

BROKEN 3 – Broken Idols

BROKEN things are not necessarily your ENEMY; but the things of the ENEMY definitely need to be BROKEN.

→ *What do we mean by 'things of the enemy'? What things typically need to be broken off people's lives?*

A. IDOLATRY in the OT

The commandment (Exodus 20:3-5) & the story (Exodus 32:1-25)

- * God is JEALOUS for our WORSHIP because He knows how critical it is WHERE we place our AFFECTION ... to what or whom we give INFLUENCE & AUTHORITY.
- * One of the Enemy's great strategies is to use IDOLS to TURN your HEAD.

→ *"Follow the Lord and you will be blessed & safe, prosperous & successful. Turn away and you are at risk. So, one of Enemy's great strategies is to use idols to turn your head." Why then does the enemy use idols? How do they 'turn our heads'?*

→ *If you're honest, do you (or have had you in the past) any functional idols?*

Here's how it works: As human beings, we have needs & wants that ONLY God can fill.

- * In our WHOLENESS, that's all great: God can STEP into that ROLE and we are at peace.
- * In our BROKENNESS, there's a human urge to fill that VOID with something ELSE, and the danger is, we choose something HARMFUL, probably without realising it.

→ *How does the Enemy use our brokenness to seduce us into idolatry? What sort of things does he tempt us to seek, replace, compensate for?*

B. IDOLS DEFINED

IDOL = Man-made object, desire, attitude, priority or concept that you choose to put IN GOD'S RIGHTFUL PLACE.

- * Anything to which you give undue ATTENTION, LOVE & INFLUENCE, and, in essence, WORSHIP.
- * Anything you LOVE, TRUST or OBEY more than God or instead of God.

→ *If you were to be brutally honest with yourself, is there anything you're ever tempted to put before God, to choose to listen to instead of God, to try to please ahead of God or put your trust in rather than God? Why are each of those things perilous?*

POSSIBLE IDOLS

- a) Materialism
- b) Power & Success
- c) Pleasure & Entertainment
- d) Relationships
- e) Political affiliations & nationalistic pride
- f) Legalistic religious traditions, doctrinal positions
- g) Spiritual gifts, the spiritually gifted, ministry 'success'
- h) Perfectionism
- i) Health & beauty

→ *Are any of those challenges for you? If you were to succumb to any, which do you think are the most likely candidates? Can you tell your group about any past victories you've won?*

TWO KEY THOUGHTS

- * The problem is not just that you GRAB HOLD of an IDOL; it's that the IDOL GRABS HOLD of YOU.
- * To practise idolatry is to make you a SLAVE to something other than God.

→ *How does an idol 'grab hold of you' and make you its slave? Why is an idol usually insatiable? How does it 'keep you from its rivals' or 'blind you to truth'? Why is it incapable of delivering what it 'promises'?*

C. TWO SPECIFIC IDOLS

1. The Idol of AMBITION

- * Danger: Over time, your heart EMBRACES your desires, dreams & ambitions to such an extent that they become functional IDOLS.
- * Something you SEEK more actively than God, to which you devote more TIME & ATTENTION than God.

→ *Is the idol of ambition a challenge for you? If so, how? Under what circumstances has (or might) it sneak in?*

→ *What are the rivals competing for your time & attention? Are you ever tempted to measure your value or determine your identity in anything other than God? If so, why?*

- * There's a proper ORDER (Matt 6:33, Psalm 37:4-5) MESS with that & you'll get yourself in a MESS.

→ *What are the risks associated with the idol of ambition? And why is the proper order the answer?*

The BIG QUESTIONS

- i) Is your ambition CONSECRATED or CARNAL?
- ii) Am I functionally expecting GOD to serve MY ambition or is my ambition PROPERLY ALIGNED to please GOD?
- iii) Would I be prepared to LAY IT DOWN, if the Lord were to ask?
- iv) Am I COMPROMISING anything in pursuit of this ambition?
- v) Is my ambition drawing me CLOSER to the Lord or tugging me AWAY?

→ *How do you answer each of those questions? Any particular one hit close to home? How do you make sure your ambition is consecrated & properly aligned?*

2. The Idol of CONTROL

- * Does God have the AUTHORITY, the final say, the right to say NO or am I KEEPING that for myself?
- * The Enemy knows that if he can TEMPT you with CONTROL, he can TEAR you AWAY from God.

→ *What is 'control' & who is competing for it?*

→ *How does the Enemy use temptation to seize control as a tool to tear you away from God? How does your taking control potentially impact your relationship with God?*

Control says,

- * I can do it WITHOUT God.
- * I can do it AHEAD of God.
- * Worst of all, I can do it INSTEAD of God

SIGNS this idol is present in your life

1. Resist biblical commands that don't align with your personal desires & preferences.
2. Make decisions based on feelings rather than biblical truth.
3. Struggle to surrender in worship.
4. Driven by a need to control every detail & make sure everything goes your way.
5. Unreasonably resistant to change or correction.
6. Prayer is a last resort, not a first response.
7. Struggle to forgive, because you feel the need to control the what, when & how of justice.
8. Resist trusting God with your future, plans & gifts, because you fear losing control.
9. Struggle to rest, relax, even sleep, because you've convinced yourself everything depends on you.

→ *Are any of those 9 warning signs for you personally? Is there anything the Holy Spirit is prodding that you need to take to the Lord?*

→ *What other idols get entangled with control, largely by convincing you that if you were to have them, you'd have a greater degree of control?*

How do we BREAK idols?

1. Idols are broken by an ENCOUNTER with God.
 2. Idols are broken by ENTHRONING God.
 3. Idols are broken by a CORRECT UNDERSTANDING of gospel theology.
- *Why are these three so important & how do you make sure you're doing them?*

→ *What false theology or corrupted part-theology are we tempted to believe that drives us into either ambition or control?
What is the gospel truth that countermands that?*

→ *What is your main takeaway / work-on from this message?*