

## Ten Commandments - #2 Idols In Our Time

2	Do not make yourselves any idols. You must never bow or worship any objects or images.	Remember, God is invisible.
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***Do not make idols of any kind, whether in the shape of birds or animals or fish. You must never worship or bow down to them ...I do not leave unpunished the sins of those who hate me, but I punish the children for the sins of their parents to the third and fourth generations. But I lavish my love on those who love me and obey my commands, even for a thousand generations.*** (Exodus 20:4-6)

We live in a society where cultures and religions mix all around us. In his love for us, God has shown us through this commandment that if we try to mix our faith in God with other religious practices we stand to bring negative effects on ourselves and generations to come.

***For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.*** (John 4:24 NLT)

The God who created the universe and who sent Jesus to save us is invisible. Therefore, if we have anything picture or object and we treat it as though it has power to bring us good luck, tell us information about the future, protect us, or give power to us, then we are operating in idolatry and are breaking this commandment. If we have anything that we believe is the representation of a spirit or a person, then we have an idol. Sometimes we even have things that we don't give worship to ourselves but people of other faith practices would. These too are idols. Lucky charms, tarot cards, religious medals, dream catchers, Buddha statues are examples of such objects. Astrological signs and horoscope predictions, psychic predictions all invite belief in a power outside of the God of heaven and lead us astray from Him.

***I don't want any of you to be partners with demons. You cannot drink from the cup of the Lord and from the cup of demons, too. You cannot eat at the Lord's Table and at the table of demons, too.*** (1 Corinthians 10:19-21)

While we may think these objects or practices are innocent, the Bible teaches us they are not and we should be careful. ***Dear children, keep away from anything that might take God's place in your hearts.*** (1 John 5:21 NLT)

To live free from idolatry we need to remove and destroy all known objects that we own or have in our possession. We need to pray that God will cleanse our house and our lives and cut us free from any power evil spirits connected to those things have tried to exercise in our lives. We need to repent and tell God we're sorry for trusting in things rather than in His loving power.

There are plenty of shows on television and movies in theatres that include occultic practices, spiritual

channeling, and voodoo type activities. Lots of heavy metal music both in the lyrics and style lift up the demonic and bring hardship to those who own and listen to it. Some jewelry has faces of Gods or figurines that represent spirits. There are numerous examples of objects and practices in our society, even in our neighbourhood that we need to keep distant from.

***Joshua said, "destroy the idols among you, and turn your hearts to the Lord"*** (Joshua 24:23 NLT)

It is God's desire that we live in His blessing and favor and that future generations do the same. That's why God clearly shows us that when we sin in these areas and co-operate with the devil, future generations will be negatively affected. We, ourselves, may be living under the effects of the sins of our parents, grandparents, and great grandparents. We see patterns of abuse and addiction in families. By the power of God we can break free from those curses that have come down to us or the increased temptation that comes to us in a particular area where our ancestors were weak or failed. However, we need to know there is an increased vulnerability and we need to use caution and alert to what the devil is trying to do to us and how he's trying to use us to make life difficult for those who follow us. God wants to bless us and future generations and He is able to do that when we honour him and refuse to have any idols in our lives.

While we need always respect others and the religious practices they choose, we must be careful that we don't mix Christian practices and teaching with practices and teachings from other religions. We should never bow down to an idol from another religion just because we happen to be in their place of worship. Practices such as yoga and martial arts which are steeped in Eastern religions are such a mixture. Various meditation/relaxation exercises have new age or Buddhist backgrounds. We need to avoid such practices in order to keep our lives free from bondage.

More and more we live in an idolatrous and superstitious society as people seek to meet the legitimate desire they have for spiritual meaning in their own way with their own god. There is only one God and He has revealed Himself to us through Jesus Christ. We can invite Him to come and fill us with the power of the Holy Spirit. We can be connected to real power and have real life as we put away idols and cling to the Living God.

### Questions For Meditation and Discussion

1. How have I been caught in idolatry?
2. What action should I take to clear any idolatry from my life?