



Psalm 127

Glorify God
& Enjoy him Forever

You are a SQUIRE.

What does this mean?

When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child.

When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. – 1 Corinthians 13:11

Moving toward manhood means moving away from childhood.

When you were a child, you spoke like a child.

Children are learning to speak. They struggle for the right words. When they are very young, they might wine and cry rather than talk about their feelings and needs. They speak in a higher pitched voice, and have to work through correct pronunciation of words. They talk about immature things, talk out of turn, and while blunt, can speak without tact.

When you were a child, you thought like a child

Children care about childish things. They love playing with their food, playing hide and go seek, learning to jump, run, and eventually riding bikes. They feel they are the center of attention and that the world must revolve around their needs and desires. They are disobedient, mischievous, and naïve about the world around them.

When you were a child, you reasoned like a child

Children know God from their parents and Christ-bearing influences around them. Their understanding is largely black and white, and cause and effect. Their faith is simple, as are their arguments. They largely take your word for it, and mimic their influences, regardless of whether they are positive or negative.

“Everybody grows old, but not everybody grows up.”

Getting older doesn't assume you will attain godly maturity. Attaining godly maturity is based first on your access to God's truth, second, your awareness of your need for that truth as the saving grace for life, and third, a commitment to God, to follow and trust Him as your pathway to full and joy filled life.

A squire moves knowledge of the truth from his head to his heart, to his hands.

Knowledge gives us power, but knowledge alone, because of our sinful hearts, leads to pride and arrogance. The squire learns the importance of humility as he connects his sin with His Savior, and His Savior, with the grace and mercy of God through the cross. It is then he begins to understand the depth of forgiveness He has been shown, and the value of Christ's model for living. Therefore the squire takes the knowledge of the truth, couples it with the conviction of the heart born out of humility, and loves God, His Creation and God's people the way it was designed. This shift, sets the stage for the squire to become the knight.

If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for him. - James 4:17

The Manhood Principles

Real men serve God first and foremost

Real men are fully committed to their work

Real men respect authority and women

Real men maintain integrity

Real men embrace empathy

Real men defend and protect boldly

Real men act courageously

Real men are willingly accountable

Real men live for a transcendent cause

Real men maintain humility

The Manhood Creed represents the heart of the Manhood Principles in the form of a lifelong process of personal discovery, submission to the truth, and resolve to perform His will and perpetuate His story through our life and legacy.

You are asked, as a squire, to memorize the Manhood Creed, as you learn to follow the truths of God within it. Each time you start a new Manhood “Vice” Study, you’ll add a section. Your camp experiences will give you the opportunity to recite this creed and proclaim to the younger pages and attendees, the significance, the roll, and the call of the biblical man, in our world.

The Manhood Creed

I came from dust. I was formed to know God and enjoy Him forever; to share in His community, and to share in His love.

He formed my inmost parts, knit me together in my mother’s womb, and made me in His image. I am intricately known and accepted by my Creator.

In my sin, I was separated from God’s fellowship and eternal rest. However, God provided mercy and grace through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ to restore my soul to Him, through faith alone.

Therefore, as a worshipper by nature, I humbly seek God first for my identity and strength, rejecting the idols that lead me away from the Truth.

I submit to all God-established authorities, and allow them to lead me with joy and not with grief. I will exercise authority given to me through faith, with empathy, service, and wisdom.

I commit to utilizing my gifts through the power of grace to fulfill my calling, to work hardily, as to God and not to man.

I will maintain integrity toward men, toward God who sees all, and willingly submit myself in accountability to the Holy Spirit, and to my fellow brother.

I am called to defend the truth, protect my family and fellow man, remain courageous and steadfast in the face of opposition, proving my faith genuine, and eternally centered.

I will leave a legacy of faith in my Savior Jesus Christ, hope in His promise for me, and love unconditional. As I return to dust, I will claim, the end on this earth, is yet the beginning of life eternal.

Manhood Principles:

Principle 1 “Real Men Seek God First and Foremost”

Life Vice Study:

Idolatry

Disclaimer for Fathers

If this is your son's first Life Vice study, you will want to consider the principle "as much as necessary, but as little as possible" when working on this study with your son.

Remember, your son has gone through or is about to go through the Squire ceremony, which clearly puts the onus on him to embrace the teaching of scriptures and to start living them out. Traditionally, rites of passages for an older child included temporary separation of the boy from the father so the boy could explore life himself. Then, after doing so, the boy would come back to the father and discuss with him what he had learned.

We understand this should be an exercise where the son is asked to think, work through, and take this journey as much independently as possible, and to receive guidance and redirection only as necessary. Your son will benefit from the independence, even if at times it is hard. He will likely have questions, need assistance in understanding things, but I would warn you to fight the urge to just give him the answers. Lead him in the right direction if necessary, but allow him to work it out as much as possible.

With that said, there are several times throughout this study your son will be asked to interact with you regarding a section.

There is a great short sermon by Matt Chandler that will help give you an overview of this study and provide you with knowledge to fuel good conversations. You can find it: [HERE](#)

Your son is going to need self-drying moldable clay that you can buy [HERE](#)

He will use this clay to build his idol, which he will bring to the event. At the conclusion of the ceremony, he will destroy his idol as a declaration of being freed from idolatry.

Fathers are encouraged to do this study as well, and are welcomed to participate in the ceremony as well.

Section One

What is an idol?

Have you seen any of the Indian Jones movies? They were an epic

The word idol is an old word, but with ever renewed cultural significance. You find it thrown around in Hollywood, on the music scene, within social media, on television, and in sports. To be an idol in our culture, is to hold power, fame, and influence.



However, God did not intend for idols to be a part of our daily lives. He intended Himself to be our chief focus, with nothing else ever taking center stage or of more importance. The fact is, idols are everywhere and often times cunning, deceptive, and destructive as it relates to our relationship with others, but most importantly, our Creator.

In this section, you are going to explore what an idol is, and begin the process of becoming aware of idol temptations in your own life.

Answer This

What is something or someone, that if taken away forever from you, would severely affect the way you enjoy life, and why? (Ex. XBOX, Iphone, Sport, Celebrity, etc)

Name a few of your favorite things in life?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

What are a few reasons why you value these things so much?

As you begin this study on idolatry, I urge you to consider that this will stretch you to think and challenge you to be honest with yourself in light of the scriptures. It is important with any endeavor that we enter into it with prayer. We must be willing to allow the scriptures to speak to us by first being humble and open to receiving them.

Pray this before you get started:

Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. – Psalm 119:18

Watch This

[What is IDOL Worship](#)

After watching the video above, answer the following questions.

What does it mean to worship something?

How can God expect us to worship Him alone?

Definition

Define the word IDOL using several different resources, making one of them your father, or a respected person in your life.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

When Paul entered Rome to spread the gospel, he was taken back by the sheer number of gods the Greeks worshipped. There was literally a god for just about anything you can imagine. Notice how he addresses the listeners by making mention of their “unknown god”.



¹⁶ While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, “What is this babbler trying to say?” Others remarked, “He seems to be advocating foreign gods.” They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹ Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? ²⁰ You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean.” ²¹ (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

²² Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. ²³ For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.

²⁴ “The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. ²⁵ And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. ²⁶ From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. ²⁷ God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. ²⁸ ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’

²⁹ “Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. ³⁰ In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. ³¹ For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

³² When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, “We want to hear you again on this subject.” ³³ At that, Paul left the Council. ³⁴ Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.

The Greeks were very smart. They were known for their philosophers and great thinkers. It is interesting to note that even smart people can fall into worshipping idols made by the hands of man.

Identify and record some of the persuasive points Paul made regarding the “unknown god”?

What was the response of the group who listened to Paul?

Who Were The Greek Gods

Let’s take a look at some of the Greek gods from that time.

Visit this website on the [Greek gods and goddesses](#)

Pick five (5) of the Greek gods or goddesses and fill in the blanks as directed below

Example:

Name of god/dess: Zeus

They are the god/dess of what: Zeus is the father of the gods, and controller of thunder and lightning. He rules along with Poseiden and Hades, and exerts his will on the other gods, and mortals.

What are some situations when someone who believes in this god/dess pray to them for help? They might entreat Zeus when they want to bring harm on someone or their property, or when they are not getting the answer they want from another god or goddess.

1. **Name of god/dess:** _____

They are the god/dess of what: _____

What are some situations when someone who believes in this god/dess pray to them for help?

2. Name of god/dess: _____

They are the god/dess of what: _____

What are some situations when someone who believes in this god/dess pray to them for help?

3. Name of god/dess: _____

They are the god/dess of what: _____

What are some situations when someone who believes in this god/dess pray to them for help?

4. Name of god/dess: _____

They are the god/dess of what: _____

What are some situations when someone who believes in this god/dess pray to them for help?

5. Name of god/dess: _____

They are the god/dess of what: _____

What are some situations when someone who believes in this god/dess pray to them for help?

Classic Idol Worship Gone Wrong

As we near the close of this section of our Life Vice study on Idolatry, take some time to read, think about, summarize, and talk to your dad about what you've learned from the following Bible story.

Elijah and the Prophets of Baal – 1 Kings 18

Summarize what you've read, learned, and talked to your father about regarding this story:



Memorize This

Title: No other gods

Exodus 20:2-3

“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me.”

What do you glean from the above verses as you ponder and think about them in light of our study on idolatry?

Takeaway

What are some of the things you have learned in this section of the study?

Section Two

Pray before you get started:

Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. – Psalm 119:18

God the King

[Watch This First](#)

After watching the video, answer the following questions

1. Name a few ways earthly kings rule over people.



2. How is God a different kind of king when compared with an earthly king?

The Role of a King

Israel desires a king

For almost 350 years, Israel was led by a judge. In that span of time, 15 judges served, overseeing legal matters, managing military duties, performing administrative tasks, and bringing judgement on Israel for their disobedience toward God. Israel had been acting contrary to God's commands for years, fighting for territory amongst themselves, almost destroying whole tribes in the process, and falling into idolatry. God sent other nations to oppress Israel, but then, when they repented of their actions, God would save them and reestablish them as a formidable people, a group God had chosen, and promised to never leave.

However, Israel's pattern of disobedience and repentance became very predictable, and progressively worse over time. God, who had set Himself as their ultimate king, was consistently being forgotten by the people He chose as His own. In their growing ignorance toward God's perfect provision and protection, Israel sought an earthly king to rule over them.

Watch This: [The Book of Judges](#)

1. What is the theme or summary of the book of Judges?

Read 1 Samuel 8-10

After Israel demands a king over them, what warnings did Samuel give them about what the king would be like?

Summarize the process of finding and appointing a king over Israel

Read 1 Samuel 15

Summarize this chapter, highlighting the rejection of Saul.

Jesus is the Ultimate King

One of the basic Christian beliefs is that there is one God, but three persons; the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit. So, though the manifestation of each may appear different, the three persons of the Trinity are all God, all the time.

For the sake of this study, we will look at the phrase “King of kings, and Lord of lords” as a reference to Jesus, and for building the case as to why He should be our only king, superior to any man made idol.

The logic of the Trinity follows, that if Jesus is our king, God is our king, and vice versa.

Summarize each of the following verses:

Revelation 19:16

Revelation 17:14

The Bible tells us that Jesus is the Lord of lords, and the King of kings.

A king is the head of a government called a monarchy. Take a few minutes to read and summarize what a monarchy is and how it functions being led by a king

Read This: [What is a Monarchy](#)

Summarize your reading about Monarchy

We all want a king to fight for us, to give us peace in a land of plenty, and to represent our past, present and future interests. But, as we saw in 1 Samuel, Saul, the first king of Israel was not exactly perfect. Samuel warned the people how an earthly king would act, and Saul did not disappoint. In fact, Saul was not alone. Many of the kings that you can read about in the book of kings, were much the same way. People are sinful, regardless of their role in society. That is why we can be assured that Israel asking for a king was not a happy thing, but a very sad thing, because it told just how far they had fallen away from God and His provision.

If you remember, God had freed them from slavery to Egypt, parted the sea for them, dried up the Jordan, provided them food and water in the desert for decades, and given them victory over their enemies, on the way to fulfilling His promise of giving them the land of Canaan, a place of plenty, and of peace. But just like humans do, they slowly started to forget their faithful, providing, and sustaining God. Sadly, humans today are no different...and that includes you and me.

Watch This: [Book Overview of 1 and 2 Kings](#)

Summarize what you learned about Israel, about idolatry, and sin:

The Role of the King

1. The King is a warrior

A warrior, defined by Webster's Dictionary is: a person engaged or experienced in warfare; a soldier

Why would God need to be engaged in warfare? Simply because evil, the anti-thesis of God, exists, and it exists chiefly to oppose and overthrow God's reign.

Remember, God created earth, and made it perfect. There was not one thing wrong with creation. It was just as He designed it. But Satan, a fallen and rebellious angel, sought out to change this in an effort to take control of God's throne and power. When sin entered the world, it wrecked the perfection that had existed, tainted mankind's thoughts and actions, and separated man from God. This is why God chose to send Jesus to earth, to reestablish a relationship with us permanently, by providing grace and mercy through the cross.

This was the first and most essential step in remedying our fallen state. And it did not come without a fight. You can find throughout the gospels, spiritual battles being waged against Jesus, trying to tempt, discredit or physically harm him. Each time, Jesus used God's truth to battle back, maintain His innocence, and silence the devil.

Even if we look back into the Old Testament, we can see the warrior God, fighting to ensure His will was done. When God chose Israel as His people, and promised to send the Savior Jesus through David's family line, Satan made it his mission to destroy that nation, and to cut off David's family line, so that Jesus would not come to be as had been foretold. Every time it looked like Satan might win, God found a way to save His people, maintain His promise, and keep the line of David true, all the way to Jesus.

Fallen mankind, under the sway of the devil, have committed innumerable atrocities over the centuries. We have become sexually immoral, impure, jealous, angry, divided, threatening, murderers, power grabbers, masters of the put-down, self-serving, and deeply egotistical, leading to racial divisions, wars, prejudices, innocent death, oppression, divorce, confusion, and hypocrisy.

Sometimes it seems the world is out of control. It seems that there is no one person or government that can right the ship. This is why we need God. He is our warrior, and it is His plan to put an end to this evil.

This can also be described as our need for justice. Evil is the single largest problem in our world. It affects everyone just as it has infected everyone. We desire those who have done evil to be punished. We especially want it for those who have done heinous things. But if we are honest with ourselves, and stay in line with the teaching of the Bible, we recognize that God sees ALL sin the same, whether perceived as big or small. This makes us realize we are all evildoers, all worthy of the just wrath of God.

It is only through Jesus that we escape that wrath; through the One who was the perfect sacrifice for our mountain of sins.

A. God is going to overthrow all His enemies

Summarize the following verses

Exodus 15:13

Isaiah 42:13

Jeremiah 31:35

1 Samuel 17:45

Zephaniah 3:17

2. The King is a Ruler

You probably have a room in your house that you feel is your domain. You have things in that space that you care about, and that you want to protect. In effect, you rule over that space, and those things.

In fact, God, in Genesis, gave mankind something specific to rule over. He said, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living that moves on the earth." (Genesis 2:28)



If someone is going to reign, they have to have something to reign over, otherwise ruling is futile. We need to consider what exactly it is that God claims He currently reigns over, and how this will look throughout the ages.

As the creator of everything, God has authority over everything. Even the wonderful inventions you see man make are made from things existing in the universe God created. Literally everything we have and do, are because of the created universe under God's headship.

When God created the universe, He became the author of it all. That means He has author-ity over it. It also means that He created all the angels, including satan, who rebelled against Him.

Summarize satan's rebellion in the following verses:

Isaiah 14:12-15

Is it possible for satan to become an authority over earth, though created by God Himself?

Satan in effect is the author of lies. His best trick is to twist the truth of God in order to cause you and I to sin. But he is not ever going to be the authority because he is subject to his Creator. This means that whenever satan wants to do something nefarious, God has to allow it to happen. Certainly God is not just allowing anything and everything to happen just because satan wants to.

Summarize the following verses:

Genesis 3:22

What does this verse tell us about conscience?

Genesis 20:6

What does this verse tell us about God's authority over satan's schemes?

God is pretty explicit about reigning over heaven and earth forever once Jesus returns to earth. Read each of these verses and summarize.

Revelation 11:15

Psalms 29:10

Daniel 4:3

When Jesus comes back and gathers those believe in Him, God will bring Heaven to earth, and the two will become one, and God will live on earth with His people. At that time, we will come to realize all that has been promised to us by God since the beginning. One thing God has promised is that as children of God, we are also heirs, and because we are heirs, we will reign with Him forever. Check out and summarize the following verses:

Revelation 22:1-5

Psalms 8

If you notice in Psalms 8, there is much said about what God has given us dominion over as a part of creation. When the fall of man occurred, creation fell with it. We can see in Romans 8 how all of it groans to be set free from the bondage of the fall. When God restores the earth back to its original perfect state, we can be assured we will return to reigning and having dominion over the earth much like it was in the beginning, except this time, free of sin and corruption.

3. The King Represents His people

Since God is the Creator, He is the “brain” behind ALL of His creation. That means He had a purpose for creating, and a plan to see it through.

Think about your last name. What is the purpose of it? First, it is a point of recognition. When your name is called out, unless there is someone with the same last name, it serves as a unique identifier amongst a group of people. It is also tied to reputation. Your family has a history, good, bad, or in the middle. If your last name is Rockefeller, you are known historically for your money and your hand in the oil business. If you are a Walton, you are in almost every town in America as Wal-Mart. If you’re a Bush, you’re name has been associated with political influencers and presidents for decades.

God’s name is the single most influential name in all of history. It will continue to be that way forever. To be a part of His family is to be a part of His family rule.

Consider and summarize these verses regarding God’s family name:

Hebrews 1:1-4 – How is Jesus considered one with God and a part of His family?

John 1:12 –How can we become a part of God’s family?

Galatians 4:4-7 - Describe how we became eligible to be a part of God’s family?

Matthew 25:34 – Describe what we receive as children of God?

How does God represent Himself and us, simultaneously?

God created us to know Him, enjoy Him, and to glorify Him. In Him we have been designed to be completely fulfilled in doing these things. This purpose has been lost in the thickness of sin that clouds our thinking and blinds us from what is truly fulfilling. Our thoughts instead are centered on knowledge and power, enjoying temporary pleasures, and glorifying ourselves. Because of our sinful nature, it seems odd that God can represent Himself and us simultaneously. The only way this can occur is if we come to recognize, accept, and pursue the purpose for which God created us.

When we pursue God, to know, enjoy, and glorify Him, we are in essence telling God that His name, His kingdom, and His reign are worth it, and that we want to be a part of whatever He is doing and wherever He is going.

When we align ourselves with the King, then we align our desires with Him also. Then it makes sense that God's family name is our name, because of Christ, and our faith in Him. Being in God's family is far better than any earthly family, or any vain pursuit. His family is secure, perfectly loving, unified, strong, complete, and joyous. It can't get any better than to be represented by the God who made you and who will sustain you for eternity.

Let us consider our Warrior, Reigning and Representing King of kings, and Lord of lords. He is worthy of our worship alone.

As you wrap up this section, take a few minutes and listen to the song ["Is He Worthy"](#) By Shane and Shane, off of their Psalms Live album.



Takeaway

What are some of the things you have learned in this section of the study?

Section 3

Honey you are a rock
Upon which I stand
And I come here to talk
I hope you understand

That green eyes
Yeah the spotlight, shines upon you
And how could anybody deny you

I came here with a load
And it feels so much lighter
Now I met you
And honey you should know
That I could never go on without you
Green eyes

Honey you are the sea
Upon which I float
And I came here to talk
I think you should know

That green eyes
You're the one that I wanted to find
And anyone who tried to deny you
Must be out of their mind

Because I...

"Green Eyes" by Coldplay

The above lyrics are oddly interesting but not unique to many of the songs written today about life, relationships, and what the world deems important.

We see the artist refer to his love as "the rock upon which he stands", "the sea upon which he floats", and say "I could never go on without you".

When we make relationships our ultimate thing in life, it is easy to see how lyrics like this come to be.

Ironically, some speculate this song was written for one of the women Chris Martin, the lead singer, was dating at the time. At the time of this writing, Chris is dating none of them, but appears to be getting on just fine without them. So much for "I could never go on without you".

Pray this before you get started:

Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. – Psalm 119:18

Modern Idol Worship

It may seem that up until now we have been dealing with some historic and out of date issue. After all, none of us probably have golden calves, statues of Baal, or shrines on our tables of things we worship and bow down to. However, this statement may not be entirely true. Though we may not have physical handmade idols as described, there are many, possibly an innumerable number of things we worship that God would call an idol.



Remember back to our basic definition of an idol – “anything that takes priority in our lives over God”. God said in the first two commandments that we should not put anything before Him (Exodus 20). Therefore, anything, whether physical or not, that take precedence over God is an idol. In Exodus 20:2-3, we are told that we are to worship God, and nothing else. This assumes that we will worship something, either God, or something else. This also means that it is not possible to worship nothing.

God created us to worship as we learned in section one. Since this is true, we must remove God in order to worship or idolize something else. Because of how we are designed, we are going to be captured by something, enamored by someone, and we will align with or claim allegiance to that thing or things.

Modern Idols in Media

Answer the following:

Who has the most followers on Twitter? _____

Who has the most Instagram followers? _____

What musician or band is hot right now? _____

Who is the best NBA player right now? _____

What actor or actress is most famous right now? _____

What makes these people famous?

How do you think our world or media set these people up to be seen as idols?

What do you think the appeal is for someone to be seen in this way?

Now think of a few people who you think fondly about on a daily or weekly basis. What makes them appealing to you? What would you do if they suddenly showed up at your door? What lengths would you go to in order to meet them or spend time with them?

The Temptation of Jesus

Let's consider Jesus's encounter with satan on the issue of idolatry. Read, summarize and answer the questions that follow.

Read Luke 4:1-14

Summarize what you read:

What three temptations did satan present to Christ?

Which of the temptations seems to be most in line with gaining power and influence?

Which of the temptations seems to be most in line with relying on yourself rather than God to supply your personal needs?

Which of the temptations seems to be most in line with forcing God to act on command?

How did Jesus combat each of the temptations?

If idolatry has to do with putting something other than God at the heart of your meaning in life, purpose, and identity, it is easy to see that Jesus was being pushed to identify with satan as lord, to take charge of his immediate needs by quenching his hunger, and through prideful rejection of God's will for Him.

Memorize

Since Jesus gave us the example of combatting temptations with scripture, let's memorize key verses on the matter so you will be equipped when you're faced with opposition in the future.

Flesh vs. Spirit

Romans 8:5-6

"For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace."

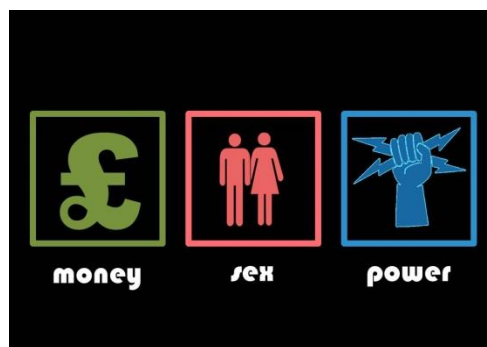
What do you glean from the above verses as you ponder and think about them in light of our study on idolatry?

Modern Idols (Money, Sex, Power) – Do this with your dad/guardian

Both Read

Romans 8 makes it clear that "those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace" (Romans 8:5-6 ESV). At the heart, then, of gospel change is recognizing and changing what we put

our minds on. In the Bible, mind and heart are not two different things; they are the core of the being. When Paul says that we have set our minds on the flesh, he is prescribing the condition and preoccupation of our hearts. What has captured our imaginations? What most preoccupies and engrosses the very core of our thinking and dreaming? Whatever occupies our hearts is our way of justifying and proving ourselves. It is our way of developing our own sense of value and worth, and therefore, it is our way of being our own Savior and Lord.



So, what are the things you have set your mind and heart on as ways of self-justification? Whatever it is, if it is not “the things of the Spirit,” it is an idol. To set the mind on the flesh is to put your mind and your heart on something besides Jesus Christ as your functional Savior. An “idol” is anything more fundamental than God to your happiness, meaning in life, and identity. Idolatry is not so much wanting bad things as it is turning good things into ultimate things. This means anything can become an idol, including good things, such as career, family, achievement, independence, a political cause, material possessions, certain people in dependence upon you, power and influence, physical attractiveness, romance, human approval, financial security, your place in a particular social circle or institution.

Things “not of the spirit”

Take some time to discuss with your dad or guardian the power of modern idols. Son, ask the following questions:

In what ways have you or someone you know dealt with money as an idol throughout your life?

How do you see sex, pleasure, and immediate gratification idolized in our culture?

In what ways is it tempting to chase power, reputation, and fame in your day to day life?

What things did you learn? Summarize them here:

Our most pervasive, in-your-face idols in modern culture, are those associated with money, sex, and power.

Our society defines manhood as:

1. How much money or success you’ve achieved.
2. How many women like you, or the reputation and beauty of the one your with currently.
3. Your personal reputation, influence, friend associations, etc.

Basically, if you have a hot girl, are athletic, smart, funny, and have money and influence, you are a “man”.

Believing the cultures lie that your identity is tied to the above things, leads you into a full on pursuit of those idols, which is a dead end, and contradictory to God’s design for you. As it relates to the gospel, this is the concept of death; how our sin separates us from God.

Identity Crisis?

People around you are going to attack your identity throughout your lifetime. The good thing is, though their words might hurt, they have no right to define who you are. Only God does that. In knowing this, this can free us from pursuing the things people value as important, and allow us to focus on what God values, and how He values us individually.

Consider the following attacks you may hear regarding who you are as a person.

1. You're just not smart enough.
2. You don't have what it takes to make the team/be a starter/be the star.
3. You're not my type.
4. You need to step up your clothing game.
5. The cool kids are all at the country club this weekend.
6. You're not cool unless you're partying .
7. You're so dumb to believe that.
8. If only you were a little more popular...
9. You don't even have a girlfriend...what's wrong with you?



The criticisms you just read above are meant to attack what the world says we should value most...our reputation, our abilities, and our relationships. It is meant to hurt, regardless of whether it is followed with "I'm just kidding".

People can be mean, but their ability to act a certain way doesn't mean they have the authority to determine who you are as a person.

God, being the Creator, is the only One who has the authority to tell us who we are. Who we are is completely defined by Him, all the time.

One thing we can know is that we have been created with a purpose, so that all of us are here for a reason.

Ephesians 2:10 – For you are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

On the following pages are numerous verses pointing out our value, and just how special we are to God. Read through them, and pick your favorite ones, considering which ones were new to you or surprising to you.

How God sees you (courtesy of Kenneth Boa)

- *I am a child of God.*

But to all who have received him--those who believe in his name--he has given the right to become God's children ... (John 1:12).

- *I am a branch of the true vine, and a conduit of Christ's life.*

I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener. I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me--and I in him--bears much fruit, because apart from me you can accomplish nothing (John 15:1, 5).

- *I am a friend of Jesus.*

I no longer call you slaves, because the slave does not understand what his master is doing. But I have called you friends, because I have revealed to you everything I heard from my Father (John 15:15).

- *I have been justified and redeemed.*

But they are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:24).

- *My old self was crucified with Christ, and I am no longer a slave to sin.*

We know that our old man was crucified with him so that the body of sin would no longer dominate us, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin (Romans 6:6).

- *I will not be condemned by God.*

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1).

- *I have been set free from the law of sin and death.*

For the law of the life-giving Spirit in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2).

- *As a child of God, I am a fellow heir with Christ.*

And if children, then heirs (namely, heirs of God and also fellow heirs with Christ)--if indeed we suffer with him so we may also be glorified with him (Romans 8:17).

- *I have been accepted by Christ.*

Receive one another, then, just as Christ also received you, to God's glory (Romans 15:7).

- *I have been called to be a saint.*

... To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints, with all those in every place who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours (1 Corinthians 1:2). (See also Ephesians 1:1, Philippians 1:1, and Colossians 1:2.)

- *In Christ Jesus, I have wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.*

He is the reason you have a relationship with Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption ... (1 Corinthians 1:30).

- *My body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who dwells in me.*

Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you (1 Corinthians 6:19)?

• *I am joined to the Lord and am one spirit with Him.*

But the one united with the Lord is one spirit with him (1 Corinthians 6:17).

• *God leads me in the triumph and knowledge of Christ.*

But thanks be to God who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and who makes known through us the fragrance that consists of the knowledge of him in every place (2 Corinthians 2:14).

• *The hardening of my mind has been removed in Christ.*

But their minds were closed. For to this very day, the same veil remains when they hear the old covenant read. It has not been removed because only in Christ is it taken away (2 Corinthians 3:14).

• *I am a new creature in Christ.*

So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; what is old has passed away--look, what is new has come (2 Corinthians 5:17)!

• *I have become the righteousness of God in Christ.*

God made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we would become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21).

• *I have been made one with all who are in Christ Jesus.*

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female--for all of you are one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28).

• *I am no longer a slave, but a child and an heir.*

So you are no longer a slave but a son, and if you are a son, then you are also an heir through God (Galatians 4:7).

• *I have been set free in Christ.*

For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not be subject again to the yoke of slavery (Galatians 5:1).

• *I have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.*

Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).

• *I am chosen, holy, and blameless before God.*

For he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we may be holy and unblemished in his sight in love (Ephesians 1:4).

• *I am redeemed and forgiven by the grace of Christ.*

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace (Ephesians 1:7).

• *I have been predestined by God to obtain an inheritance.*

In Christ we too have been claimed as God's own possession, since we were predestined according to the one purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will (Ephesians 1:11).

• *I have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.*

And when you heard the word of truth (the gospel of your salvation)--when you believed in Christ--you were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13).

• *Because of God's mercy and love, I have been made alive with Christ.*

But God, being rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us, even though we were dead in transgressions, made us alive together with Christ--by grace you are saved (Ephesians 2:4-5)!

• *I am seated in the heavenly places with Christ.*

... And he raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus ... (Ephesians 2:6).

• *I am God's workmanship created to produce good works.*

For we are his workmanship, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared beforehand so we may do them (Ephesians 2:10).

• *I have been brought near to God by the blood of Christ.*

But now in Christ Jesus you who used to be far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ (Ephesians 2:13).

• *I am a member of Christ's body and a partaker of His promise.*

... The Gentiles are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 3:6). (See also Ephesians 5:30.)

• *I have boldness and confident access to God through faith in Christ.*

... In whom we have boldness and confident access to God because of Christ's faithfulness (Ephesians 3:12).

• *My new self is righteous and holy.*

... Put on the new man who has been created in God's image--in righteousness and holiness that comes from truth (Ephesians 4:24).

• *I was formerly darkness, but now I am light in the Lord.*

... For you were at one time darkness, but now you are [/netbible2/index.php?header=&book=eph&chapter=5](#) light in the Lord. Walk as children of the light (Ephesians 5:8).

• *I am a citizen of heaven.*

But our citizenship is in heaven--and we also await a savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ ... (Philippians 3:20).

• *The peace of God guards my heart and mind.*

And the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7).

• *God supplies all my needs.*

And my God will supply your every need according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).

• *I have been made complete in Christ.*

... *You have been filled in him, who is the head over every ruler and authority (Colossians 2:10).*

• *I have been raised up with Christ.*

Therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God (Colossians 3:1).

• *My life is hidden with Christ in God.*

... *For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3).*

• *Christ is my life, and I will be revealed with Him in glory.*

When Christ (who is your life) appears, then you too will be revealed in glory with him (Colossians 3:4).

• *I have been chosen of God, and I am holy and beloved.*

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with a heart of mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience ... (Colossians 3:12).

• *God loves me and has chosen me.*

We know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you ... (1 Thessalonians 1:4).

Summarize what stood out to you from the above verses. Write about how they affirm you as a person and how this is in contrast to what you might hear from people at school, on the playing field, or at a job.

Idols Come And Go

Idols, as we have seen, are those whose personal abilities, financial success, or physical desirability gain them power amongst their peers or followers.

Think back to the questions you answered about those idols with the most social media followers. How does a follower of someone interact with that person? Watching or commenting on their posts? Attending one of their concerts? Seeing one of their movies? Why do you think people get so wrapped up in these people?

As we have learned, it is because we are idol factories, and they have something desirable about them. They capture our attention, captivate our hearts, and show us what it is like to have power and influence. We were made to worship someone, and when that someone is not God, it is ALWAYS something or someone else.

The reality is, all of our idols eventually fade away. Eventually they lose their beauty, their athleticism, and in many ways, their appeal. Many times, with it, goes their income, and ultimately their power and influence. Our consumeristic culture is quick to replace one idol with another.

All idols are temporary.

Read 1 Samuel 5:1-12 and write out your thoughts on the futility and temporary nature of idols.

Read and summarize Isaiah 44:9-20

In the end, all of us find ourselves subject to our surroundings. We all bleed, can be broken, and eventually our bodies wear out and die. It begs the question, how can we worship things and people that are not eternal? Why would we put our trust, time, and effort into something or someone that doesn't ultimately have any more power than I do?

As God's creation, we also are all in the same boat. We will all stand before God and give an account of our lives.

It is written, "As surely as I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow; every tongue will confess to God". So then each of us will give an account of Himself to God. – Romans 14:12

Watch This

Take time to rent "[I Can Only Imagine](#)", a movie about the lead singer of Mercy Me, and his struggle for significance. After the movie is over, discuss with your dad or guardian what you learned about idolatry from this film, and how the main character worked through it.

Section 4

Pray this before you get started:

Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. – Psalm 119:18

Idolatry and the Gospel

Anything you look to more than Christ for a sense of acceptability, joy, significance, hope, and security is by definition your “god,” something you adore and serve with your whole life and heart. If you try to achieve your sense of self by a performance (as I have often done with my work and ministry), then you are putting something in the place of Christ as a Savior. That is an idol by definition. The sign of idolatry is always inordinate anxiety, inordinate anger, and inordinate discouragement. Idols are good things (family, achievement, work, career, romance, talent, etc.) that we turn into ultimate things in order to get the significance and joy we need. Then they drive us into the ground because we have to have them. If we lose a good thing, it makes us sad. If we lose an idol, it devastates us.

- Tim Keller in “Idols of the Heart”

God understands our dilemma with idols. He knows how backward our thinking is. He knows we don’t deserve anything but death, yet He looks on us, and acts with compassion.

Christ came to restore our relationship with God, which had been broken because of our sin. He came to show us the truth of God, and to save us also from our skewed thoughts on life. He came to show us how to reorder our lives to put God first in everything. He came to redeem us from our idol worship.

Christ did this through His example of perfect thinking, flawless living, sacrificial service to mankind by taking on the cross for their sin, and by overcoming death through the resurrection, securing our redemption in Him alone.

Believers in Christ, who have experience the gospel, understand the following points:

1. God is the supreme authority who, in His perfect holiness, made all things good and right.
2. Mankind, which includes me, has rejected God’s command to love and live only for Him, which is sin.
3. This rejection, which is based in idolatry, has separated me from Him eternally, so that I cannot get to Heaven on my own works.
4. Christ is my only hope for redemption. Only through Him can I be restored to right relationship with God, and live with Him in Heaven forever.

5. I receive Christ when I repent of my fallen state, and recognize Him as my Savior.

6. When my heart is captivated by none other than the King of kings and Lord of lords, I am able to live fully and completely.

There are two critical aspects of putting idols aside, repentance and rejoicing.

There if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. - Colossians 3:1-3

Notice “you have been raise up with Christ” – which shows our repentance.

Notice also “set your mind on the things above” – which shows our rejoicing.

We can’t only have repentance without rejoicing, or we will become exasperated, live in fear, and eventually hate ourselves.

We can’t only have rejoicing without repentance, or we are left with shallow living and low commitment.

When repentance and rejoicing go together, it looks like this – in our rejoicing for what Christ has done for us, we become most aware and repentant for our sinful state.

There is something beautiful about repentance and rejoicing together as it relates to our relationship with Christ, and our rejection of the world of idols. In fact, we will never fully understand what it is like to be a child of God until we connect with this principle.

Examine Yourself

Now comes the time for you to consider all you have studied and learned on the topic of idolatry, and to consider where your idols lie.

In summary, we have discussed the following:

1. What is an idol, and what is worship
2. What can we learn about historical idols and their power over mankind
3. How is God the King over all else
4. What do modern day idols look like and how do they show up in our lives
5. How does the gospel redeem us from idols

As Tim Keller describes, there are two kinds of personal idols, “far” and “near”.

“Far idols” such as power, approval, comfort, and control are more subtle and basic. They are at the roots of your life— farther from the surface of things. They are motivational drives.

“Near idols” are more concrete and specific objects and subjects such as your spouse or your career. Now these things—your business, your ministry, your music—are extremely good things that you need to detach from the far idols, which are using them. That means they often (even ordinarily) may remain in your life, if they are put in their proper place.

Many times far and near idols co-exist and can be identified in our emotional responses to certain situations, or our motivations for acting a certain way.

If we get angry or prideful at situations, it may be as a result of feeling like our identity is being attacked, or because we don’t have control over a situation or a person. If we feel worthless and depressed, it’s again often because we have put too much emphasis on what people say or think about us, that we are unable to see that we have ultimate and sustained worth in God, our Creator. When we lie, it might be as a result of our desire to maintain our reputation with our friends, and consider that of more importance than telling the truth in a situation. When we respond in ways that don’t put God as supreme, we in essence are saying that our idols are our saviors, and that we trust in them to make us happy and fulfilled.

Below are several categories where we develop and draw near to idols in our lives. Read each of these and start considering where you feel like the world has taught you to value these good things and people more than God. Remember, many of the things below are not necessary bad in themselves, but become bad when they become ultimate.

1. Work

Work can actually include almost anything we are working toward that helps us feel powerful, productive, useful, or validated. Sports, school, other forms of competition, or basically anything that requires your time to master fall into this category. Working at being the best at whatever you’re into can become the thing you live for. The results are, when you don’t do as well on a test, or fail at a sport, don’t get into the school you wanted, or get hurt, these situations can be particularly devastating because you’ve put too much value and worth into them.

2. Relationships (co-dependence)

Co-dependence means you rely on someone else for your sense of worth. Relationships become unhealthy because you feel your worth is tied to how and what people think and feel about you. There is a sense that you need others, and you’re willing to be drug through the mud at times to

hold on to relationships that should have healthy boundaries or severed completely. If you find you'll do almost anything to get or retain a friend, you should beware.

3. Physical Attractiveness

This is where your appearance (what you wear, your body shape etc.) becomes an ultimate concern for you. How you look can drive a sense of how you experience intimacy, and can lead to false forms of it like pornography or the allure and dream of earthly "true love" being able to conquer all your issues. If you are spending excessive time in the gym, can't help but stop and admire or critique your looks whenever you walk in front of a mirror, or get some inner satisfaction in sporting the latest fashion, then you may need to consider who you are putting first.

4. Money.

When what you have becomes an essential part of who you are, there's a problem. The fear of not having the best car at school, the best clothes to wear, the nicest house to hang at, the newest video game, the best summer vacation can be a very real thing. Whether it is trying to be the rich kid or the spend thrift, finding security in how much money you or your family has is idolatrous.

5. Control.

If you feel the need to maintain control in your life to the point that you find yourself manipulating situations or people, you may be dealing with the fear of not trusting in a greater God to lead and guide you how He sees fit, and within the context of His promise to you to show you His plan for your good in the context of His glory. If you feel anxiety about not being good enough (perfectionism), fearing tomorrow, or being worried, you may be dealing with a control idol.

Take each of the following above categories, and consider how Jesus shows us a better way based on what you have learned thus far.

Work

Relationships

Physical Attractiveness

Money

Control

You really have to ask yourself, “When I get to Heaven, is God going to be interested in how much money I made or the kind of clothes I wore?”

I bet He doesn’t, but I know He will be interested in the way that I used the money I had for the kingdom above.

“Is He going to be interested in how popular I was, or if I was the captain of the sports team?”

I am sure He won’t be, but I do know He will want to know how popular I made His name amongst those I interacted with.

“Is He going to care how many As I got on my tests, or how many worried hours I spent making sure I was the top of my class at graduation?”

He is not, but He is going to want to know how many hours I spent in His word and in prayer, getting to know Him.

“Is He going to care how good I looked for the ladies, or how much weight I could lift on a bench press?”

He won’t, but He is going to be interested in how beautiful I made the gospel look by the way I acted around people.

“Is He going to want to hear about how many people I manipulated so that I could get my way?”

Certainly not, but He will definitely be eager to know how well I served and loved others and laid my interests aside for their good.

You see, to work, have relationships, use my gifts, make money, and be a leader, are all good things. But when they become an ultimate thing, it robs God of remaining first in our life.

Replace Idols With Jesus

What happens if we get rid of an idol in our life, but don't replace it with Jesus? We will only shift our idol to something else.

The man who gets caught in unhealthy relationships, may see his error, and shed the people he's tangled up with, but instead of embracing Jesus as his source of personal value, he finds himself getting caught up in his school work, determined to become someone and find his worth by studying his way to a straight A average. The idol cycle without Jesus as number one in the man's life, just keeps going.

Since we are idol factories, unless Jesus is number one, we will always worship something or someone, even if we come to realize our idol, and seek to remedy our situation.

What is Your Idol

"Every one of us is, even from his mother's womb, a master craftsman of idols." – John Calvin

If you are being honest with yourself, there is something, or multiple things in your life that are captivating you. The question is, "what is the idol in your life"?

As you think about what your idol may be, consider the following questions:

1. What is something you think about more often than God? (a girl, a video game, school, sports, etc.)
2. What, if taken away from you, would wreck your life? (girlfriend, family, athletic ability, etc.)
3. What negative thoughts creep into your head that drive how you act or react? ("I'm not good enough", "I'm not smart, not cool, not good looking, not athletic, not funny enough", "life is only worth living if I have this girl, this car, these friends, etc")

Feel free to write down some of your initial thoughts below:

How does Jesus redeem you from this idol? Said another way, in what way does Jesus provide the ultimate substitute for your idol?

As Jesus takes away this idol, how should your life look different?

Why is it important that Jesus be the substitute for your idol, and no one or nothing else?

Now that you have identified your idol, you are going to create a depiction of your idol to be used at a Sand to Stone event as a part of a Manhood Principle ceremony.

Ceremony Preparation

You are responsible for the following as you prepare to stand up at camp and give your testimony about what you have learned during this study. Remember, your preparation and personal conviction will be an inspiration to someone, and maybe many. Your testimony is God's word in action in you, and we know that God's word does not come back to Him in vain.

1. Be able to recite the first section of the Manhood Creed

Manhood Creed – 1st Section

I came from dust. I was formed to know God and enjoy Him forever; to share in His community, and to share in His love.

He formed my inmost parts, knit me together in my mother's womb, and made me in His image. I am intricately known and accepted by my Creator.

In my sin, I was separated from God's fellowship and eternal rest. However, God provided mercy and grace through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ to restore my soul to Him, through faith alone.

2. Recite Manhood Principle #1

Principle #1: A real man puts God first and foremost.

3. Give a testimony of what you learned through your study on idolatry

Use the following questions to help formulate your presentation to the group. There is no need for you to read each of these questions, but your testimony is going to have a flow to it that 1. Shows what you learned about idolatry, 2. Learned about God, 3. Learned about yourself, 4. How Jesus has set you free.

1. How would you define an idol, and how does this connect with how we worship?
2. What did you learn about God as our King (Warrior, Ruler, Representer)?
3. How is God the better choice for our worship?
4. What did you learn about yourself when you thought about modern day idols?
5. What is your idol? Present it to the group and talk about how this idol has tempted or captivated you.
6. How has Jesus set you free from this idol?
7. How have you chosen to destroy your idol?

After you have discussed what you have discovered in your study, you get the opportunity to destroy your idol however you want.