

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: The Elusive Danger of Idolatry

PASSAGE: Daniel 3:1-7

DATE: January 30, 2022

I. The Great Image: vs. 1

“The great golden statue they were asked to worship was not named. It could have been one of Marduk, Bel, or Nebo. Whatever its name, it represented Babylon and her king. To worship it meant total and absolute commitment to the imperial government and to the system it represented.”

II. The Dedication: vs. 2-3

III. The Ultimatum: vs. 4-6

IV. The Worship: vs. 7

Literary Details	Reference in Daniel 3	Implication
Impressive size of the golden statue	3:1,	Unavoidable idol
Repeated references to the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar "set up"	3:2-3, 5, 7, 12, 14, 15	Unavoidable authority of King Nebuchadnezzar
Repetition of the long list of officials gathered to worship the statue	3:2-3	Inescapable pressure from government, society, and peers
Repetition of the international scope of those assembled from "peoples, nations, and languages" to worship the idol	3:4, 7	Universal human acceptance of idol worship
Repetition of the list of musical instruments whose music calls for worship of the idol	3:5, 7, 10, 15	Unmistakable signal to engage in idolatry
Repeated threat of punishment in the furnace, which was then carried out	3:6, 11, 15, 19-23	Inescapable death penalty for insubordination
Repetition of the pagan names assigned to the accused Judeans	3:12-14, 16, 19-20, 22-23	Intense focus on their lack of conformity to their imposed pagan names

“The evil in our desire typically does not lie in what we want, but that we want it too much.” – **John Calvin**

Application

Five Insights Concerning Idolatry

1. Idolatry is misplaced worship

- "When we cease to worship God, we do not worship nothing; we worship anything."
- G. K. Chesterton

2. Idolatry can be overt or subtle and involve objects that are evil or good

- "Sin isn't only doing bad things; it is more fundamentally making good things into ultimate things. Sin is building your life and meaning on anything, even a very good thing, more than on God. Whatever we build our life on will drive us and enslave us. Sin is primarily idolatry." - Tim Keller

3. Idolatry utilizes a mesmerizing rhythm

4. Idols have roots that produces fruits

Idolatry Chart

Root Idol	Life only has meaning if...	How it appears	What we sacrifice	Worst fear	Biggest Problem	How it makes others feel	Gospel solution	Bible Passage
Comfort (freedom, lack of stress, pleasure)	I have a specific kind of pleasure experience or a particular quality of life	Laidback, easy going	Lack of productivity	Stress	Laziness or Boredom	Hurt, neglected	God's satisfaction	Isaiah 58:11
Approval (affirmation, love, relationships)	I am loved and respected by ___	Likeable, friendly	Codependency on others	Rejection	Cowardice	Smothered	God's love and acceptance	Romans 5:1,5-11
Control (certainty, security, self-discipline)	I am able to get mastery over my life in the area of ___	Competence	Loneliness	Uncertainty	Anxiety	Condemned, judged, offended	God's peace	Philippians 4:7
Power (success, winning, influence)	I have power and influence over others	Confidence	Burdened	Humiliation	Anger	Used, manipulated	God's righteousness	2 Corinthians 5:21

5. Because we worship our way into idolatry, we must worship our way out of idolatry

- "The best way to overcome the world is not with morality or self-discipline. Christians overcome the world by seeing the beauty and excellence of Christ. They overcome the world by seeing something more attractive than the world: Christ." - Thomas Chalmers

"No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry." - 1 Corinthians 10:13-14

"Those who cling to worthless idols turn away from God's love for them." - Jonah 2:8

“Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.” – **1 John 5:21**

“Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.” – **Colossians 3:5**

Benediction:

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.” – **Colossians 1:15-20**