



Christian Questions

TALK RADIO WITH A PURPOSE

You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13

Dear Fawn,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You wanted to know exactly what would constitute an idol. You specifically mentioned a nativity scene, a praying hands pin, a crucifix, and rosary beads.

To the Christian anything is an idol that usurps the place of God in the heart, whether it be a person, a system, a project, wealth, a material object, or an image, etc. Anything, even a pass time, which is loved more than God or Christ, can be considered an idol.

The definition of idolatry, according to Webster, is "the worship of idols or excessive devotion to, or reverence for some person or thing." An idol is anything that replaces the one, true God. Our modern idols are many and varied. Even for those who do not bow physically before a statue, idolatry is a matter of the heart—pride, self-centeredness, greed, gluttony, a love for possessions, etc. All of the above mind-sets ultimately lead to rebellion against God. Is it any wonder that the Apostle admonishes, "Keep away from anything that might take God's place in your heart." (1 John 5:21 New Living Translation)

Three of the items you mentioned above, the nativity scene, the praying hand pin, and the crucifix, are not idols, in and of themselves, unless undue attention and reverence is paid to them, thus making them idols. Only the rosary beads are truly idolatrous mainly because most of the prayers in the rosary are "Hail Mary" prayers. In fact, the rosary has ten "Hail Mary" prayers for every one "Our Father" prayer and is, therefore, basically designed as a devotion to Mary. In light of the scriptural admonitions in the Old Testament to pray to God alone (Exodus 20:3-5; Deuteronomy 5:7-8) and in the New Testament to pray to God through his Son Jesus (John 14:6, 13-14; Ephesians 3:12; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1), we feel it is definitely wrong for a Christian to pray the rosary. Praying to anyone other than God and his Son is contrary to what the Scriptures teach us and is, indeed, a form of idolatry.

We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.com. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio

