



The Ten Commandments

No Graven Images

RULE

➤ Exodus 20:4-6

*You shall not make for yourself a carved image,
or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above,
or that is in the earth beneath,
or that is in the water under the earth;
you shall not bow down to them nor serve them.*

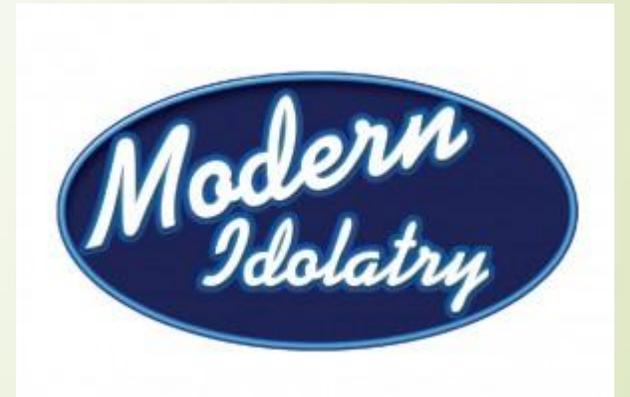
*For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God,
visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children
to the third and fourth generations
of those who hate Me,
but showing mercy to thousands,
to those who love Me and keep My commandments.*

➤ Idolaters damage the generations that follow them



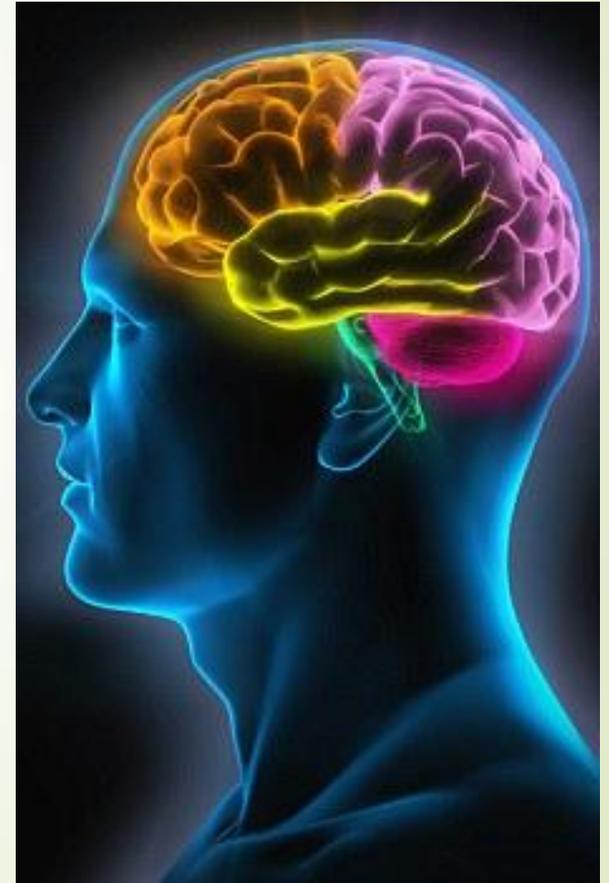
Principle

- ▶ Idolatry is the **worshipping** of images.
- ▶ Art, photography, motion pictures etc?
- ▶ The issue
 - ▶ is not images for communication or beauty,
 - ▶ is images for the purpose of worship
- ▶ Worship is
 - ▶ ascribing of worth
 - ▶ acts or attitudes that give worth-ship
- ▶ Idolatry creates life-directing images
- ▶ Some make statues
- ▶ Modern idolatry is
 - ▶ more subtle
 - ▶ perhaps more prevalent
 - ▶ more powerful



Idolatry is of the Mind and Heart

- All statues, pictures, and other images are first formed in the mind.
- Images become idols when they are bowed down to and served.
- Idolatry is of the mind and heart.

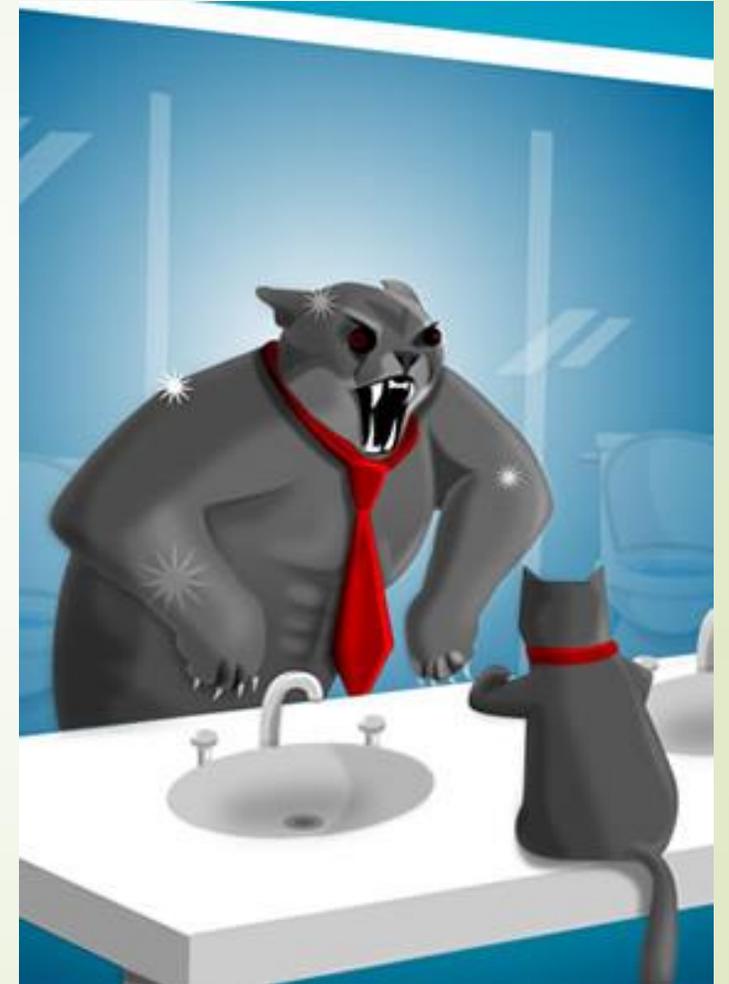


IDENTITY

► Psalm 135:15-18

*The idols of the nations
are silver and gold,
The work of men's hands.
They have mouths,
but they do not speak;
Eyes they have,
but they do not see;
They have ears,
but they do not hear;
Nor is there any breath
in their mouths.*

*Those who make them are like them;
So is everyone who trusts in them.*



Reason

- ▶ This commandment forbids seeking of identity from a source other than our Father God.
- ▶ Our Father God is the only valid source of life and love meaning
- ▶ When we relate to Him in this way, we find ourselves as real people.
- ▶ If we relate to anything else as a substitute (disobedience to the first commandment) we become
 - ▶ unstable in our lives
 - ▶ unreal in our thinking
 - ▶ insecure in our personalities.



Spiritual and Moral Decline

► Romans 1:20-25

*For since the creation of the world
His invisible attributes are clearly seen,
being understood by the things that are made,
even His eternal power and Godhead,
so that they are without excuse,*

*because, although they knew God,
they did not glorify Him as God,
nor were thankful,
but became futile in their thoughts,
and their foolish hearts were darkened.*

*Professing to be wise, they became fools,
and changed the glory of the incorruptible God
into an image made like corruptible man;
and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.*

*Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness,
in the lusts of their hearts,
to dishonour their bodies among themselves,*

*who exchanged the truth of God for the lie,
and worshiped and served the creature
rather than the Creator,
who is blessed forever. Amen.*



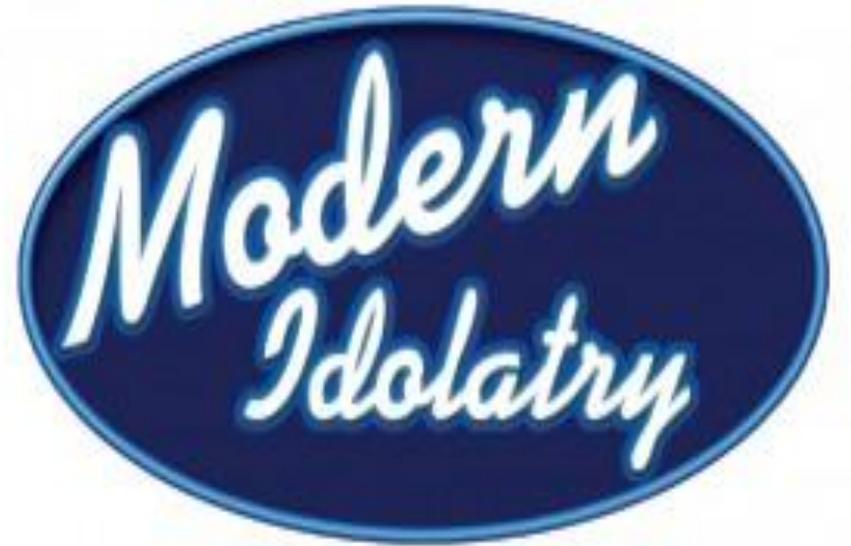
REACTION

- The human reaction to the loss of identity is image building (idolatry)
- Many problems related to self esteem come from building our own images



Forms of Idolatry

- ▶ Idolatry takes many forms
- ▶ Most fit the following six categories:
 - ▶ Cult Idolatry
 - ▶ Ideological Idolatry
 - ▶ Religious Idolatry
 - ▶ Hero Worship
 - ▶ Self Rejection
 - ▶ Self Projection



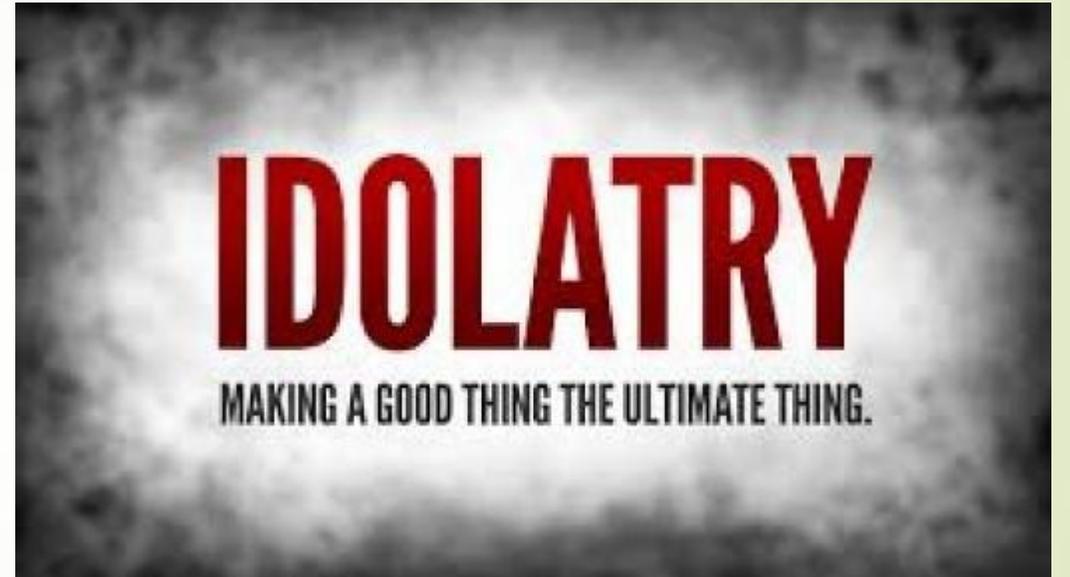
Cult Idolatry

- ▶ This includes the worship of personified false gods such as
 - ▶ Astarte (Judges 2:13),
 - ▶ Baal (Judges 2:13),
 - ▶ Dagon (Judges 16:23),
 - ▶ Molech (Leviticus 18:21) etc.
- ▶ This also includes occultism and Satan worship in which supernatural power is ascribed to incantations, talismans (magic charms and images) and secret rituals.



Ideological Idolatry

- ▶ An idea or “ism” that promises fulfilment to its followers.
- ▶ These include the following:
 - ▶ Communism
 - ▶ Nationalism
 - ▶ Patriotism
 - ▶ Denominationalism
 - ▶ Liberalism
 - ▶ Feminism
 - ▶ Capitalism
 - ▶ Environmentalism etc.
- ▶ Some genuine value
- ▶ Adherents to ideologies become idolaters when they look to these ideas for their
 - ▶ sense of worth
 - ▶ life fulfilment
 - ▶ identity



Hero Worship

- Identity is sought through identifying with the achievements, charisma and status of
 - sports champions,
 - entertainers (rock idols),
 - politicians
 - religious leaders.



Self-Image Building

- ▶ This is the most widespread form of idolatry.
- ▶ All forms of idolatry can be seen to be expressions of this basic problem.
- ▶ Self image building usually involves
 - ▶ self rejection and
 - ▶ self projection



Self Rejection

- ▶ Since all self-image involves rejection of our true selves.
- ▶ May begin parental lack
- ▶ May be reinforced and magnified peer groups etc.
- ▶ Causes
 - ▶ feelings of inadequacy and inferiority
 - ▶ fears of disapproval and criticism.
- ▶ Does not always appear as inferiority
 - ▶ May be false self-assertiveness and superiority.



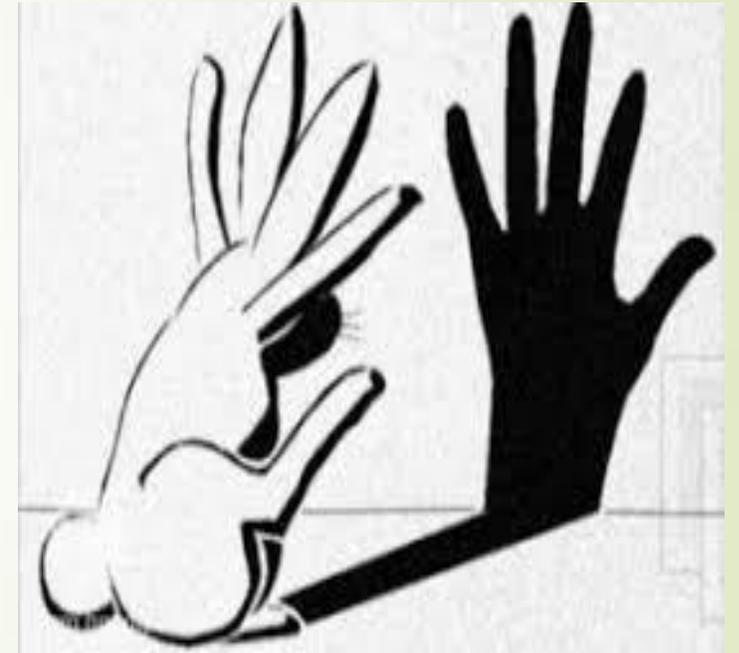
Self-rejection is the greatest enemy of the spiritual life because it contradicts the sacred voice that calls us the Beloved.

— Henri Nouwen —

AZ QUOTES

Self Projection

- ▶ Self projection is the act of compensation for self rejection.
- ▶ Projecting an image that covers the self we have rejected.
- ▶ Image depends upon our life experience and our temperament.
 - ▶ What has happened shapes what we want
 - ▶ Temperament shapes how we go about getting it.
- ▶ Lifetime preoccupation.
- ▶ Distracts and cuts us off the true fulfilment of knowing who we are in God.



RESULT

- ▶ Lifetime of insecurity maintaining shaky images that are founded in unreality.
- ▶ Haunted by doubt - all images are shadows.
- ▶ Energy expended substantiating images.
- ▶ Leads to
 - ▶ Disappointment
 - ▶ Disillusionment
 - ▶ Despair



REMEDY

- There are three aspects of the remedy,
 - **The rod**
refers to the hand of God upon us in discipline.
 - **The revelation**
is that aspect of the truth in Christ that can set us free in each particular situation.
 - **The release**
is the living freedom experienced as the soul is set free to obey.



ROD

- ▶ God mercifully destroys any image that distracts us from knowing Him or our true selves.
- ▶ This may produce pain and insecurity in our lives.
- ▶ Sometimes the answer to our problems about self esteem and insecurity lie in giving up our ideas and efforts rather than in trying harder.
- ▶ **Isaiah 2:17-21**

*The loftiness of man shall be bowed down,
And the haughtiness of men shall be brought low;
The LORD alone will be exalted in that day,*

*But the idols He shall utterly abolish.
They shall go into the holes of the rocks,
And into the caves of the earth,
From the terror of the LORD
And the glory of His majesty,
When He arises to shake the earth mightily.*

*In that day a man will cast away his idols of silver
And his idols of gold*



Revelation

- ▶ The utter futility of trying to find security in our own identity
- ▶ Our lives are hid with Christ in God
- ▶ **Colossians 3:1-2**

*If then you were raised with Christ,
seek those things which are above,
where Christ is,
sitting at the right hand of God.*

*Set your mind on things above,
not on things on the earth.*



RELEASE

- Secure self-acceptance.
- At rest as called and chosen by God without doing anything to deserve it.
- No image to maintain,
- We are inescapably who we are, the handiwork of God, made in His image and likeness
- Assurance of His love and interest in us.
- **Ephesians 1:3-6**

*Blessed be the God and Father
of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the
heavenly places in Christ,
just as He chose us in Him
before the foundation of the world,
that we should be holy
and without blame before Him in love,
having predestined us to adoption as sons
by Jesus Christ to Himself,
according to the good pleasure of His will,
to the praise of the glory of His grace
**by which He has made us
accepted in the Beloved.***

