

Grace Bible Church 2015 Biblical Counseling Conference

Session #5

Identifying Idols of the Heart

I. INTRODUCTION:

II. IDOLS OF THE HEART – DEFINED

An idol is something or someone we allow to _____ us in a way that only God should.

III. IDOLS DESCRIBED AND DEMONSTRATED

A. Idols are a matter of _____ – we bow before them in service.

1. God describes idols of the heart to Moses

DT 30:15-17 “See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity; in that I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments...but if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them...”

He is talking about the _____ affairs of men.

Follow carefully the development of the passage.

- First - "To _____ the Lord your God"
- Then - “your _____ turns away"
- Finally - “are drawn away and _____ other gods and serve them”

2. God describes idols of the heart to Jeremiah.

a. **JE 11:1-10** God judges Judah

"**3**...‘thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, “Cursed is the man who does not heed the words of this covenant **4** which I commanded your forefathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, ... **5** in order to confirm the oath which I swore to your forefathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey... **8** ‘yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked, each one, in the stubbornness of his evil heart;... **10**...they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers.”"

b. **12:2** Jeremiah tells God that the Judeans are _____.

"You are near to their lips, but far from their mind."

c. **12:3** Jeremiah describes it as a heart issue as he compares himself to Judah.

"...but you know me, O Lord, you see me; and you examine my _____ attitude toward you."

d. **13:10** - God defines their behavior as _____.

"This wicked people, who refuse to listen to My words, who walk in the stubbornness of their hearts and have gone after other gods to serve them and to bow down to them..."

The sin of daily life has its _____ in worship – and Judah was worshipping other gods - that is idolatry of the heart.

"Sin is fundamentally idolatrous. I do wrong things because my heart desires something more than the Lord." (Paul Tripp – *Instruments In The Redeemers Hands*, p 66)

3. Sin is rooted in the idolatrous desires of the heart.

a. _____ is a heart issue:

- 1) **1 PET 3:2-4** - "of the hidden person of the heart"
- 2) **ROM 1:18-32** – "foolish heart was _____" **21**
- 3) **MK 7:21-23** - the heart as _____ of sin

b. **JAS 1:14-15** – Sin begins with the _____ of the heart.

"**14** But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own _____. **15** Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death."

c. **HEB 4:12** – The _____ pierces the heart.

"For the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword...and able to judge the _____ and intentions of the heart."

4. Desires of the heart need to be addressed for _____ change.

a. **PR 23:6-7** – "6 Do not eat the bread of a selfish man, or desire his delicacies; 7 for as he _____ within himself, so he is. He says to you, "Eat and drink!" but his heart is not with you. 8 You will vomit up the morsel you have eaten, and waste your compliments."

b. **EPH 4:22-24** "**22** ...lay aside the old self... **23** and that you be renewed in the spirit of your _____, **24** and put on the new self,"

Do not underestimate the power of "thoughts and intentions and desires" of the hearts. They are:

- the _____ that drive our lives,
- the _____ of our heart out of which we speak,
- the _____ talk by which we rationalize our choices.

B. Example of idols of the heart - **2 PET. 2:1-20**

1. The men were _____.

a. **VS 1** "false prophets... false teachers"

b. **VS 20** – They displayed _____ change.

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- “They escaped the defilements of the world (but were) _____ entangled in them.”
- c. **VS 22** – Their behavior _____ before the desires of their heart.
 “‘A dog returns to its own vomit,’ and ‘a sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire.’”

2. Their problem was no heart _____.

a. **VS 2** "SENSUALITY" – CP **VS 18** "ENTICED BY FLESHLY DESIRES, BY SENSUALITY"

b. "GREED" (3), - CP **VS 14** – "A HEART TRAINED IN GREED"

3. Note the course of development.

a. **VS 20 – 22** – “They...escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior...”

b. **VS 22** – “‘A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT,’ AND ‘A SOW, AFTER WASHING, RETURNS TO WALLOWING IN THE MIRE.’”

Basic Principle: Desires of the heart ultimately _____ our attitudes and behavior.

IV. THE BENEFIT OF IDENTIFYING IDOLS

A. Idolatry addresses the person at the most basic level.

PR 4:23 "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it *flow* the springs of life."
 "springs" – "The basic notion of *YĀṣA* (the Hebrew word) is "to go out.""

The New International Dictionary Of New Testament Theology (vol. 2, p 182), defines heart as - "It is simply the person."

B. Addressing idols of the heart enables you to address many _____ by addressing one desire.

Look for a primary desire and passion. Examples:

- | | | |
|------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1. _____ | 3. To be rich | 5. Power |
| 2. Control | 4. _____ | 6. Prestige |

C. Trace the fruits to their roots.

The root " _____ " expresses itself in other areas of the person's life.

D. Example:

1. You must address the fruit.

2. You must also address the root.

a. Failure to address the root and the struggles in the marriage will soon return.

"Lusts...giving birth to sin" **JAM 1:15**

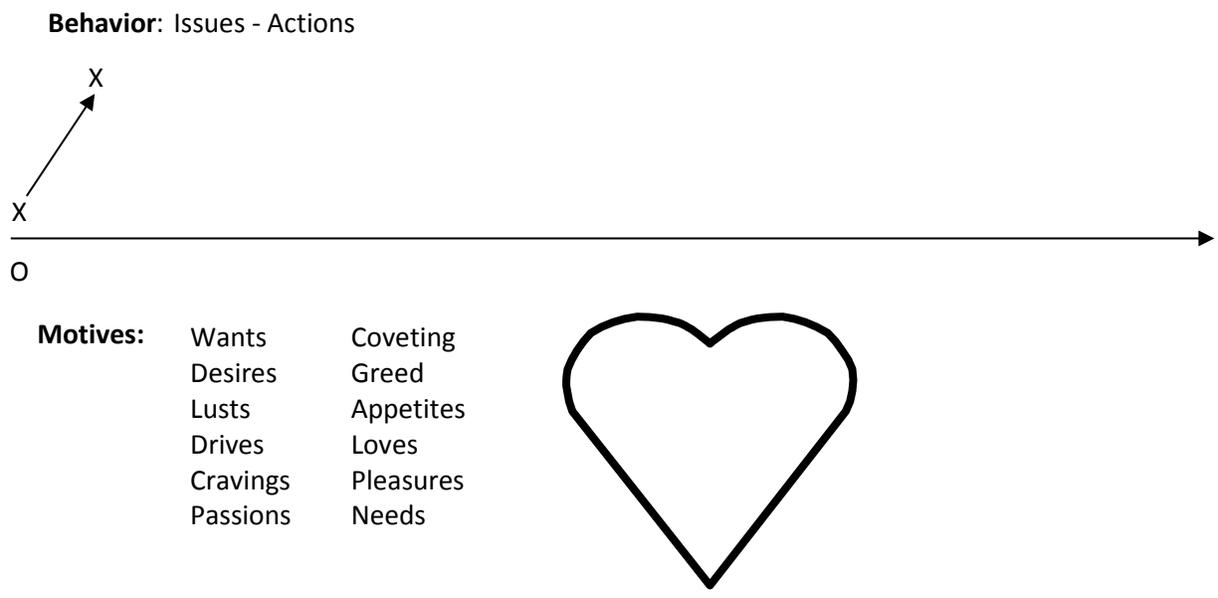
b. If the husband struggles with an idol of " _____," you may find an answer to other fruit such as:

- _____ of his children
- Stress headaches at work
- His habit of _____ committing as an elder in the church
- Coolness toward him by other members of the local Christian school board

V. COUNSELING THE HEART: Biblical Warrant

1. **1 COR 4:5** - We can not _____ the heart.
2. **MATT 15:8** – God condemns honoring him with our _____ while our heart is far from him.
3. **1 COR 10:14** - “flee idolatry”
4. **COL 3:5-6** – commanded to put off “immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to _____”
5. **1 TIM 1:5** – The goal is “love from a pure heart.”

VI. BACK SIDE OF WORKSHEET: Ways People Change



VII. FRONT SIDE OF WORKSHEET: Idols of the Heart: (turn to the following page)

(answers to fill in blanks)

II. IDOLS OF THE HEART

An idol is something or someone we allow to **CONTROL** us

III. IDOLS DESCRIBED AND DEMONSTRATED

A. Idols are a matter of **WORSHIP** –

1. He is talking about the **EVERYDAY** affairs of men –

- First God contrasts...what it means "to **LOVE** the Lord your God"
- Then He describes...commands as: "your **HEART** turns away"
- Finally He wraps...they "are drawn away and **WORSHIP** other Gods ..."

2-b **12:2** Jeremiah tells God that the Judeans are **HYPOCRITES**

2-c **12:3** "but you know me, O Lord, You see me; and you examine my **HEART'S** attitude..."

2-d **13:10** - God defines their behavior as **IDOLATRY**

The sin of daily life has its **ROOTS** in worship

3-a **SIN** is a heart issue:

3-a-2) **Rom 1:18-32** -...because our "foolish heart was **DARKENED.**" **21**

3-a-3) **Mk 7:21-23** - Jesus depicts the heart as **SOURCE** of sin

3-b **Jas 1:14-15** – Sin begins with the **DESIRE**s of the heart

3-c **Heb 4:12** – The **WORD** pierces the heart

"For the word of...and able to judge the **THOUGHTS** and intentions of the heart."

4. Desires of the heart need to be addressed for **LASTING** change

- a. **Pr 23:6-7** – "6 Do not eat the bread of a selfish man...7 for as he **THINKS** within..."
- b. **Eph 4:22-24** "**22** ...lay aside the old self,... **23** ... the spirit of your **MIND, 24** and ..."

Do not underestimate: • The **PASSIONS** that... • The **MEDITATIONS** of... • The **SELF**-talk

B. 1) The men were **DECEITFUL**

b. **Vs 20** – they displayed **TEMPORARY** change, but..."They escaped...**AGAIN**..."

c. **Vs 22** – their behavior **BOWED** before the desires of their heart.

2) Their problem was no heart **CHANGE** – what drove them

Peter teaches a basic principle here: Desires of the heart ultimately **DETERMINE** our...

IV. THE BENEFIT OF IDENTIFYING IDOLS

B. Addressing idols of the heart enables you to address many **FRUITS** by addressing one desire

1. **ACCEPTANCE**

4. **PLEASURE**

C. If you label the object of...opportunity to address how the root "**PASSION**" expresses itself

D-2-b. If the husband struggles with an idol of "**CONTROL**," by addressing it...

- **REBELLION** of his children
- His habit of **OVER** committing as an elder in the church

V. Counseling the heart

A-1. **1 Cor 4:5** - we cannot **JUDGE** the heart.

2. **Matt 15:8** – God condemns honoring him with our **LIPS** while our heart

4. **Col 3:5-6** – Believers are commanded to put off "...**IDOLATRY**"