



Do I Have Other Gods and Idols in My Life?

Exodus 20:3-5: (NASB) ³*You shall have no other gods before Me.* ⁴*You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.* ⁵*You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God...*



When God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses, He set a standard that would influence the world for ages to come. Those ten statements of direction summed up all of what humanity would need to live godly and productive lives. The first two of those commandments were to have no other gods before God Himself and to not create and worship idols. While we know what these things meant for ancient Israel, what do they mean for us? Are we as Christians bound by those Commandments? If so, how? What does having other gods look like in the 21st century? And what about idols? Back in those days, people chiseled them out of wood or stone. We no longer do that (although there are some countries that do), so how would creating and worshipping idols fit into our day?

The Ten Commandments as a whole represent an architectural plan for godly life. With the First Commandment as the absolute foundation for the rest, the Ten are a collection of life-building necessities developed through fidelity and righteousness.



Guide our relationship with God



INTERNAL INSTRUCTION
FULFILLMENT WITHIN
OUR HEART AND MIND



EXTERNAL ACTION INSTRUCTION
FULFILLMENT CAN BE SEEN



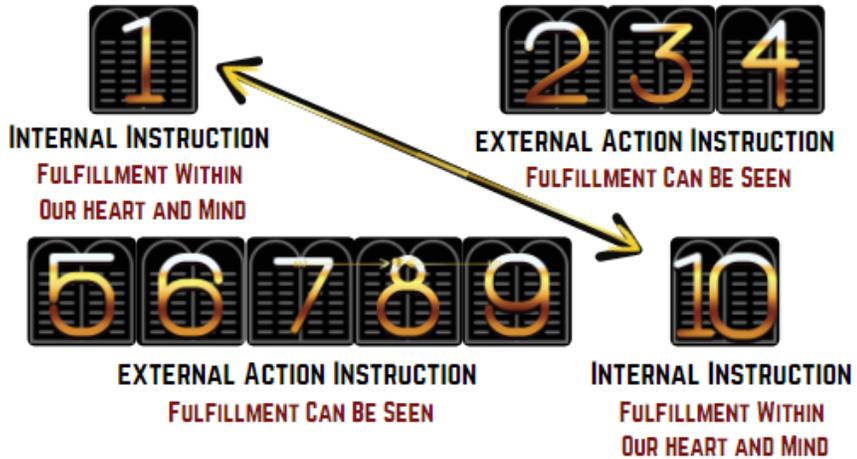
Guide our relationship with our human family



EXTERNAL ACTION INSTRUCTION
FULFILLMENT CAN BE SEEN



INTERNAL INSTRUCTION
FULFILLMENT WITHIN
OUR HEART AND MIND



What we have is somewhat of a sandwich effect - surrounding all of our actions are the internal desires of our hearts and minds related to God in heaven and to our human family.

During this podcast we will focus on the First and Second Commandments.

First Commandment - notice the context God provides:



Exodus 20:1-3: (NASB) ¹Then God spoke all these words, saying, ²I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ³You shall have no other gods before Me.

Only God could have saved three million people without military intervention. He led Israel out of slavery without any loss of life for the Israelites in terms of altercation. They literally walked out after being enslaved for 142 years.

Out of the house of slavery - there is a spiritual parallel for us as Christians being saved out of the house of slavery. We will address this further in our discussion.

No other gods before me - in other words: I am first in your mind - your instinctive go-to source for strength, courage, calm, wisdom, insight and direction. I am the worthy recipient of your praise and thanksgiving.

Violation of this First Commandment begins a downward trajectory for any individual or civilization. This can be subtle as it always happens in our mind first. Lucifer is a good example.

Satan, the original usurper, sought personal power and to be worshipped by the angels that would follow him and God's earthly creation:

Isaiah 14:12-14: (NKJV) ¹²How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! ¹³For you have said in your heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; ¹⁴I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.

Satan guided humanity INTO the slavery of sin.



OTHER "GODS"

The elevation of **ANYONE** or **ANYTHING** in our lives that would challenge God's sacred and rightful ascendancy. In our minds, these people/things can rival His power, justice, wisdom and love.

POTENTIAL OTHER "GODS"



How do we keep God first? Decide!

Joshua was bringing the people back from idolatry. This is one of his last acts, as he died shortly after these events:

Joshua 24:14-17: (NASB) ¹⁴Now, therefore, fear the LORD and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers (back to Terah) served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. ¹⁵If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; (Joshua is telling them to decide whom they are going to serve!) but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. ¹⁶The people answered and said, Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; ¹⁷for the LORD our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and who did these great signs in our sight and preserved us through all the way in which we went and among all the peoples through whose midst we passed.

The Israelites had physical clear evidence of God's power, grace, wisdom and actions, but as human nature would have it, they would repeatedly fall and get back up.

KEEPING GOD FIRST

There are many ways we can lose our focus on THE most important thing. We are, therefore, tasked with deciding regularly about where our allegiance lies.



God instructed Israel to remember how He rescued them out of slavery by instituting the annual celebration of the Passover. It was His reminder to them that He is their God and to have no other gods before Him.



Let's look at the Holocaust as a modern-day example for Israel. How many generations said they would never forget? What about our generation? Are we beginning to forget? Yes, because as generations pass, the impact loses its intensity.

Our Almighty God is a God of promise and righteous action. NO other gods anywhere can make that claim.

**Knowing God delivers is inspiring, but we are still imperfect.
How do we keep Him always before us?**

Deciding to only worship and serve God sounds like it would be enough. However, as we walk through the myriad of life's experiences, we realize there is always a thought, observation or an event that can get us off track. Deciding is a good start, but we need much more to stay focused.



What is in your heart relative to God and to others (the First and Tenth Commandments) will dictate what you DO in relation to God and to others.

What dwells in our hearts is the path our life will take, as our heart inevitably directs us. Even though we may know differently, we tend to follow our heart.



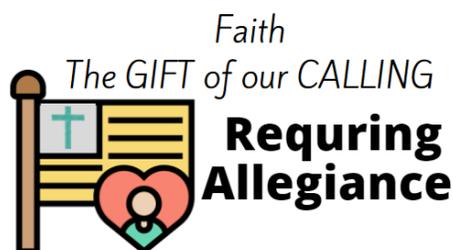
Idolatry, *Not just a sin, Modern Idolatry Compilation, Time of Grace Ministry*

- Then I actually started to do a little research on idolatry, and I discovered that some of the most influential thinkers in world history, including some of the best Bible scholars, said that idolatry wasn't just a sin or wasn't just a problem in life and certainly not just an ancient problem. It's the overarching problem of life. It's the reason the world looks the way it does today, and the reason humans behave the way we do.*

The audio clip mentioned idolatry as the overarching problem in life and there is a lot to be said for that. We see having other gods before God as the bigger problem, and idolatry is an outgrowth of having other gods.

Maintaining our decision to keep God first is a vital process. Its basis for operation is in understanding who God is. Notice this will all be based on our faith.

As we go through the following Scriptures in 2 Peter, we will look for attributes of allegiance - what makes somebody have allegiance.





Faith is an "Allegiance Attribute." The gift of our calling requires allegiance:

2 Peter 1:1-4: (NASB) *¹Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: ²Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; ³seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. ⁴For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.*



Faith has two aspects:

1. Faith in the gospel, and
2. The expression of our belief.

Peter is saying to those who received a faith in the gospel, now your faith has to grow.

Our faith is the beginning of the "keeping God first" process. 2 Peter 1:1-10 provides several necessary Allegiance Attributes to keep our faith sound.

2 Peter 1:5: (NASB) *Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge,*

For what reason? Because God has unequivocally promised us deliverance from corruption and into divine nature! *Applying all diligence* - apply speed, eagerness, earnestness and urgency.



A Christian life lived casually ends up inevitably becoming a casualty.

Faith is the basis for our allegiance. Let's examine our next attribute.



Allegiance Attribute

Moral Excellence
ALLEGIANCE OF OUR HEART

We put God first by eagerly supplying moral excellence to the foundation of our faith:

1 Peter 2:9: (NASB) *⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.*

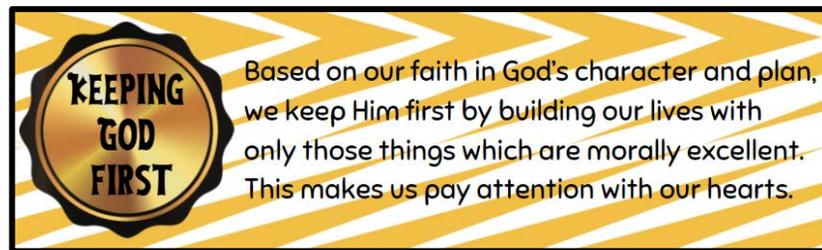


Because God is SO lofty in His being and plan for mankind, we are spurred on to always keep Him first as we strive for moral excellence:

1 Peter 2:11-12: (NASB) *¹¹Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. ¹²Keep your behavior excellent (virtuous) among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

We often see church signs that say, "Come as you are." These verses tell us come as you are, but **DO NOT STAY** as you are. Raise yourself up to a higher level.

Keep your behavior excellent (virtuous) among the gentiles - in other words, if we are Christians in a worldly environment we should behave differently. We should behave in a godly way, which is how we **KEEP GOD FIRST**.



Our heart chooses our building blocks. Make no mistake about it - we can intellectually choose, but we often end up with our hearts pushing us in another direction. That is the human propensity. Our hearts react to circumstances, feelings, trauma or sadness which can get us off track.



Why does moral excellence come right after faith?

Once we have faith in the gospel given to us, moral excellence is required because the gospel requires us to be elevated. The biggest problem is within our own morality, within the decisions we make as human beings versus the decisions we make as followers of Jesus.



Our moral excellence is a decision that should drive us to a better understanding of God and His plan:

2 Timothy 2:15-16: (NASB) *¹⁵Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. ¹⁶But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness,*

We need to have knowledge of what we believe and why we believe it. This proves our fidelity to God.



Faith, moral excellence and knowledge are foundational, especially when we build our *knowledge* based on *moral excellence* because we have *the gospel*.

Now we can begin to see how encompassing it is to keeping God first. We really need to stay in the game.

Now that we have a sense of *no other gods before Me*, what about building and worshipping idols?

It is critically important to get the First Commandment in place and understood. Once we clearly see the import of *no other gods before Me*, tackling the major issue of idolatry has a sound basis. This Second Commandment has a very different - though no less pertinent - modern appearance than before.

What is the difference between idolatry and having other gods? Having other gods before God causes us to produce idols.



The Second Commandment:

Exodus 20:4-6: (NASB) ⁴You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. ⁵You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, ⁶but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

I...am a jealous God - He is the Creator; He *should* be jealous for our fidelity. *Visiting the iniquity...on the third and fourth generations* - He allows the sinfulness of walking away from Him to have its full effect. He is not going to intervene in order to learn the lesson. This is a good and righteous Father.

recap
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OTHER "GODS"

The elevation of **ANYONE** or **ANYTHING** in our lives that would challenge God's sacred and rightful ascendancy. In our minds, these people/things can rival His power, justice, wisdom and love.



Not making idols means do not make any tangible way to focus our allegiance elsewhere. Our allegiance belongs only to God.



Habakkuk 2:18,19: (NASB) ¹⁸What profit is the idol when its maker has carved it, or an image, a teacher of falsehood? For its maker trusts in his own handiwork when he fashions speechless idols. ¹⁹Woe to him who says to a piece of wood, Awake! To a mute stone, Arise! And that is your teacher? Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all inside it.

This reminds us of the golden calf made in Moses' day - Exodus 32:1-10. Creating such a thing is dishonoring the actual living God who created us versus worshipping what we create. (He also created all the wood, gold, silver and stone used to make these idols!)

WHAT MIGHT BE AN "IDOL"

Possessions - Objects - Pictures - Symbols



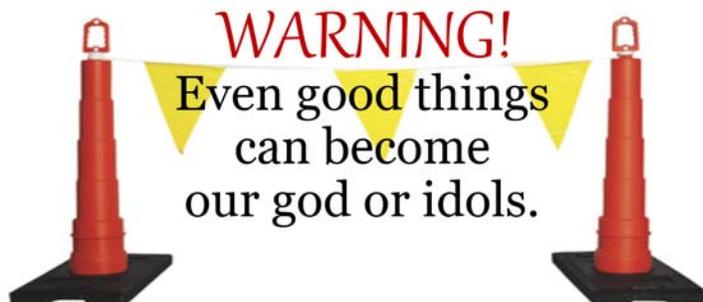
ENHANCE EGO - UNDULY ELEVATE PEOPLE -

DEPICT SUCCESS, COMFORT, WEALTH, POWER OR SOCIAL POSITION

These kinds of things do not necessarily have to be idols, but they certainly can be. There is nothing wrong with having a goal in life to accomplish. There is nothing wrong with having things that help us focus. But when they become the object of our focus because it is feeding our ego or relationship with other people, or with success being the "god" in our lives, this is where the idols become dangerous. The same things that can spur us to action can become idols if put in the wrong context. We have to be careful.

 Old Christian quotes on idolatry, *Modern Idolatry Compilation*, *Time of Grace Ministry*

- *For instance, Martin Luther once said, "Whatever your heart clings to and confides in, that is really your God." In other words, what he's saying is it doesn't matter so much what you say on Sunday mornings. On a day-to-day basis throughout the week whatever you run to for security, that hope and purpose in life functionally, that's really your God. Another reformer, John Calvin, said something similar - he said that the human heart is an idol factory. Every one of us is an expert from our mother's womb in inventing idols. Even before these guys, one of the early church fathers named St. Augustine said something similar. He maybe said it best. He said, sin and idolatry isn't so much loving bad things and doing bad things; it's loving good things too much. It's loving good things and making them God-things in your life. It's loving the blessings of life ahead of the Blessor. It's loving created things ahead of our Creator God.*





Having other gods is a thought process and an internal decision. Having idols brings that internal decision into the light of day. We are either producing reverence to God OR producing idols to other gods. We do not want to handle our Christianity casually.

2 Peter 1:5-6: (NASB) ⁵Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, ⁶and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance...



Each of these aspects Peter brings out is another attribute of allegiance. But why is knowledge before self-control? If we do not have self-control based on godliness and righteousness, we do not know what self-control even looks like. We have to first put knowledge in place so we can define what self-control actually is.

We put God first and deconstruct any idols by applying self-control, the mastery of our passions, to the knowledge and moral excellence we have already built upon our faith:

1 Corinthians 9:25-27: (NASB) ²⁵Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. ²⁶Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; ²⁷but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

This teaches us to follow through. We have control because we know where we are going. We may have thoughts of other gods in our imperfect minds. What do we do with those thoughts? Self-control catches them and denies their passing into the light of day.



I have thoughts that are not godly thoughts and the question I have to ask myself is, what am I going to do? This might sound corny, but I'm going to say it anyway because this is an imagery in my own mind. In the movie *The Lord of the Rings*, Gandalf is a hero, and he was having a standoff with this monstrously evil being. They're on this little rickety bridge and Gandalf is standing in the way. He's protecting everybody else and commands that evil being and says, "You shall not pass!" That's the kind of imagery I want to put into my own head when I get those thoughts that are not godly. "You shall not pass into the light of day. It is not your jurisdiction; you are not allowed there."

What do we do with ungodly thoughts?



Do you want to not have idols? Have self-control! Have it built on knowledge, built on moral excellence, which is built on the foundation of our faith.



Allegiance Attribute

Perseverance

ALLEGIANCE of our ENERGY

Perseverance is the act of consciously staying the course and of faithfully bearing the weight of a burden.

Perseverance is necessary to continually keep from building and worshipping idols:

James 5:7-8,11: (NASB) ⁷Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. ⁸You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ¹¹We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.



I have been focusing on mercy lately. I want to be more merciful to others. I realize I make tons of mistakes, and I am reminded that God's son Jesus died for everyone. He died for them, too. I want to develop this merciful quality because it is so beautiful. I want to be like my heavenly Father.

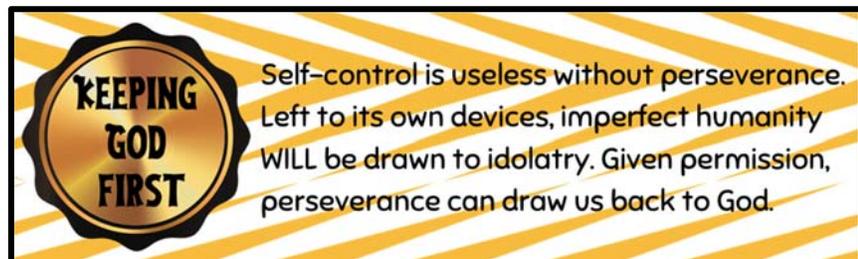


Check out our CQ Kids video: **WHAT IS MERCY?**

christianquestions.com/youtube

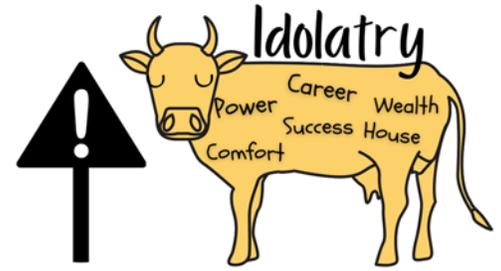
God delivered us from the slavery of sin, just like He delivered Israel from the slavery of Egypt. We should have no other gods before Him.

James 1:4: (NASB) *And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*





Idolatry is the warning sign that something is wrong. We need to be able to recognize the warning signs of having another god before God. We have to examine and see what that is because getting rid of the idol is not enough. We have to put God back in His rightful place.



A "God first" allegiance is a lot of work and requires a whole-hearted wholly focused effort to keep it thriving.

**Will our allegiance to God always be such a struggle?
Can we ever learn to just make it a habit?**

The good news is that this allegiance battle does NOT have to rage on forever. The more diligently we fight to have and then maintain our appropriate loyalty, the more we will begin to live in accordance with our transformed "mind of Christ" in control.

Our loyalty can become eternal. How? We must make the effort to open the door by concentrating on allegiance to God. Then we have to let it do its work. We must remember to feed that allegiance and then obey its precepts.

To avoid having other gods before God, these are the things we need to put in place:

2 Peter 1:5-7: (NASB) ⁵Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, ⁶and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, ⁷and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.



**Allegiance
Attribute**

Godliness

ALLEGIANCE of our CHARACTER

Our *godliness, brotherly kindness* and *love* are the by-products of acting on the previous Allegiance Attributes. We can put God first by being godly. We must put the first four Allegiance Attributes (*moral excellence, knowledge, self-control and perseverance*) in place first. Godliness does not happen because we walk into church on Sunday, feel like we are blessed and walk out of church - this does not create godliness! Godliness is created in the daily struggles of our minds and hearts, experiences and circumstances.

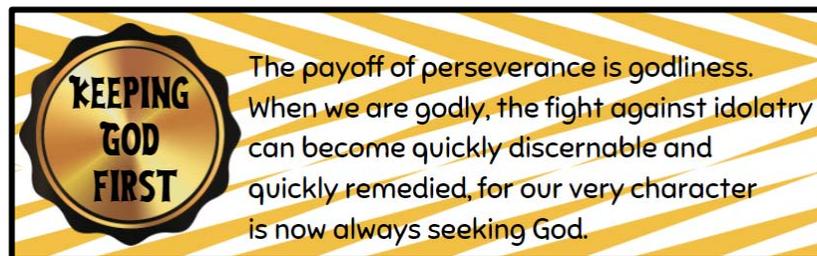
We have to build a character that puts God first. When honored and followed, self-control and perseverance based on knowledge and moral excellence inevitably producing godliness. *Godliness is reverence regularly applied*. We do not have to constantly struggle with becoming godly. If we allow and work at the growth process, godliness becomes an integral part of who we are.



This is where idolatry dramatically shrinks, and true character transformation takes place:

Romans 12:2-3: (NASB) ²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. ³For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed. We cannot prove God's will unless we are in reverent harmony with His will. No matter how much knowledge we have, God's will is only *proven* by the transformation of our characters. We need to live those things that we can intellectually prove. That is how we have no other gods before God. It is a matter of keeping Him first always.



There is a powerful payoff when we put perseverance in place and let it develop. Just like with loyalty and allegiance, we have to make room for perseverance. We have to feed it by renewing our commitment, and we have to obey it by pushing through our natural tendencies. When we build perseverance up, the payoff is godliness. Godliness brings spiritual victory. Even when we experience defeat there is still spiritual victory because we are working, getting up and trying again. God loves when we fall down, get up and try again (asking for help and forgiveness). Thank God for His mercy!



Allegiance Attribute

Brotherly Kindness

ALLEGIANCE of our RELATIONSHIPS

The allegiance of our relationships is stronger if we have the allegiance of our character to God first. A godly character widely opens the door to genuine brotherly love. To see others through the eyes of brotherly love is to see them as God sees them.

As we become more mature in Christ there is more depth in our character, and we treat others with godliness and brotherly kindness in ways we never could before.



All idolatrous tendencies fade into the background when we put brotherly love to work:

Romans 12:10-11: (NASB) ¹⁰Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; ¹¹not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;

We are to *be devoted to one another in brotherly love*. This devotion is stronger when we have that godly character because we are putting God first, *serving the Lord*. Diligence shows up here again! We have to put urgency and energy into every one of these aspects.

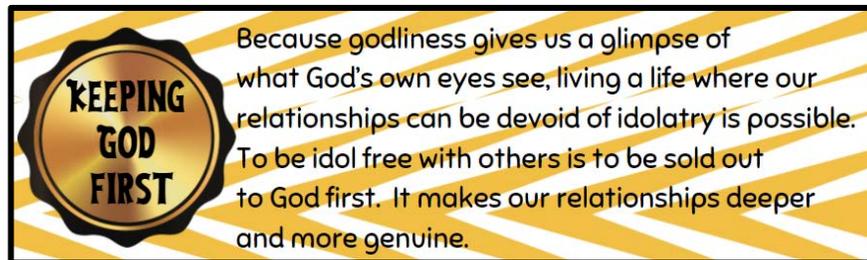
Brotherly love is not only for our brotherhood; it is for ALL of humanity as well:

Hebrews 13:1-2: (NASB) ¹Let love of the brethren continue. ²Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.



Jonathan mentioned earlier how he is focusing on mercy - that's been his word for the last several weeks. Well, my word has been KINDNESS. I've been working on showing kindness in every possible opportunity. It is a joyful experience. I feel like a little kid sometimes and think, I'm going to hold the door for that person, or I'm just going to greet them even when they're not expecting it.

We are to let the light of God's love shine through us. We have so much to be grateful for! Brotherly kindness is an important aspect of what our lives should be producing. This behavior keeps idolatry away because we keep God as God.



Idolatry gets in the way of our relationships with one another. If we analyze our lives, we can see where the things we idolize affect our relationships with those around us. It is shocking to see how we allow these idols to stand between us and those we love and with whom we associate. *Thou shalt have no other gods before Me*. We can see why this is the first, and most important, commandment! It has to do with every single part of our lives. It always comes back to that. God is really brilliant. What a plan He has made to help us live lives that are valuable in the sight and service of others.



Allegiance Attribute

Love

ALLEGIANCE of our PURPOSE



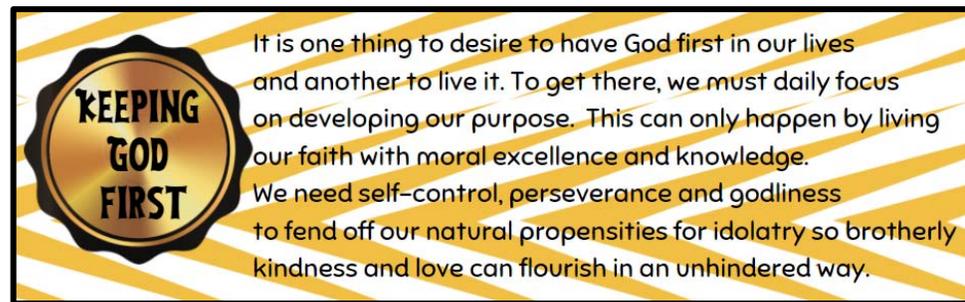
We do not want to look at love as just an emotion; we want to understand it as the purpose of life. There is no higher allegiance to God than the purpose of selfless love. This is what Jesus' human life taught us. By definition, dwelling in Jesus' selfless example is living with God first where there is no room for idolatry.

Because we cannot do this perfectly, God judges our intentions and efforts. There is such value in this. He tells us to keep trying - over and over until we learn and grow.

Each time this happens, let us draw closer to God and put away the idols:

1 John 3:13-16: (NASB) ¹³*Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you. ¹⁴We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death. ¹⁵Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. ¹⁶We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

This is a powerful verse with a powerful direction on how to live in a godly way, always putting God first. We pass *from death into life because we love the brethren*. We need to make this our own.



This is the formula for *Thou shalt have no other gods before Me*. Peter tells us it is right in front of us; we just have to put all the pieces in place. But Peter does not stop there. It is not enough for him to say this is how we do it, but he continues with the promised blessing God will give us if we follow the path of God first.

2 Peter 1:8-10: (NASB) ⁸*For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. ¹⁰Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble.*

Remember, Christians, God saved US from being enslaved to sin. Why did God tell the Israelites they should have no other gods before Him? Because He chose them out of all the people in the earth and delivered them from 142 years of bondage. They all walked away from Egypt and the slavery of working for the Pharaoh. This would not have been possible without God.

God is a loving, powerful God of plans and purposes. Peter started us off in **2 Peter 1:5-11:** (KJV) *giving all diligence, add to your faith...*, earnestly work at it, do not stop, keep moving forward. Then he ends by saying, *be all the more diligent*, do not stop. Be diligent now to take all the pieces - all the things that help you put God first so we can be faithful and put them all together.



For as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble. Faithfulness is attainable even when we are imperfect, because God makes up the difference due to the sacrifice of Jesus covering our imperfections. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me. Never make an idol, never have anything that is a symbol of something that takes us away from God Almighty. Always put God first.

*So, do I have other gods in my life?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*

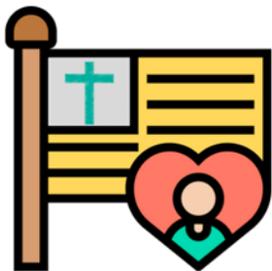


Join us next week for our podcast on October 19, 2020

Ep. 1148: Ghosts, Reincarnation and Humanity –
What’s Real? (Part I)

Bonus Material and Study Questions

*Let parents bequeath to their children not riches, but the spirit of reverence.
– Plato*



Faith
The GIFT of our CALLING
Requiring Allegiance
Moral Excellence
ALLEGIANCE of our HEART
Knowledge
ALLEGIANCE of our INTELLECT
Self-Control
ALLEGIANCE of our PASSIONS

Perserverance
ALLEGIANCE of our ENERGY
Godliness
ALLEGIANCE of our CHARACTER
Brotherly Kindness
ALLEGIANCE of our RELATIONSHIPS
Love
ALLEGIANCE of our PURPOSE



The defining characteristics of worship rightly placed, and worship wrongly placed:

- The object of your worship - what is it?
- The reasons for your worship - why is it?
- The methods of your worship - how is it?

We are not to worship anything which is not in its rightful place worthy of our admiration, our praise and our loyalty!

Examples:

Psalm 29:2: (KJV) *Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.*

Matthew 6:24: (KJV) *No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

Matthew 4:10: (NKJV) *Then Jesus said to him, Away with you, Satan! For it is written, You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.*

2 Peter 1:1-10: (NASB) *¹Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: ²Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; ³seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. ⁴For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. ⁵Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, ⁶and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, ⁷and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. ⁸For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. ¹⁰Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;*

In the account of Jonah, he prays to God about his own idolatry and is delivered:

Jonah 2:1-10: (NASB) *¹Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the stomach of the fish, ²and he said, "I called out of my distress to the LORD, And He answered me. I cried for help from the depth of Sheol; You heard my voice. ³For You had cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, And the current engulfed me. All Your breakers and billows passed over me. ⁴So I said, I have been expelled from Your sight. Nevertheless I will look again toward Your holy temple. ⁵Water encompassed me to the point of death. The great deep engulfed me, Weeds were wrapped around my head. ⁶I descended to the roots of the mountains. The earth with its bars was around me forever, but You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God. ⁷While I was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, And my prayer came to You, Into Your holy temple. ⁸Those who regard vain idols forsake their faithfulness, ⁹But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving. That which I have vowed I will pay. Salvation is from the LORD. ¹⁰Then the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah up onto the dry land.*



Daniel's experience with King Nebuchadnezzar is a good example of other gods and idolatry:

Daniel 2:46-48: (NRSV) ⁴⁶Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, worshiped Daniel, and commanded that a grain offering and incense be offered to him. ⁴⁷The king said to Daniel, Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery! ⁴⁸Then the king promoted Daniel, gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon

So, Daniel is rewarded as the king recognizes that the God of Daniel is the God of all gods. It is important to remember that the king is here expressing a great appreciation of the Almighty and His power, but over time he is destined to forget. This is the consequence of mere appreciation rather than full and unbridled worship. Meanwhile, Daniel is living his heart-felt communion with the Almighty.

There is a repeated pattern that will run through all examples of wrongly placed worship:

- The Observation Stage: Seeing something attractive that begs admiration
- The Thought Stage: Holding in awe the image of that which is attractive
- The Rationalization Stage: Convincing one's self that you owe obeisance to that which is attractive
- The Action Stage: Turning the inward sin of wrongly placed emotional worship into an outward sin of active worship

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Ep. 1147: Do I Have Other Gods in My Life?

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See:



1. What is the "architectural plan" for godly life in the Ten Commandments? (See Genesis 20:2-17)
2. Why does God say, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me*? What does this actually mean?
3. Which commandment did Satan violate? Where did he guide humanity? (See Isaiah 14:12-14, Genesis 3:1-19)
4. What "other gods" can creep into our lives? What "gods" do you have in your own life? How did Joshua keep God first? (See Joshua 24:14-17)
5. How can we build a foundation for keeping God first? How do you keep God first? (See 2 Peter 1:1-4) What aspects of God are revealed in these verses?
6. What is the second "Allegiance Attribute"? Why is it the "allegiance of our heart"? (See 2 Peter 1:5, 2 Peter 2:9,11-12) How do we accomplish this attribute?
7. What is the third Allegiance Attribute? Why is this important? (See 2 Peter 1:5, 2 Timothy 2:15-16)
8. What might be an idol in our lives? How is this different from "other gods"? (See Exodus 20:4-6, Habakkuk 2:18-19, Exodus 32:1-10)
9. Why do we need knowledge *before* self-control? Self-control is useless without what other very important attribute? Why? (See 2 Peter 1:5-6, 1 Corinthians 9:25-27, James 5:7-8,11, James 1:4)
10. How do we develop godliness in our characters? What part does perseverance play in godliness? How does the development of godliness help us to have brotherly kindness? (See 2 Peter 1:5-7, Romans 12:2-3,10-11, Hebrews 13:1-2) How does idolatry get in the way of our relationships with one another? What can you do to keep idolatry out of your life?
11. Why is love an "allegiance of our purpose"? How can we develop this in ourselves? (See 1 John 3:13-16)
12. How does Peter begin and end his admonitions in 2 Peter 1:5-11? Why are these words so important?