

CELL NOTES 18/2/08

ICE BREAKER

Do you, or have you, collected anything? What is your favourite item in the collection?

THEME

Pop idol – Totley style.

Readings ; Deut 4 : 10 – 20 & Eph 5 : 3 – 7

SERMON OUTLINE

1) A look at the second commandment “ You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything.”

2) Chambers 20th Century Dictionary definition of an idol : *an object of love, admiration or honour in an extreme degree.*

3) The religious scene today is very varied, and very different from a generation or two ago. Understanding of the word “god” varies immensely, there are many different religions making themselves felt, and many people profess no faith at all.

4) However spirituality is commonly accepted – often expressed in various new age concepts e.g. feng shui, astrology etc.

5) All this means

There is no commonly accepted universal truth

Whilst spirituality is accepted, it often is a vague, and undemanding concept

“Tolerance” is a value many champion, at times in an apparently intolerant way.

6) The Bible often mocks idol worshippers. Idolatry today may not revolve around objects of worship, but can be just as powerful as mental attitudes.

7) The place God needs in our lives is to be
the One who gives us purpose and meaning,
governs the way we act,
is the focal point of our existence
a cause of enthusiasm.

Whenever something or somebody else fulfils these roles in our lives, then that thing/person has become an idol – displacing God from his rightful place.

8) Such idols are not bad in themselves – but become damaging as they take a wrong priority for us – e.g. money, holidays, caring for our bodies etc.

9) Even church can become an idol, when building, style of music etc. displaces God at the heart of our lives.

10) The picture of another woman in your wallet!!

11) Resist idolatry by planting a flag for Christ in the place where the idol may reign (like early Christians building a church on a place of pagan worship). E.g. :-

Develop inner beauty in the face of worship of the body.

Practice generosity in the face of greed
and worship of things.

12) Idols can never deliver. We think we may find satisfaction there – but it is only Jesus who will do that.

QUESTIONS OF APPLICATION

Read both the passages. What do you make of them?

1) An idol in the OT was a god you had made, and so could control? How do you try to limit or control God?

2) Where are you most prone to idolatry?

Family

Material stuff

Career

Leisure e.g. sport

Your body/appearance/image

Something else?

What can you practically do about it?

3) Look at Eph 5 : 5. What is the link between idolatry and the other qualities mentioned there?

4) As you compare the life you lived before knowing Christ and the life you live today –where have you seen the greatest change? Have any idols been knocked down?