

*Return to me, says the LORD of hosts, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts.*

**Zechariah 1:3**

## Store In My Heart

### James 1:17

Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

God gives good things. He does not tempt us. He does not want us to fail. He wants us to be successful in our service unto Him. He has provided what we need to overcome temptation.

Too often we give up because we think we cannot endure. James tells us God will never stop blessing us with good things as long as we put our trust in Him. We are not alone in our struggle and we are not left to our own strength. God will give wisdom. He will provide strength. With Him we will be able to overcome all difficulty that might come along.

We need to put all our trust in God for help with our struggles.



# Modern Day Idolatry

**John M. Duvall**

What images does the word idolatry bring to mind? Generally speaking, people who hear the word idolatry think about people bowing down and worshiping some sort of statue or image. However, would you ever associate idolatry with the love of money? As we proceed with this article, we will show that many people living today are struggling with modern day idolatry and never realize nor admit it.

What is idolatry? Idolatry is "1. The worship of idols. 2. Excessive or undiscerning admiration or veneration; blind infatuation." (The Reader's Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary) The Greek word translated as idolatry means "1) the worship of false gods, idolatry ... 1b) of avarice (passion for acquiring and hoarding riches; covetousness; greed ..." (Thayer's) From the aforementioned definitions we see that idolatry is much more than just bowing down before a statue. Idolatry is the holding in reverence or excessive admiration that which is unworthy of reverence. The only subject qualified to be held in reverence or excessive admiration is God. (In the case of our reverence towards God, it is not possible for our admiration to be excessive.) When we focus our admiration or reverence towards some other subject other than God, we are committing idolatry.

Based upon the above definitions of idolatry, we can say that it is possible for people today to commit idolatry without bowing before an idol. In the New Testament, we see that idolatry was committed by people of the first century. This idolatry was not always the worshiping of idols. **Ephesians 5:5** reads, "*For this ye know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.*" (KJV) Paul, writing through inspiration, calls the covetous man an idolater. The Greek word translated as covetous means "1) one

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## For Our Information

John Ragsdale has been battling a cold this past week.

Betty Ragsdale has had difficulties with her legs.

Dan & JoBeth will be in Texas this week for Thanksgiving at JoBeth's Mom's.

Ray Anderson, a member at Hot Springs is in ICU and will have surgery for a brain bleed Monday. This is the second he has had since July.

Tonight we start in 2Kings 2:15.

Pray for safety, courage & healing.

eager to have more, esp. what belongs to others 2) greedy of gain, covetous." (Thayers) When a person desires to have something to the point of becoming covetous, he is then excessively admiring that which he desires. Covetousness happens when a person has given his heart over to something or someone other than God. When our attention is focused on something so strongly that we covet it, we no longer have proper attention focused on God. If this happens, then we are committing idolatry.

Applying what we have just learned, we can see how many people today are committing idolatry. Consider several objects that people love more than God: Money, family, friends, spouses, recreation, sleep, politics, or anything that steals away their love for God and it's accompanying obedience to God. Another example of modern day idolatry was the worshiping of David Koresh in 1993. The followers of David Koresh were guilty of blind infatuation. For all intense and purpose, the followers of David Koresh worshiped him and lived their lives based solely upon his words. This was a form of idolatry.

What does God think about idolatry? God hates anything that steals from Him our worship, admiration, respect, reverence, love, and obedience. (**Deuteronomy 16:22**) God is a jealous God. When God's people turn their attention to something or someone else other than God, He becomes jealous. (Cf. **Exodus 20:5; 34:14**)

What will happen to those who commit idolatry? The answer is simple: They will not inherit the kingdom of God. Paul wrote, "*Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*" (**1Corinthians 6:9-10**, KJV) Paul also wrote, "*For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*" (**Ephesians 5:5**, KJV) A person who commits idolatry will also face the wrath of God. Colossians 3:5-6 reads, "*Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.*" (**Colossians 3:5-6**, KJV)

Consider your life very carefully. Is God truly first in your life? If your love and service to God is not taking priority in your life, then you could be guilty of committing idolatry. Do not allow anything or anyone to steal away from God your worship, admiration, reverence, respect, and obedience.

(Let us be wary of things that pull attention from service to God. DLH)



We seek only to serve God according to His Will!