

Idols of the Heart (Part II)
Campus Lutheran Church
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1. What is an idol (*pesel* or *gilulim* in Hebrew; *epithumiai* in Greek) or god you worship? [One has a god when a finite value is viewed as that without which one cannot receive life joyfully.)
 - a. Deut 5:1-8 (10 Commandments)—Why the first 2 commandments then 3-10? Why this order?
 - b. Romans 1:21
 - c. Romans 1:25
 - d. Ezekiel 14:1-8**
 - e. Ephesians 2:3; 4:22
 - f. Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 3:5

2. What is the secret to change if you are enslaved to these “idols of the heart” as we have identified them last time?
3. Why are ALL our failures to trust in God wholly or to live rightly due at root to idolatry?
4. What values compete for our attention? Why do these other values take center place in our hearts at times? [These values are, of course, “finite” values.]
5. Identifying idols:
 - a. Anxiety (idolatry and the future)
 - b. Guilt (bitterness and the past)
 - c. Boredom /Emptiness (idolatry and the present)—an anticipatory form of being “dead.” Which can develop into “despair.”

6. Do you think (as much popular psychology preaches) that we must love ourselves before we can be set free to love others?
7. Why don’t “pep talks” do the trick when we are buried in guilt? Why can’t we just clear away our problems and become “self-reliant”?
8. So how do we heal this idolatry at the center of our hearts?
 - a. Avoid moralizing approach—repent ! You have sinned! (recall Job’s counselors; what kind of help did they provide him when he was suffering?)
 - b. Avoid “psychologizing” approach—God loves you just as you are—rejoice! Why can’t you tell an unhappy person (or yourself) this?
 - c. Adopt the “Gospel Approach”: You are looking for something besides Christ in your lives. Every idol-system is a way of our-works-salvation. It keeps us under the LAW.

9. Look at Romans 6:14 for a way to break the works-oriented path to happiness.

