

Knowledge vs. Love
1 Corinthians 8

Paul says, "Covetousness, which is idolatry." So what idolatry looks like today is the activity of the human heart. This is not a deed of the body. That follows — a fruit on a branch. It starts in the heart: craving, wanting, enjoying, being satisfied by anything that you treasure more than God. That is an idol. Paul calls this covetousness — a disordered love or desire, loving more than God what ought to be loved less than God and only for the sake of God. But covetousness is the condition that this disordered heart is in, an act of loving too much what ought to be loved less. And that is why the wrath of God is coming. That is what idolatry looks like today. And it is everywhere in our culture.

So finally: What is an idol? Well, it is the thing. It is the thing loved or the person loved more than God, wanted more than God, desired more than God, treasured more than God, enjoyed more than God. It could be a girlfriend. It could be good grades. It could be the approval of other people. It could be success in business. It could be sexual stimulation. It could be a hobby or a musical group that you are following or a sport or your immaculate yard. John Piper

- I. The Corinthian believers lived in a culture that was steeped in idol worship. It was very polytheistic. If a believer walked outside, they would see statues everywhere of Aphrodite and other false gods, and if they were invited into an unbeliever's home, they would see statuettes of the various false gods they worshipped. We also live in a very polytheistic culture, but the idols our culture worships blend in the lives of people in ways that are hard to define or distinguish. That is why it is important for us, as followers of Jesus Christ, to work at recognizing and renouncing any idols we might be coveting and worshipping in our hearts.

Exodus 20:23

Exodus 32:1

Rom. 1:25

Exodus 20:3-5 3"You shall have no other gods before me. 4"You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. 5You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, ...

- II. Gaining biblical knowledge is necessary for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness (**2 Tim. 3:16**). Expressing God's love is necessary for building others up in the faith. Knowledge without love, is loud and boisterous, amounts to nothing, gains nothing, is boastful, full of pride, rude and self-seeking. Love on the other hand, never fails. (**1 Cor. 6:1-5,8**)

1 Cor. 8:1-8

Rom. 11:33-36

2 Cor. 3:6

1 Jn. 4:7-8

1 Cor. 13:8-13

Oikodomeō – *to build a house, erect a building, to build (up from the foundation) to restore by building, to rebuild, repair. Metaphor, to found, establish, to promote growth in Christian wisdom, affection, grace, virtue, holiness, blessedness, to grow in wisdom and piety*

- III. Jesus has given us a trust, and it is to make sure that the expression of the freedom he has given us in areas that Scripture does not speak out against, is done in such a way that looks out for the spiritual wellbeing of others. How we exercise our freedom has power to either build a precious child of God up in love, or destroy them by sinning against them. We can either bless Christ or sin against him by how we choose to live our Christian liberty before others.

1 Cor. 8:9-13

“When we ‘do not merely look out [for] our own interests, but also for the interests of others’ (Phil 2:4), we are on the road to mature, loving Christian behavior. Love sets the limits on Christian liberty.” MacArthur