

## **The Grievous Sin of Idolatry**

One of the schemes that the devil uses to bring the elect down is Idolatry. God said nothing, and no one should be worshipped besides Him. He explicitly forbids it (Exodus 20:4-5). Some consequences for worshipping and serving creatures rather than the Creator are listed in *Romans 1:21-32*.

Idolatry goes beyond creating false gods and bowing down to them in worship. Let us look into a few examples of Idolatry.

### **Idolising Creatures**

#### **(1) Saints, Angels, Mary Mother of Jesus Christ**

Saints, angels, Mary Mother of Jesus Christ and their images or statues are not to be worshipped. Mary was no doubt of impeccable character, and much loved by all Christians. However, she is not to be prayed to, petitioned through, or worshipped; likewise, saints and angels. Making images and pictures of God the Father, Jesus Christ, Mary, angels, saints in the Bible, and supposedly using them to connect to God is also a very common idolatrous act (Exodus 20:1-6). Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between God and man, beloved (1 Timothy 2:5).

#### **(2) Religious Leaders**

You may find yourself worshipping and serving a creature instead of the Creator, when you do not acknowledge that blessings come from God, and not the vessel, through whom He gives them (James 1:17). This is so rampant today, as folks give credit to, and idolise mere mortals like themselves; and blindly give their all to support selfish and vain causes, just to please them. Thank God for the lives of those He has used to graciously bless you, but give Him alone the glory - not Him and the vessel (1 Peter 4:11).

A lot of well-meaning folks in the vineyard have also served their leaders with great zeal, thinking they were serving God. While some of these folks got used and dumped, some got swindled out of their possessions. Unbeknownst to them, their service was not unto God; and so, they missed out on His blessings, as He never acknowledged it.

#### **(3) Self**

We set ourselves up against God when we attempt to take His glory. God uses us in different capacities to be a Blessing to others and for signs and wonders, all for His Glory. We are not to direct attention to ourselves while we go about doing what He has called us to do. We are what we are, and have what we have by His grace.

### **Modern Day Idols**

Many people unconsciously worship idols, these days. One does not have to physically bow to an object or a person for them to become an idol. An idol is

anyone or anything that takes the place of God in your life or is depended on more than Him. An idol could be some addiction (drug, alcohol, etc), money, an asset, your career, a portrait, your spouse, your children – just to mention a few. Seek the intervention of the Lord to unseat the idol.

## **Accepting Undeserved Worship**

We may let our desire to be respected and admired for our gifts get the best of us, and unconsciously accept worship. Only God deserves to be worshipped, beloved. If saints and angels rejected worship, as recorded in the Bible, we should be quick to do so, as well.

- **A Saint Rejected Worship:** *When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshipped him. But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I am only a man myself." (Acts 10:25–26)*
- **An Angel Rejected Worship:** *"Then I fell down at his feet (the angel's feet) to worship him, but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brethren who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (Revelation 19:10).*

When one of the Pharisees asked Jesus Christ what the greatest commandment was, He replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:34-37). God alone is worthy of our worship. May we be guided.

Shalom!