

9/19/21

Ex. 32: 1-5

Title: Making A List Of Our "Shiny gods".

Introduction: Today we start a four Sunday series that looks at how we set our financial priorities for God. The main object of this sermon series is to have financial freedom and to avoid being controlled by debt so that we can demonstrate generosity in our lives.

Idolatry is not a new problem for humanity. Every culture has things that are being worship since the beginning of time. What comes to your mind when you hear the word, "idol"? Is it shiny gold statue of a calf?

What is an idol? Merriam Webster dictionary defines it as:

1. an object of extreme devotion
2. a representation or symbol of an object of worship.

Mike Slaughter who is a pastor at a church in Ohio defines it as, "anything, or anyone, that receives the primary focus of my energy or resources, which should first belong to God." (Book Title: "Shiny gods", pg.17).

The Bible calls this having a divided heart.

"Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, "If you return to the Lord with all your heart, remove the foreign gods and the Ashtaroath from among you and direct your hearts to the Lord and serve Him alone; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines." 1 Samuel 7:3 NIV

"You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments." (Exodus 20:3-6NIV)

Do you see yourself as having a problem with idol worship?

The following are the areas most of us struggle with:

1. Relationships

In Matthew 8:21-22 we read about a disciple asking if he can first go and bury his father before following Jesus. Jesus' response to him "No". "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

2. Material possessions

Conclusion: God wants our exclusive devotion. We are not to place any other gods, any other priorities that get primetime usage of our time, energy, and resources before Him.

"You shall not forget the covenant that I have made with you. You shall not worship other gods, but you shall worship the Lord your God; he will deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies." They would not listen, however, but they continued to practice their former custom. So these nations worshiped

the Lord, but also served their carved images; to this day their children and their children's children continue to do as their ancestors did." 2 Kings 17:38-41 NRSV