

Are There Idols in my Life?

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When it comes to the concept of idolatry it can be easy to consider the subject as an ancient issue. After all, in America it is not common for people to have what we often recognize as “idols.” You know...those the little wooden figures or the small gold pieces, that Indiana Jones might find. The truth is, those things are not typically found in the American household; they are found in old Myan temples or archaic tombs in Egypt. When we examine Scripture, we notice idols were constantly mentioned during the time of the Old Testament, but not as much as time went on. Now, these are just a few examples, but you can understand why our minds tend to believe idolatry is an issue of old. However, be that as it may, we would all be wise to recognize idolatry is just as prevalent today as it was in the past. In fact, it could even be the case we have idols in our own lives without realizing it. With that in mind, let us consider three questions to ask to help us determine whether or not there are idols in our life.

First, we need to ask ourselves, “Where is my time going?” When we look to God’s Word we learn several principles about time. The Bible teaches that time is limited (James 4:13-16), the Bible teaches that time should not be wasted (Acts 24:25), and the Bible teaches time needs to be used wisely (Eph. 5:16). Having said that, where are we spending our time? If we are spending more time in Facebook than we are God’s Book, we might have an issue with idolatry. If we are concerned about the amount of time that worship takes, but we have no problem spending 4 hours at the ball game, we might have an idol. Where is your time going? If most of our time is devoted to secular things rather than spiritual things, we need to rearrange our priorities (Matt. 6:24).

Second, we need to ask ourselves, “Where is my money going?” In the United States alone, a family with two kids in sports spend an average of 1,600 dollars a year. For subscriptions, the American household spends over 900 dollars a year, and when it comes to vacation the average spent is at least 3,000 dollars. Now, certainly there is nothing wrong with allowing your kids to play sports, having some subscriptions, or going on vacation, but are we giving more to those things than we are to God? Do we enjoy putting money into those things, but we have a hard time putting money in the plate (2 Cor. 9:7)? If we are not careful, we can easily take God’s blessing (James 1:17), and use it to worship something else.

Finally, we need to ask ourselves, “What are we emotionally invested in?” The truth is we can become invested in many different things. Some people invest in their hobbies, others invest

in their work, and some invest in pure recreation. Once again, just as it is the case with time and money, there is nothing wrong with investing in various aspects of life, but we must keep our priorities straight. If we are more excited to go to a movie than the house of the Lord, we have our priorities mixed up (Ps. 122:1). If we invest more emotion into a football game than we do worship services, we have our priorities mixed up (John 4:24). Truly and idol can be anything you please when its investment is greater than God!

Without a doubt, sometimes we convince ourselves idolatry is simply an ancient practice, but there is no denying it is alive and well today. While idolatry may not look like it used to, may we never forget there can very easily be idols in our lives if we are not careful with our time, money, and emotion.