanded? Explain

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