

KEEP YOURSELVES FROM IDOLS.

Sunday, April 24, 2022 -- 1st JOHN series -- Msg 34 -- Pastor Andrew Coleman

1st JOHN 5:18-21

English Standard Version (ESV)

18 We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.

19 We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. 21 **Little children, keep yourselves from idols.**

REVIEW of the little letter of FIRST JOHN:

1st John is a MASSIVE _____ to all who call themselves Christians to evaluate their faith:

- Do you believe in Jesus as the Messiah?
- Do you love God's people?
- Do you love God?
- Do you obey God?

1st John is a MASSIVE _____ for those who rightly trust and live in Christ.

vs 13 -- True Believers can know that they have eternal life.

vs 15 -- True Believers can know that God hears them.

vs 15 -- True Believers can know that God answers prayer.

vs 18 -- True Believers can know that God has delivered them from sin & Satan.

vs 19 -- True Believers can know 'whose kingdom they are in'.

vs 20 -- True Believers can really know the _____.

vs 21 -- True Believers must keep themselves from _____.

LITTLE CHILDREN, keep yourselves from idols. vs 21

- Notice the affectionate but humbling way by which the readers are reminded that they are vulnerable to serious _____ and grave _____. 'Little children,'
- Notice that the _____ God (vs 20) is the exact opposite of _____ (vs 21).
- This final statement vividly exposes the underlying message of the entire _____.
- This final statement is absolutely consistent with the key theme of the whole _____.
- This final statement points to the _____ and _____ of the Ten Commandments.

EXODUS 20:3-6 [God gives the 10 Commandments to Moses]

"You shall have no other gods before Me.

*"You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a **jealous God**, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing **steadfast love** to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments.*

21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

HUMANS and WORSHIP:

1) Humans are made to _____.

Westminster Shorter Catechism (1646 England/Scotland -- 107 simple questions and answers)

Question 1. *What is the chief end of man?*

Answer: *Man's chief end is to _____ God, and to _____ him forever.*

Romans 11:36; Prov. 16:4; Col. 1:16; 1 Peter 4:11; 1 Cor. 10:31; Ps. 73:24-27

2) Humans _____ worship.

The great question is not _____ you are worshipping but _____ are you worshipping.

3) What does **worship** mean? Worship comes from two words put together...

'worth' = _____, cherish, treasure.

'ship' = a suffix in English that indicates a 'state of being' or 'shape'.

(think of friendship, craftsmanship, sportsmanship, statesmanship)

So worship is assigning, _____*, expressing, exalting value to something or someone.

HUMANS and IDOLS:

What is IDOLATRY?

Idolatry is anything that interferes with _____ to and _____ of the one true God.

- An idol may be _____: a material possession, a part of nature, a sport, a hobby, a person
- An idol may be _____: a nationality, a philosophy, a virtue, a right, an ability, a dream, a desire, an accomplishment, a goal, a status, a profession, a feeling, an experience, an escape, an _____.
- An idol may be something you _____ and seek to _____.
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EXODUS 20:4-6

You shall have no other gods before Me... [and no graven images]

ISAIAH 45:5

I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God;

I equip you, though you do not know me,

DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9 the Great Shema ('hear'):

*Hear, O Israel: **The LORD our God, the LORD is one.** You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

Idolatry is ANYTHING that _____.

21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

IDOLATRY IN THE BIBLE:

- 1) In the Bible there is no more _____ than idolatry. It's as bad as it gets!
- 2) Idolatry called for the strictest of _____, (Lev. 26:27-33; Nub. 33:51-56; Deut. 29:16-28) and the most extreme _____ (Exodus 23:13-- *do not even speak the name of other gods*).
- 3) Idolatry is the ultimate expression of _____ to God.
- 4) Idolatry is heavily condemned in the New Testament as well.
(Acts 7:41-43; 17:29-31; Rom. 1:18-23; 1 Cor. 5:10-13; 6:9; 10:5-8, 14-22; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:5-6; Col. 3:5-6; 1 Peter 4:3-5; Rev. 2:20-23; 14:9-11; 16:1-2; 19:20; 21:8; 22:15)
- 5) God is righteously _____. He even names Himself '*Jealous*' (Ex. 34:14).
He will not tolerate a _____. He will not share his _____.
(Think about all the _____ things in this indicates about His love for you.)
- 6) There are two main **anthropomorphic metaphors** that reveal the way God relates to humanity:
 - The metaphor of _____ -- a husband and his wife.
(Exodus 34:15-16; Hosea, Ezekiel, Jeremiah)
 - The metaphor of a _____ -- a king and his people.
(1 Sam. 8:7-9 '*They have rejected me as king*' also Isa. 31:1-3; Jer. 2:17-19; etc.)
 In both cases _____ is central and unequivocal.
- 7) Interestingly enough, the NT unambiguously and most prominently declares _____ (also known as '*covetousness*') to be idolatry.

Colossians 3:5

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

Ephesians 5:5

For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Matthew 6:24

24 "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

- 8) The antidote for idolatry is _____, _____ and **obedience in Christ.** **see Matt. 6**

25 "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? 28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, 29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

What ‘things’ (person, place, thing or idea) am I tempted to put before God in my life?

**Do I ever value anything more than God? Does anything rival Him in my heart or mind?
If yes, what? Why?**

Do I place things in place of my worship of God? If so, what are they?

- If I refuse to read my Bible, what do I do instead? _____
- If I make excuses to not worship with His people, WHY? What do I value instead? _____
- If I choose my sin over obeying God, what sin am I valuing more than walking in fellowship with Him?

What things consume my time? _____

What things consume my ‘free-time’? _____

What things consume my money? _____

What things am I most passionate about? _____ Are they from/for God?

What things am I afraid of? What causes me fear? Do I fear them more than God?

God’s Word indicates that I should be...

[SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES -- WORSHIP OF GOD]

- **Growing in knowledge of God through learning His** _____
(Am I? If not, where does my time go?) IDOL: _____
- **Worshipping _____ His people** -- see Hebrews 10:24-25
(Am I? If not, why? What do I do instead?) IDOL: _____
- **Growing in _____ and faith**
(Am I? If not why? What do I do instead?) IDOL: _____
- **Sharing the Gospel with _____ people**
(Am I? Why not? Fear? Apathy? Ignorance?) IDOL: _____
- **Growing in faithful financial management and generous _____**
(Am I? Where does my money go?) IDOL: _____
- **Carefully teaching my children to genuinely love/obey God** (Deut.6)
(Am I? What is more imp't than that to me?) IDOL: _____

Am I willing to _____ and _____ idols that rob God of my worship?

John wrote what he wrote for a reason... am I keeping myself from idols? How or how not?
