

Before the Lesson

Read the Scriptures and overview below before your LIFE Group meets this week.

Scripture Passages: Colossians 3:17, Ephesians 5:15-16, 6:5-8

A career, a home, a car ... these are all part of the “American Dream.” And although your job and possessions matter to God (because everything matters to Him), they matter because God wants you to use your job and resources as a platform to point others to Him. Too many people, however, place so much emphasis and impact on what they do that the job goes from being part of the “American Dream” to being your “American Idol.” The job becomes what defines you, delights you, directs you, and demands more and more from you. Could your job possibly be an idol?

God absolutely demands excellence from us in all things because we are to “do everything as unto the Lord.” But when our devotion and drive for the job become a distraction, pulling us away from God, idolatry has overtaken us. When we find more satisfaction and delight in the job than in God, or when we become captivated or enslaved by a career, we have ceased doing our job “as unto the Lord,” and started making our job “Lord over all.”

Be careful! Before you know it, your job that God has blessed you with will become that which defines your worth. It will soon demand your greatest sacrifice and determine your ultimate happiness. The perception you may have of your dream job is all a delusion. The only One who can define your worth is Jesus. The only One who is worthy of your sacrifice is the One who sacrificed it all. The only thing that should determine your happiness is delight in our great God! What is your “American Idol?” Is it your God or is it your job?

When others look at you, do they see Jesus or you?

Take the *American Idol* test to determine your level of idol worship:

Does your work define your worth?

Does your work demand your sacrifice?

Does your work determine your happiness?

Group Discussion

It is easy for a job to become an idol. Whether you are in a place of mothering, schooling, banking, buying, or selling, your job can become your obsession.

In Pastor McKinley’s message Sunday he said this: “Anything that takes me outside my walk with Christ is a challenge to my worship of Christ.” What do you think?

- How have you been deluded by the *American Idol* mentality?
- From where does your satisfaction come? If you looked at your job as a place for stewardship and not satisfaction, would that change your view of it?

- Do you thrive on recognition and need to have the “at-a-boys,” or are you content to simply serve others and receive your reward from the Lord?
- Read Luke 4:1-12. How did Jesus handle the devil’s attempts to feed on His desire for pride, possessions, and power? What was Jesus’ overarching theme as He rebutted Satan’s temptations? (Luke 4:8)
- John the Baptist was a man with a very important job. What was it? (Read John 1:15-34.)
- In what way was John the Baptist a good steward of his job? Who did he point others to and how did he do it?
- Read John 3:22-30. What does John the Baptist declare in verse 30 that we should emulate?
- In what ways did John the Baptist use his work to show love, become a platform to serve others, and become a platform to share Christ? How was his attitude toward his job, himself, and others who knew him affected by this servant-like attitude?
- Read Matthew 22:37-39. If this command became your heart attitude, how would it impact you, your job, and those in your sphere of influence?
- When others look at you, are they so distracted by *you* that they can’t see Jesus? If so, what changes can you make this week to realign your heart to be in service to God and not man?

Further Study

At the heart of our struggle with idolatry is the desire for purpose. What or who determines your purpose? (Be honest!) Beside each verse below write down what God says about purpose.

- Psalm 138:3
- Romans 12:1-5
- Romans 8:28
- Matthew 5:13-16
- Philippians 4:13
- Jeremiah 1:5
- Matthew 6:33
- 2 Corinthians 12:9-10
- 2 Timothy 1:9

How can remembering these truths help you tear down your idols and worship the one true God?

Read **Exodus 19-20:6** and **Exodus 32**. God had given the people of Israel a job to do. They were to consecrate themselves, look to the mountain of God, and wait in a spirit of worship. What caused their job of waiting and worshiping God to turn into idol worship? Was it fear, anxiety, boredom, jealousy, ambition? Perhaps some of the same external influences that caused the Israelites to turn to idol worship cause us to as well. Are you looking to Jesus in your job and worshiping Him, or are you making yourself into a golden calf that others see in place of Him? Repent, tear down your idol, and love the Lord your God with all your heart.