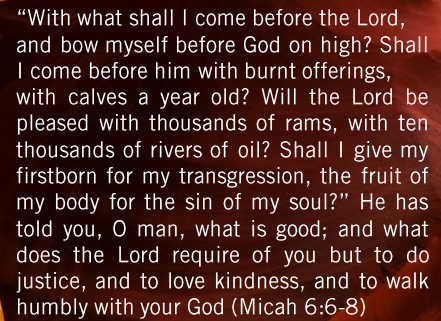




Power and idolatry

Theuns Jacobs

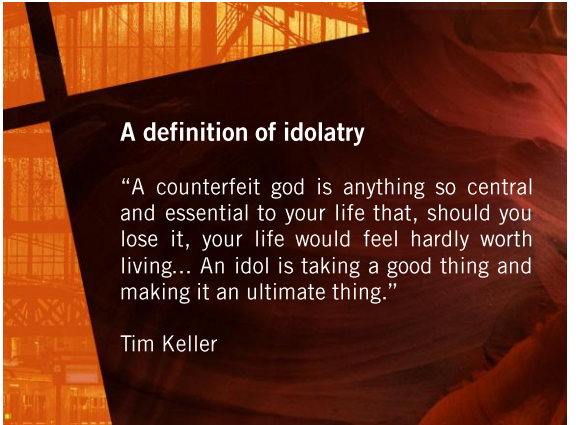


"With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God (Micah 6:6-8)



The power of idolatry

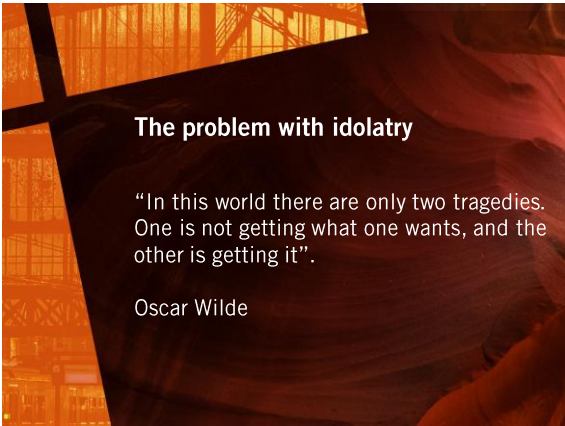
Understanding idolatry



A definition of idolatry

"A counterfeit god is anything so central and essential to your life that, should you lose it, your life would feel hardly worth living... An idol is taking a good thing and making it an ultimate thing."

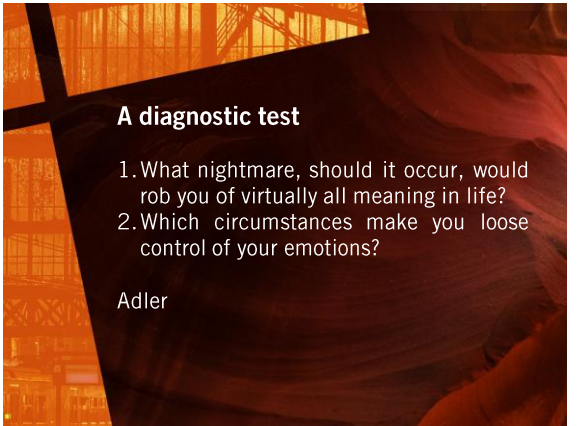
Tim Keller



The problem with idolatry

"In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it".

Oscar Wilde



A diagnostic test

1. What nightmare, should it occur, would rob you of virtually all meaning in life?
2. Which circumstances make you lose control of your emotions?

Adler

Defining power

A Biblical definition of power

1. Power is the ability to achieve a given end
2. Power is derived not inherent.
3. Power is material or spiritual.
4. All power is relational in its outcome.
5. Power is essential to being human.
6. Power is often appear imperceptible.
7. Power can become creative or destructive.

Power is the ability to achieve a given end.

that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, Ephesians 1:15–23 (ESV)

Power is derived not inherent.

He gives strength to the weary, And to him who lacks might He increases power. Though youths grow weary and tired, And vigorous young men stumble badly, Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary. Isaiah 40:29–31 (NASB95).

Overcoming the idol of power

How can we overcome the desire for power?

1. Submission

giving thanks always for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of Christ. Ephesians 5:20-21 (HCSB)

2. Servanthood

There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me.

John 15:13-15 (NLT)

2. Servanthood

"A Christian is perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all."

Martin Luther

The power of ordered love

"The only cure for the love of power is the power of love"

Sheri McAdam

Speaking truth to power

How can we be a prophetic voice?

What God requires of all humanity

He has told you, O man, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you but

1. to do justice,
2. and to love kindness,
3. and to walk humbly with your God