

AMERICAN IDOL – Ron Serabia 9-16-2014

SLIDE 1 – The American Idol

What's wrong with success or the trappings that go with it?

Tonight we're going to talk about idols; what they are and just how big a deal it is to idolize things or people.

Prayer

SLIDE 2 - So what is an idol? Let's start with the definition of idols and idolatry. An idol is any person or thing regarded with blind admiration, adoration, or devotion.

SLIDE 3 - And Idolatry? Then follows as excessive or blind adoration, reverence, devotion to a person or thing. That could also be something of the mind.

What are the key words here?

OK with those words in mind, let me ask you about work, can your work be an idol and how?

Dr. Ted Roberts in his book Pure Desire says,

SLIDE 4 - "Addiction, at its spiritual core, is about idolatry – about where we're going to find life and fulfillment." He goes on to say, "All addiction is about trying to get our needs met in the immediate instead of the eternal."

SLIDE 5 - What are some other things that could be idols in your world or the culture you live in?

Back to my original question: What's wrong with success or the trappings that go with it?

Patrick Morley said it well in his book, "Man in the Mirror" "There is no sin in worldly success, per se. But because worldly success is such a seductive idol, God in His wisdom has made it impossible for worldly success to satisfy – either by withholding it, removing it, or giving you so much that you gag on it."

And it's not really worldly success we want anyway, but the security, contentment, peace, and joy we think it will give us. By giving—or not giving us worldly success, our jealous God is teaching us to be satisfied in Him alone.

SLIDE 6 – The 4 P's of Man POWER – PROFIT – PRESTIGE - PLEASURE

The problem is that we are selfish, and what were a couple of the key words in the meaning of idolatry? Excessive, adoration, reverence or devotion to. When that happens in your world and it takes that success into excesses as it so often does, it affects your relationship with your family and God.

If you or I could find satisfaction in worldly success apart from God, we would. So to protect us from our own sinful natures, God in His grace frustrates our ambitions when they would destroy us.

There's nothing on the inside! They can't satisfy just as Patrick Morley so aptly explained.

SLIDE 7 - As John put it in 1John 2:15-17

“Don't love the world's ways. Don't love the world's goods. Love of the world squeezes out love for the Father. Practically everything that goes on in the world – wanting your own way, wanting everything for yourself, wanting to appear important – has nothing to do with the Father.”

SLIDE 8 – Who wins?

As John MacArthur puts it, idolatry includes much more than bowing down or burning incense to a physical image. Idolatry is having any false god – any object, idea, philosophy, habit, occupation, sport or whatever that has one's primary concern and loyalty or that to any degree decreases one's trust in and loyalty to the Lord.

And if you worship what you possess, if you center your life on yourself, your possessions, or even your needs, you have denied God.

And Matthew 6:24 says,

SLIDE 9 – “No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money. “

God won't take back seat to the gods of this world. Trust me, I found that out the hard way. My career and position had defined me. And my idols had become my gods and our Heavenly Father taught me that there is no other God but the God of the Bible.

Now I knew that but in application or daily life, I didn't exhibit it. And I learned that He is a jealous God who will not tolerate the worship of another.

SLIDE 10 –And in Exodus 34:14 it says, “You shall not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.”

He helped me to step back and recognize the way I had been living and what I needed to do about it.

SLIDE 11 – (1Cor 10:14-15) 14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. ¹⁵ I speak as to wise men; you judge what I say.

Idolatrous worship strikes at the true character of God; it is the most serious and contaminating of sins. Those who worship idols of any kind declare that the Lord is not the only true God and that other so-called gods are worthy to share His glory and honor.

SLIDE 12 - Cross away 4P's of Man Power, Profit, Prestige & Pleasure,

God has the 4M's that He is: Master, Manual, Mindset, and Mission

(Master) When we allow ourselves or things to become master or share that role that only He deserves, we will not share in God's fullest blessings.

(Manual) He has given us a Manual to live by and when we allow the world to script a manual to live by, we will always be headed down the slippery slope towards chaos, confusion and compromise. He has given us the perfect direction right in His word.

(Mindset) When we take on the Mindset of Jesus, we will be walking in lockstep with God's will. Philippians 2:5-6 says: In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage.

(Mission) And we cannot forget what our Mission on this earth is. It is not as I saw on a bumper sticker a while ago, our mission is to go and make disciples. How each of us may do that is through our own unique callings but we must not forget our focus and mission.

I challenge you to remember and live by the 4M's of Master, Manual, Mindset, and Mission and to not...

SLIDE 14 - provoke the Lord to jealousy. 1 Cor 10:22

We cannot allow other things to compete or cause us to play God. We must take on, walk with, live in Jesus; to allow the Holy Spirit to fill us and control our minds. As a Christ follower, it is a degrading influence on all of the society in which it is practiced. We are not set apart but of this world when we practice idolatry of any kind.

SLIDE 15 – For He is our only true security, contentment, peace and joy!

SLIDE 16 – **Break out to small groups....Be back here by 8:20!**

SLIDE 17 The 4M's that He is: Master, Manual, Mindset, Mission

These are the application points for idolatry.

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(Manual) He has given us a Manual to live by and when we allow the world to script a manual to live by, we will always be headed down the slippery slope towards chaos, confusion and compromise. He has given us the perfect direction right in His word.

(Mindset) When we take on the Mindset of Jesus, we will be walking in lockstep with God's will. Philippians 2:5-6 says: In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage.

(Mission) And we cannot forget what our Mission on this earth is. It is not as I saw on a bumper sticker a while ago,

SLIDE 18 - Whoever dies with the most toys, still dies.

Our mission is not to pursue a comfortable retirement or lifestyle. Our mission is to take up our cross and die to self daily. What does that mean? For Paul that meant shipwrecks, beatings, hunger and more.

What does that mean for us?

My question is, "Will we take risks in whatever way we can to spread the word or will we prefer to be comfortable in our daily lifestyle and when it's convenient, maybe say something about God?"