

Fugazi God

We are currently going through a series called **Love God Love Others** and today we are wrapping up the Love God portion.

Let's go way back to the book of **Exodus 20:4-5**.

You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods.

Do not idolize anything and worship God only.

But what is an idol? It's not just a figurine that sits in a shrine that we kneel before and chant. If it was, I think we'd all be in the clear.

My Dodger Bobblehead collection.

- Buddha
- Ganesh
- Jobu

An idol is anything that takes that takes the place of God. Anything that takes our focus off God and puts it on something else. The most important thing in your life.

Anything that is first in my life that is not God is an idol, even if it's something good. Our idols today can be **driven on the street, in the water, or fly through the air. They can give us great feelings of accomplishment (jobs, trophies, fame). They can even be things that we use to identify us in the deepest ways (politics, nationalism, family, religion).** ANYTHING that takes the place of God IS AN IDOL.

Anything that replaces God is a false god. Its artificial, its a fake, its a fugazi.

Video Clip: Donnie Brasco

The problem with a “Fugazi god” is that it will not satisfy you, it will not fulfill you, and ultimately it destroys your relationship with the one real God.

DON'T IDOLIZE ANYTHING

Luke 10

You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.

1. Idols will disappoint you.

They always promise more than they can deliver.

Jeremiah 10:14

The whole human race is foolish and has no knowledge!

The craftsmen are disgraced by the idols they make, for their carefully shaped works are a fraud.

These idols have no breath or power.

Advertisements tell you to wear these clothes, drink our soda, smoke our cigarettes, brush with our toothpaste, wash with our shampoo... you will have the most amazing results.

Have you ever ordered something from Amazon and it was nothing like the ad showed?

- Ava's Chair
- Asteroids
- No Man's Sky

Any time you put a person, product, or ideal in the place of God, and expect that this will solve your problems, you will be disappointed. Idols will always disappoint you.

2. Idols will dominate you.

Idols can end up controlling your life.

1 Corinthians 12:2

(before you knew Christ) you were **controlled** by dead idols, who always **led you astray**.

Circle or underline these words

Two inevitable effects when you love something more than God:

1. The thing you love more than God will begin to **control you**.

We call this addiction. When we use this word, we typically think of vices like, drugs, alcohol, or pornography. But we can be addicted to any number of things: sports, video games, work, and the Christian favorite stimulant of choice coffee.

1 Corinthians 6:12

12 You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is good for you. And even though "I am allowed to do anything," I must not become a slave to anything.

Being addicted to anything is slavery. It controls us.

2. You will be led astray

You will lose your perspective when something takes the place of God in your life.

- People chasing down a promotion or part in movie have been known to break all sorts of morals, sacrificing family and friends in the process.
- PokemonGo: two men fell off a cliff trying to collect pokemon near San Diego in 2016

Idols will dominate your life and control your actions.

3. Idols will deform and destroy you.

They will change you.

When God is GOD and in control of your life, you also change. You begin to resemble Him and His characteristics. But when anything else takes God's place, you begin to resemble what you value most.

Psalm 115:8

And those who make idols are just like them,
as are all who trust in them.

Rick Warren says "we shape an idol and it ends up shaping us."

Famously, the Gospels tell us about Jesus' encounter with a rich young ruler. He wants to know what it will take to follow Jesus. And Jesus sees his heart and knows that money is the most important part of his life, and Jesus tells him to sell everything he owns and give it to the poor and then he can follow Jesus. The Bible says the man walked away sadly because he was rich.

If you're not rich, replace that word with whatever else is the most important to you. God has to be THE most important thing in your life. You need to ask yourself, "What do I need to give up?" What are you holding on to that is keeping you from thriving in your relationship with God? Because if you can't give it up, if you can't let it go; you don't own it, it owns you!

DON'T IDOLIZE ANYTHING WORSHIP ONLY GOD

Exodus 20:5

You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods.

God's jealousy does not stem from neediness or vanity or misunderstanding.

Compare jealous dogs and jealous kids.

Their jealousy is unwarranted.

If I started dating another woman, Dana would be jealous. But it would not be unwarranted. Our marriage vows were a covenant between us and God and it gives her complete rights to my heart and vice versa.

And His creation, made for His glory, He deserves our worship and adoration.

Romans 1:25

they worshiped and served the things God created instead of the Creator himself, who is worthy of eternal praise!

We don't need to look to stars, or crystals, or astrology for guidance because we have access to God Himself.

There are three motives behind idols. Why would people want to make God into a statue or form that they can worship? There's a good chance none of you are making little idols at home, but we can still be plagued by the reasonings behind these idols.

1. We want to limit God's location.

If we can limit God to a statue or place, we can keep tabs on Him, and He's not keeping tabs on us. We can close the door on Him and He can't see what I'm doing.

We do this when we limit God to the church building or to our dinner table or during prayer times. If I can limit God's location, then I've got Him under my control.

2. We want to reduce God's power and size.

If we can limit God to a statue or icon, it's less imposing, less threatening. He's more convenient and manageable.

Genesis 1:27

So God created human beings in his own image.

In the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

We have reversed this and tried to make God in OUR image.

AW Tozer writes in his classic *The Pursuit of God*:

"Much of our difficulty as seeking Christians stems from our unwillingness to take God as He is and adjust our lives accordingly. We insist upon trying to modify Him and to bring Him nearer to our own image...We can get a right start only by accepting God as He is and learning to love Him for what He is. As we go on to know Him better we shall find it a source of unspeakable joy that God is just what He is. Some of the most rapturous moments we know will be those we spend in reverent admiration of the Godhead. In those holy moments the very thought of change in Him will be too painful to endure."

3. We want to control God.

When you have an idol, the worshipper has more control than the person being worshipped. A lot of people want a god they can manipulate.

There's a little boy who wants a new bike...

So he goes and asks his mom for a bike to which she replies that maybe if he prays, god will bring him a bike.

So he sits down and writes Jesus a letter .." Dear Jesus, if you give me a bike I wont sin for 1 year.."

He walks down to the mailbox but before leaving the house sees his mother's statue of Mary and suddenly feels guilty because he won't be able to avoid sin for that long. Defeated he heads back upstairs.

So he sits down and writes Jesus another letter .." Dear Jesus, if you give me a bike I won't sin for 6 months.."

He walks down to the mailbox but before leaving the house sees the statue of Mary and feels guilty again. So, he picks her up and takes her to his room. He stuffs the statue in his toy box and begins drafting another letter.

"Dear Jesus, if you ever want to see your mother again..."

There are a lot of adults who try to manipulate God "God, you owe me." "God, I demand this."

Owing my mom

We don't demand anything, we don't manipulate God. We worship Him and trust that He knows best.

Psalm 34:8

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

He proved that by sending His Son to die on the cross to pay for our sins.

Communion