

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Day 1: The Danger of Idolatry

Reading: Exodus 20:1-6, Romans 1:21-25

God's first commandments address idolatry because He knows our hearts are prone to worship created things rather than the Creator. Reflect on areas in your life where you might be placing something above God - career, relationships, possessions, or even your own intellect. How might these "idols" be shaping your thoughts and actions? Ask God to reveal any idols in your life and to help you reorient your heart towards Him. Remember, true fulfillment comes only from worshipping the one true God.

Day 2: The Transforming Power of Worship

Reading: Psalm 115:1-8, 2 Corinthians 3:17-18

"We become what we worship." This profound truth reminds us of the transformative power of our focus and devotion. When we fix our eyes on Jesus, we gradually take on His characteristics - love, joy, peace, patience, and more. Consider how your current "objects of worship" might be shaping you. Are you becoming more Christ-like, or conforming to worldly standards? Today, intentionally direct your praise and attention to God, allowing His Spirit to mold you into His image.

Day 3: Freedom in Christ

Reading: John 8:31-36, Galatians 5:1

Idolatry doesn't just misplace our worship; it enslaves us. Whether it's the pressure to please others, the pursuit of success, or the chains of addiction, false gods always demand more than they can give. In contrast, Jesus offers true freedom. Reflect on areas where you feel bound or burdened. Bring these to Christ, acknowledging that His truth and love can set you free. Ask for the courage to live in the freedom He provides, no longer striving to earn approval but resting in His unconditional acceptance.

Day 4: God's Unfailing Love

Reading: Romans 8:35-39, 1 John 4:7-10

In a world of conditional love and shifting loyalties, God's love stands unchanging and secure. Unlike the fickle nature of idols, God's affection for you isn't based on your performance or perfection. He loves you completely, in your best and worst moments. Take time to bask in this incredible truth. How might your life look different if you truly believed and lived in light of God's unfailing love? Allow this assurance to free you from fear and empower you to love others more fully.

Day 5: Putting God First

Reading: Matthew 6:31-34, Colossians 3:1-4

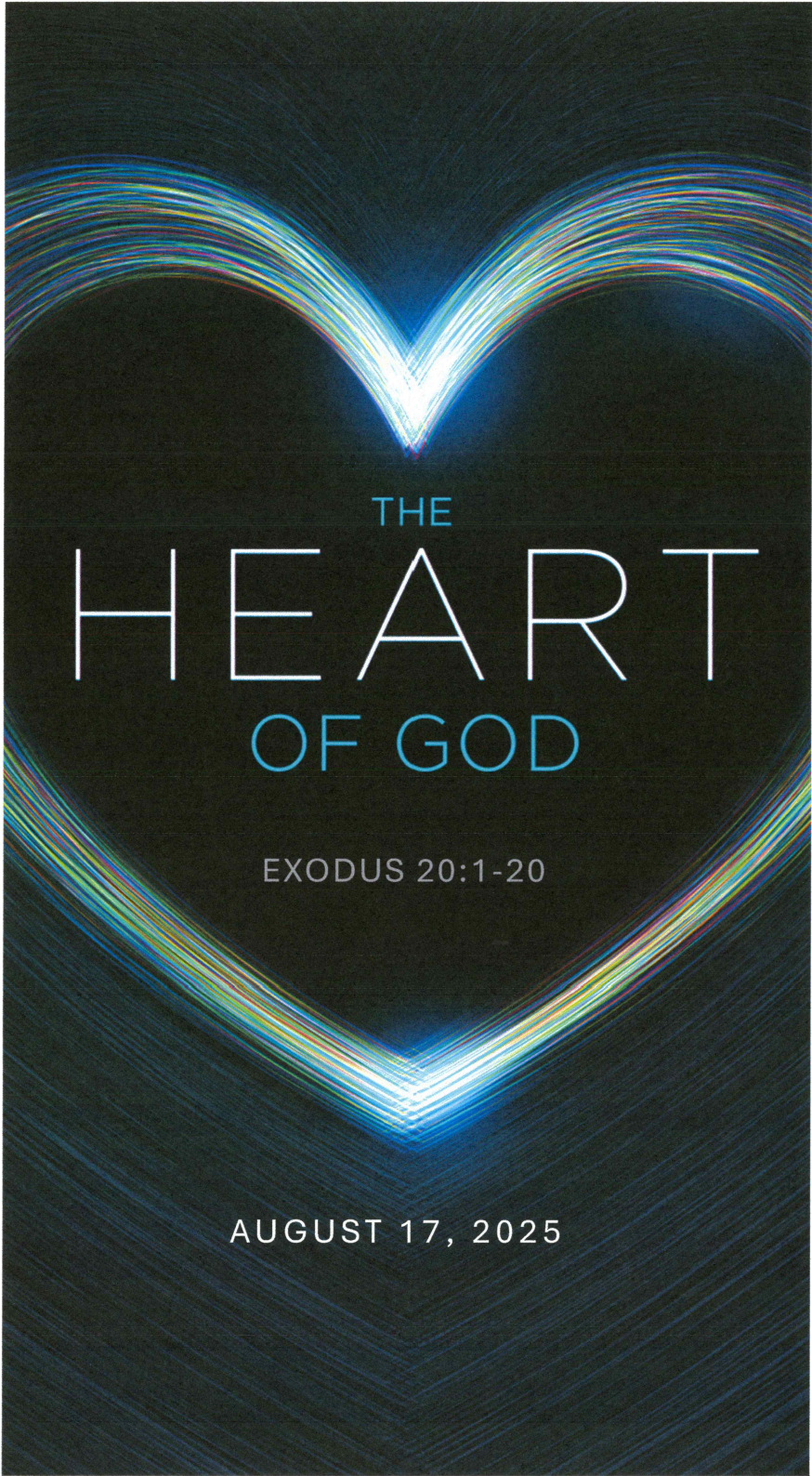
Jesus calls us to seek first His kingdom, promising that everything else will fall into place. This isn't a guarantee of an easy life, but an assurance that when we prioritize our relationship with God, He provides what we truly need. Examine your priorities. Where does God rank in your daily thoughts and decisions? Challenge yourself to start each day by acknowledging God's lordship over your life. As you do, watch how your perspective shifts, anxieties lessen, and you begin to see life through His eyes. Remember, nothing else can satisfy the deepest longings of your heart like a vibrant relationship with your Creator.

DEACONS ON CALL

David Barks and Royce Blair

SCHEDULED EVENTS

- **WORSHIP:** Sundays at 9:45 AM
- **SMALL GROUPS:** Sundays at 11 AM
- **DEEP DIVE:** Wednesdays at Noon & 6:45 PM
- **FIRST KIDS:** Wednesdays at 5:30 PM
- **FIRST YOUTH:** Wednesdays at 5:30 PM & 6:45 PM



American Idols

Exodus 20:4-6

We often find ourselves chasing after success, wealth, relationships, or even our own intellect, believing these pursuits will bring us fulfillment and happiness. But what if these very things we're striving for are actually leading us astray? The concept of idolatry might seem outdated in our modern society. Yet, the truth is, idolatry is alive and well in the 21st century – it's just taken on more subtle forms.

Introduction

I. What is an idol?

Anything that I _____ more than God.

II. Don't _____ anything!

1. Idols will _____ me.

2. Idols will _____ me.

3. Idols will _____ me.

III. What are the motives behind idols?

1. It is an attempt to _____.

2. It is an attempt to _____.

IV. What are the benefits of worshiping God only?

1. It _____ me.

2. It _____ me.

3. It _____ me.

Scripture References (In order of use): Romans 1:21-23; Jeremiah 10:14; Habakkuk 2:18; 1 Corinthians 12:2; Psalm 115:8; Jeremiah 2:5; Romans 1:25; Genesis 1:27; Psalm 37:4; Romans 10:11; John 8:31-36; 2 Corinthians 3:18
Referenced Works: The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge (Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott); Be Delivered (Warren Wiersbe); Ten Values that Build Strong Families (Rick Warren); Exodus (John Mackay); The Message of Exodus (Alec J. Motyer); Exodus (Peter Enns); Exodus & Leviticus (B. H. Carroll)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some things people in our society tend to prioritize or "worship" above all else?
2. Read **Exodus 20:4-6**. Is there anything from the sermon you would like to discuss?
3. Patrick mentioned that idolatry, not atheism, is the opposite of Christianity. How do you see this playing out in our culture?
4. There are many things in this world that can become idols in our lives (centering life on spouse, money, sexuality, etc.). What is our culture's greatest idol? Explain.
5. How have you experienced disappointment from putting something other than God first in your life?
6. What does it mean to "become like what we worship"? Can you think of examples of this?
7. Patrick mentioned two motives behind idols: control and manipulation. Which of these do you think is most prevalent today? Why?
8. How does worshiping God alone lead to freedom? Have you experienced this in your own life? Explain.
9. If you were to give a person one nugget of advice concerning idols, what would it be?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

- Take some time this week to prayerfully consider what might be competing with God for first place in your life. Write these things down and pray about how to reorder your priorities.
- Commit to spending 10 minutes each day this week in focused worship of God (through prayer, singing, reading Scripture, etc.). Notice how this impacts your perspective.
- Identify one area where you've been seeking approval from others. Practice releasing that to God and resting in His unconditional love.
- Choose one characteristic of Jesus (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control) to focus on developing this week. Ask God to help you grow in this area as you worship Him.