

Sunday, August 20, 2023

No Substitutes

[1 John 5:21, pg 1024](#)

Weird ending?

-Maybe a first century thing when people still carried statues to worship, but for today? We don't have any idols, right?

Review Letter- So why end it like this???

Read text.

"What is an idol? It is anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give..."

An idol is whatever you look at and say, in your heart of hearts, "If I have that, then I'll feel my life has meaning, then I'll know I have value, then I'll feel significant and secure." There are many ways to describe that kind of relationship to something, but perhaps the best one is worship." Timothy Keller.¹

[Little children, keep yourselves from idols \(false gods\)–\[from anything and everything that would occupy the place in your heart due to God, from any sort of substitute for Him that would take first place in your life\]. Amen \(so let it be\).](#)

[1 John 5:21 AMP](#)

Paul Tripp addresses idols of the heart by asking, "What Is Your One Thing?"

[One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple. Psalm 27:4](#)

- Power. Life has meaning or I have worth only if I have power and influence over others.
- Approval. If I am loved and respected by_____.

¹ Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power, and the Only Hope that Matters by Tim Keller

- Comfort. If I have a certain kind of pleasure or experience.
- Image. If I have a certain look or body image.
- Control. If I am able to have mastery over a particular area of my life.
- Dependence. If someone is there to keep me safe.
- Independence. If I am completely free of the obligation or responsibility to take care of someone.
- Inclusion: If a particular social or professional group lets me into their inner ring.
- Achievement. If I am recognized for my accomplishments.
- Prosperity. If I have a certain level of wealth, finance, nice possessions.
- Work. If I am highly productive and get a lot done.
- Religion. If I am adhering to my religion's codes and accomplished in its activities.
- Irreligion. If I am totally independent of organized religion and have a self-made morality.
- Race or culture. If my race and culture are ascendant and recognized as superior.
- A person. If this one person is happy to be in my life and happy with me.
- Family. If my children/parents are happy and happy with me.
- Helping. If people are dependent on me and need me.
- Suffering. If I am hurting or having a problem, only then do I feel noble, worthy of love, or free of guilt.²
- **Communion**

Paul, Elsi and Melvin.

^{2 2} Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power, and the Only Hope that Matters by Tim Keller