

THE SIN OF IDOLATRY

Idolatry has been around since the children of Israel in the days of Moses' leadership and all throughout the Bible even into the New Testament. It has and always will be sin according to God's word. As believers we've often thought of idolatry as simply the worship of idols, some golden image created to be a tangible God but we have moved from golden images to ideals and ambitions that are rooted in our desires for success and prosperity as defined by this world. We have allowed the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life to be established in our activities to the point that we don't consult the Lord or listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit in the governing of our daily lives. It is sad to say and see where believers have begun to worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator. When I say creature I refer to the *things* we have made our focus and priority over God and the leading of His Holy Spirit (Romans 1:18-32).

I want to spend time ministering to parents because there is a pattern of behavior in the church that is causing failure to the next generation. I want to share the importance

of keeping the Sabbath holy and bring light to the fact that even in our places of worship we have allowed in idols. The church has got to get back to a place and position of Godly influence. We must be a holy people so we have got to do away with idolatrous thinking and living.

In today's modern world too many Christian parents allow sinners who don't go to church or worship God on Sunday (our Sabbath in honor to God in America) lead them and their children through sports and other recreational activities. This is an act of idolatry and was designed by Satan to lure parents and their children away from worshipping and growing in the knowledge of God in the church. The same way Eve and Adam were deceived in the Garden of Eden in Genesis 3:1-7 is the same sly and subtle way Satan is deceiving parents and their children today. When children control their parents with their emotions through crying, disobedience and the environment of what children of the world do, the parents do not have a strong relationship with Christ. Listen to what the Holy Scriptures say in Isaiah 54:13, "All your children shall be taught by the Lord, And great shall be the peace of

your children.” Proverbs 20:11, “Even a child is known by his deeds, Whether what he does is pure and right.” Proverbs 22:6, “Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.” Ephesians 6:1-4, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise: “that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.” And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.” God wants parents to pay attention to the word “admonition”. There are several definitions for this word including counsel, advice, or caution; a gentle reproof; warning or reproof given by an ecclesiastical authority *Dictionary.com.2016.* <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/admonition?s=t> (27 July 2016). It is the parent’s job to counsel and warn their child or children not to sin against God. The parent is supposed to provide oversight to their children about how important it is to worship and grow spiritually to honor God on the day set aside for corporate worship. God requires a day of worship and praise to Him. Listen to what God said in Ezekiel 20:12, “Moreover I also give

them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them.”

The Sabbath is a set day and time for Christians and their families to come together, hear God’s word and be sanctified by what they are hearing for spiritual growth. One of the reasons so many families in America are failing is because they have forgotten God’s Sabbath. Our country has forsaken the Sabbath for the cares of this world. In our nation worshipping God on Sunday is not important anymore. Even Christians make excuses for not coming to church to worship God on Sunday, our decreed day to honor and worship God. Football, baseball, basketball, golf, tennis, soccer and entertainment are the major replacements of pleasure over worshipping God on Sunday as the Sabbath. Christians have followed sinners to endorse such conduct on a day that God wants His people to come together before Him.

The Sabbath has been replaced with idolatry. Sports, entertainment and sexual immorality are the common idolatrous worship of today. This is the sinful pleasure people seek instead of God. Look at all the immoral acts that go on in

our country. When we see the increasing rate of murder and terrorism we can't afford to have any other god before the Lord our God. Bible prophecy teaches us in 2 Timothy 3:4-5 that men will be lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power and from such people turn away! 1 Peter 4:3-4 says, "For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles-when we walked in lewdness, lust, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you." Interestingly enough, when a Christian decides they are going to change and renew his/her mind according to Romans 12:2 and not walk, fellowship, worship or participate in worldly activities and environments, the first thing some Christians and non-Christians do is criticize them. No Christian, full of the Holy Spirit should want to indulge in abominable idolatries. Every Christian should rise above the lifestyle of which the Devil once had them live and walk. The Devil has no right to control the life of a born-again Christian. Read

Ephesians 2:1-7; these scriptures will reveal that God has taken away our past through the riches of His mercy, His great love, and made us alive together with Christ--saved and sitting together in heavenly places with Him. This means you have a relationship with Christ and not the Devil. When you fulfill your life in Christ you become fruitful for the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 13:23). Your desire is to fulfill the will of God, not the world that's full of idolatry. Your desire is to grow in the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22), the gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:4-11) and to develop your will to give attention to reading, exhortation and doctrine to save yourself and those who hear you when you speak about the goodness of God (1 Timothy 4:13, 15-16). Spiritual growth keeps your mind from keeping up with celebrities, Hollywood, and the entertainment industry of this world. Christians should never idolize people! God and His Son Jesus Christ should always be your focus.

One of the greatest forms of idolatry today is how men covet money. There is nothing new about men of the world coveting money, but when you see ministers dancing on money thrown at the altar, it is their god. This form of idolatry

has carried so many Christians into false worship and belief before the Lord. This is the same sin that got Judas into trouble. Remember Judas was a chosen minister of the gospel just like a lot of ministers today. Our Lord Jesus Christ chose Judas as one of His original disciples for apostleship. As the son of perdition, a thief, lover of money and a traitor, Judas never became an apostle. Money can make you an idolater if that is where your heart is. When a preacher creates false doctrines to get money; lie and change the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures for people to believe and give money--this is idolatry. Whenever you covet money or anything else, you are an idolater. Today, I see so many ministers preaching a false gospel that causes them and those who hear them to not believe in 1 Timothy 6:3-10. When reading these scriptures you can see a great divide in the body of Christ with regard to Christians not consenting to wholesome words. From these scriptures God gives ministers and Christians a warning to not love money. 2 Timothy 3:2 says that in the last days men will be lovers of money. That is a sign of where the church is

today and how ministers are deceived by demon spirits to cause people to become avaricious.

The reason why a lot of Christians cannot grow spiritually and become mature in Christ is because they won't obey God's word and instructions. For instance in 1 Corinthians 5:11 it says, "But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner- not even to eat with such a person." God said not to keep company with an idolater or to even eat with such person. If what a minister teaches causes you to become an idolater, why would you attend his/her conference, forums, and seminars? Listen to what God says and teaches us according to His word from the Holy Scriptures in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, no adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God." Notice the word idolater appears with all

those other sins that keep people out of the kingdom of God.

Idolatry is a sin and there is a penalty for those who willfully practice sin. It is important for all Christians to understand how to live and worship the true and living God. Demons rule idolatry. Demons want Christians to live and worship God in an unrighteous manner. Ephesians 5:5 says, “For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.” What is revealed in this scripture is that a covetous man is an idolater. This is why Christians should not be listening to *name it and claim it* messages instructing them to seek after material things. God wants you to believe in Matthew 6:31-34, and obey what He says in 1 John 2:15-17. Use the members of your body righteously. Don’t allow your flesh and eyes to cause you to lust and covet after the things of the world. When the lust of the flesh and eyes leads your life as a Christian, you become the person the bible speaks of according to Matthew 13:22, Mark 4:18-19, and Luke 8:14. Understand what causes you to fail God in your life. Colossians 3:5 says, “Therefore put to

death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.” Remember, covetousness brings forth idolatry.

I want to encourage every Christian to worship righteously and correctly before the Lord. Obey God according to what He said in 1 Corinthians 10:14, “Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.” Understand what God requires of worship according to the simplicity of His truth. Do not be deceived by false doctrines and rapacious men. Don’t follow men described in Ephesians 4:14, but live your spiritual life according to Ephesians 5:17. Be a fruitful Christian according to Mark 10:20. Be blessed of the Lord and may you continue to prosper in the knowledge of His word to perform His will.