

**Title:** The Power of godliness I – Consuming fire  
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## **Introduction:** The Image of God & Hypocrisy

**God is pursuing people.**

**What do people see when they look at you and me?** We are either turning people off from God or turning people to God.

**What does godliness look like?** 1) Walk the walk. 2) Give grace to those who don't.

## **Why do Christians sometimes misrepresent God?**

2 Timothy 3:1–5 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: <sup>2</sup> For men will be **lovers of themselves, lovers of money**, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, <sup>4</sup> traitors, headstrong, haughty, **lovers of pleasure** rather than lovers of God, <sup>5</sup> **having a form of godliness** but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

Serve another god. **God of self. God of money. God of pleasure.** No longer serving God, but serving another god.

## **Different types of hypocrites?**

1. Misunderstood Christians – God is very pleased with Christians who stand for the truth in a loving way.
2. Christian in name only – This type of Christian probably offends the most people. Extremely confusing to people..
3. Sincere Christian, but fell short of God's standards

## **\*Jesus was different.**

Hebrews 1:3 (NKJV) who **being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person**, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

## **Idolatry** – Christians serving other gods.

**Idolatry is the primary reason that a sincere Christian would act like a hypocrite or misrepresent God. Anything can become an idol once it becomes a substitute for God in our lives.** And this new god causes us to act in ungodly ways. Our core has shifted from being Christ-centred, to become something else centred.

Matthew 15:7–8 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> **Hypocrites!** Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: <sup>8</sup> 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.

Exodus 20:1–4 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> And God spoke all these words, saying: <sup>2</sup> "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. <sup>3</sup> **"You shall have no other gods before Me.** <sup>4</sup> "You shall not make for yourself a carved image...

- **\*God must be first and there is no next place.**

**Tree of idolatry** – all of your problems most probably comes from idolatry. **Beneath every sin or struggle is a form of idolatry.**

- Pot of gold. god of money.
- Food of all kinds. god of self / god of pleasure. Who or what do you pursue passionately?
- You could be serving something that is, in itself, very commendable.
- god of sex
- Different sets of keys – god of materialism
- **Idolatry is the tree from which our sins and struggles grow. Idolatry is always the issue. It's the trunk of the tree and all other problems are just branches. Leads to ungodliness.**

## Consuming fire

God is pursuing each of us. He is pursuing our hearts. **He desires total commitment.** Jealous God. He is a consuming fire of passion for us.

Deuteronomy 4:22–24 (NKJV) <sup>22</sup> *But I must die in this land, I must not cross over the Jordan; but you shall cross over **and possess that good land.*** <sup>23</sup> *Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you, and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of anything which the LORD your God has forbidden you.* <sup>24</sup> **For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.**

- Covenant = marriage. Exclusive commitment. No other gods. Just this one. Just Him.

**God is jealous for your heart,** not because he is petty or insecure, but because He loves you. **The only relationship God is interested in is one that is exclusive and completely committed.** The reason why God has such a huge problem with idolatry is that his love for you is all consuming. **He loves you too much to share you.**

**\*This month let's look at idolatry & godliness from different angles: God will speak to you, about the idols. He'll challenge you with two words: "you choose".**

*Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.* Proverbs 4:23

*\*Some of the illustrations and content in this message were borrowed from the book "Gods at war" by Kyle Idleman.*