

idolater. In **Philippians 3:18-19**, many had allowed their belly to become their God. That is, their own appetites and passions consumed them.

The Danger of Idolatry

Idolatry leads to all sorts of immorality, wickedness, and eventually to Hell. According to **Romans 1:21-32**, because of idolatry, God has given many people up into uncleanness, vile affections, and a reprobate mind. As a result of idolatry, these verses show that the extreme sinfulness of man is what brought God's judgment upon them. The statement of **verse 24**, "*Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness,*" is because of **verse 25**, "*Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.*" Also, God gave up Israel because of idolatry in their hearts. (**Psalm 81:9-12**). The sin in the Garden of Eden is associated with idolatry, for Satan told Adam and Eve, "*Ye shall be as gods*" (**Genesis 3:5**). The plagues brought against the Egyptians were against their gods (**Exodus 12:12**). The Canaanites lost their land because of idolatry (**Deuteronomy 12:1-32**). Israel lost fellowship with the Lord because of their idolatry (**II Kings 17:5-15,35**). The danger of idolatry is that it brings a curse and eventually excludes men from Heaven (**I Corinthians 6:9-11**).

In conclusion, we must keep ourselves from idols. The warning is given throughout the Scriptures. We must not think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device (**Acts 17:29**). In **Acts 17**, the Athenians had become idolaters even though they were a highly cultured and artistic people in the ancient world. But they knew not the true God. They had lost the knowledge of God and worshiped many idols (**Acts 17:16-31**). Idolatry must be repented of, for it is a sin against our Lord and Savior, Amen.

"Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry."

I Corinthians 10:14



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*"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."
Acts 16:31*

The **RICHIES** OF GRACE

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Idolatry

"Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

I John 5:21

+ Spiritual Adultery +

Idolatry is an insult to God's majesty. It is an abomination and a gross sin against our Creator. There is much warning in Scriptures against idolatry, for the Lord is a jealous God. Idolatry is any attempt by men to place their interest or will above God's. It is placing the creation above the Creator. According to **Jeremiah 44:3-4**, God hates idolatry. The Lord is provoked to jealousy by idols (**Deuteronomy 32:16-21**). We are not to bow before idols, nor are we to set up idols in our own hearts. The honor due to God is not to be given to any other. Anything that holds a controlling position in my life is an idol, Amen.

"We are no more at liberty to worship the true God in a false way than we are to worship false gods."

- Durham

In this article we will discuss the meaning, the cause, and the danger of idolatry. In **I John 5:21**, Christians are warned against idolatry. The apostle's last words were concerned with Christians having victory in their life. To do this, we must guard our hearts from idols.

The Meaning of Idolatry

Idolatry is the worship of false gods or the worship of the true God in a false way. Also, anything put above God becomes an idol, or anything that occupies the place that should be occupied by God alone. When we give honor and worship to the creature which is due only to the Creator, we become an idolater, *"Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen"* (**Romans 1:25**). The first commandment of the Ten Commandments teaches us who to worship, **Exodus 20:3**, *"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."* It condemns any worship besides the true God as gross idolatry. The second commandment teaches us how to worship, *"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth"* (**Exodus 20:4-6**). The second commandment forbids worshipping false gods or worshipping the true and living God in a false way. We are not to worship God through visible symbols. Please understand you do not have to deny God to be an idolater. The second commandment forbids using images to represent God. We are not to represent Him by any visible or bodily shape. The golden calf that was made by the children of Israel when Moses was on the mount was intended to represent God (**Exodus 32**). They never denied God, but used the idol as a help or stepping stone to serve Him. In **verse 4**, Aaron proclaimed a feast unto the Lord (Jehovah God). They sinned when they gave honor that was due God almighty to a visible representative of Him. Please note that we worship and serve a jealous God and He will not share His glory (**Exodus 34:14, Ezekiel 28:16, 43:7-9, Ezra 6:9**). The second commandment also forbids pictures of Christ. God's law forbids any likeness to God. The Lord Jesus Christ is God. He is a part of the Godhead and any attempt to portray Christ is idolatrous. The picture itself becomes a mediator and it leads to a pantheistic concept of our Lord and Savior.

The Lord purposely saw to it that no one would know what he looked like. To use pictures of Christ is a denial of deity, because they do not portray Him as God. Remember, that Jesus Christ is the second person of the Holy Trinity. The second commandment is further clarified in **Deuteronomy 4:12-19**.

The Cause of Idolatry

The secret roots of idolatry are within us. It comes from the natural corruption of the human heart (**Mark 7:21-22**). There is a natural tendency in us to give God a carnal worship. Idolatry is a natural product of the heart. It is called a work of the flesh in **Galatians 5:19-21**. According to **Ezekiel 14:3**, the children of Israel "set up idols in their heart," showing the internal problem before the external is manifested, *"Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I be inquired of at all by them?"* Also, consider **verses 4-7**: *"Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols; That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols. Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations. For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to inquire of him concerning me; I the LORD will answer him by myself."* In **Colossians 3:5**, covetousness is considered idolatry because a covetous person has given utter devotion to the created thing rather than to the creator. **Matthew 22:34-40** tells us we are to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, and mind. Anything less is idolatry. So, the covetousness man is an idolater whether it is money, sports, pleasure, honor, or even our own will. Every reigning lust in whom it dwells is an