

21st Century Idols

Acts 17: 16-34

Paul visits Athens and realises that if the gospel was to have an impact here, Jesus Christ had to replace these idols. Christ had to unseat these idols from their thrones in these people's lives. How we handle potential idols in our lives

Twenty first century idolatry: In the 10 commandments God calls us to have no other gods but Him. When something else does take His place the Bible calls it idolatry. And just about anything can become an idol. The Bible tells us (Rom 1:23-25) that one of the fundamental problems with mankind is that we worship the wrong things.

So what is an idol? It is anything that serves as an alternative to God, anything that takes the place that only God should occupy. And that can be true on the level of the culture you live and work in as well as on the level of your individual life. These things are not necessarily bad. But they become idols when we elevate them and promote them into the ultimate, supreme thing in our lives.

The inevitable consequences of idols

1. They let us down: we make these things the ultimate thing because we think they will give us what we seek: joy, peace, security etc. The problem is that when they give way your life can crumble with them. They're not meant to be built on. Jesus Christ is the only sure foundation to build on. Anything else will always disappoint.
2. They can ensnare us: they can begin to dominate your life.
3. We become like them (Ps 115:8): either we become as unresponsive to God like a stone idol, or they have a corrupting influence on us.
4. They are a cause of half-heartedness: Allowing anything else to have the ultimate place in your heart inevitably robs God of the worship from your heart that He and He alone deserves.
5. Their influence explains the lack of difference too often seen between Christians and non-Christians.

Getting rid of the idols: So how should you respond if you think something other than Jesus Christ has the ultimate place in your life?

If you're not yet a Christian you can build your life on the far more secure foundation of Jesus Christ. He calls you to love Him wholeheartedly.

If you are already a Christian, the first thing to do is to recognise it if something else has your heart. Then comes repentance, which works two ways: you need to turn away, which means moving this other thing from off the throne of your heart; and turning towards God, and embracing Jesus Christ with all your heart.

Nothing else is worthy of your life or your worship. He is worthy of it all. And if you spend your life on anything else, you're wasting it. So decide again today to pursue Him with all your heart, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to live a life that brings worship and glory to Him, in all that you do. With Him as your God.