

UNDERSTANDING IDOLATRY – PART ONE

THIS IS YOUR RADIO FRIEND, PASTOR AMARA UWAEZIOZI, BRINGING YOU: **“HEALING WORDS FROM THE MASTER”**, A RADIO PROGRAM OF THE MASTER’S VESSEL MINISTRY WHOSE AIM IS TO LET YOU KNOW THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND GOD’S UNSEARCHABLE RICHES AVAILABLE TO YOU.

Beloved friends, I welcome you to today’s broadcast...in the Name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. I am sure you have been following our messages. We want to encourage you to be a doer of the Word – not just a hearer. Hearing alone gives you information; and if you do not act on the information you will fall into judgment. But if you act or take steps to act on what you hear you will escape judgment, you will grow in Godliness.

We shall run two series on our current topic: Understanding Idolatry.

UNDERSTANDING IDOLATRY

Despite the number of years Christianity has stayed in our land, idolatry remains a challenge. The worrisome part in our land is what theologians call syncretism which the fusion or union of different religions or the amalgamation of or attempted amalgamation of different religions including our African Traditional Religion which has much to do with idolatry.

Today, we will be reading from Exodus 20:1-6

Exodus 20:1-6

¹ *And God spoke all these words, saying:*

² *“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*

³ *“You shall have no other gods before Me.*

⁴ *“You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; ⁵ you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third*

and fourth generations of those who hate Me, ⁶ but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

Understanding Idolatry

Let us pray.

PRAYER

Our FATHER in heaven, the FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Creator of heavens and earth, grant us understanding in the issue of idolatry. Help us to come out of it and reverse the consequences which are already prevailing in our communities...in JESUS Mighty Name I pray. AMEN!

Idolatry means the worship of idols: the worship of idols. Idolatry connotes the worship of something or someone other than GOD as if it were GOD. Idolatry is the greatest sin that can be committed against GOD. GOD abhors all evils: but in GOD's assessment none compares with idolatry. It provokes HIS jealousy and makes HIM abhor even HIS people. Little wonder GOD made the law against it the first in the scriptures. Idolatry attracts divine displeasure. And this is the reason why I want you to understand the issues involved and that will help you to take appropriate decisions to come out of this sinful attitude which attracts divine displeasure.

Let's look at its various manifestations.

The manifestations of idolatry

1. Replacing devotion to GOD with another priority.
Idolatry manifests when you replace the devotion you should have to GOD with another priority.
2. Worshipping the One True GOD as a lesser GOD – you worship the One True GOD as a lesser GOD: is idolatry.
3. Whenever anything or anybody gets what GOD deserves – that's idolatry.

Hating GOD and HIS Way is idolatry. When reverence or fear of GOD is not first in one's life: that's idolatry. GOD should come first. Reverence or fear of GOD is the first thing for a human being created by GOD, when it is not so: it is idolatry. Provoking GOD to anger is idolatry. Forgetting GOD in your daily affairs is idolatry. The worship of an image or person or anything instead of GOD is idolatry.

Idolatry manifests as a device to control people or to control family or control the land. Idolatry promotes false worship, deception, witchcraft and bloodshed. Idolatry manifests in a covenant relationship with Satan and his demons. Disobedience to GOD's rules and laws is pure idolatry. Covetousness is also idolatry: because your desire comes first before GOD's. That's idolatry.

Idolatry is rebellion against GOD. Rebellion against GOD is idolatry. The bible also talks of idolatry as spiritual adultery or fornication: spiritual adultery or fornication.

Its areas of manifestation cuts across cultures and their ways and all their various ways of life: in marriage wrights, in naming ceremonies, in worship, in festivals and burial ceremonies, politics, farming, governance, market, and even in procreation. You will see the manifestations of idolatry in the land.

Let's look at,

What are the reasons that led people into idolatry.

Satan demands worship in exchange for things he promises people. He is able to do this because of his capacity to deceive people most often capitalizing on their ignorance.

Notice what he did to our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

In Matthew 8:9 is a classical example of what he promised our LORD JESUS. Can you imagine that?

Matthew 4:8-9

⁸ *And again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.* ⁹ *And he said to Him, "All these I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."*

The major reason why people get into idolatry is because of the promises made to them by the devil. *Again, the devil took Him up, the bible says, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."*

Unlike our Master JESUS, many have accepted to worship and bow down to Satan in exchange for the things he can offer. Satan promises promotion from danger and death. Satan promises gain of wealth and riches. Satan promises security and power to rule. Satan promises to establish thrones and stools and dynasties. Satan promises to win battles and wars. In most cases he wants people to know the future. He promises the knowledge of the future. He promises possession of magical powers – that you will possess magical powers to overwhelm your people. Satan promises to give esoteric knowledge to some people. Satan exercises witchcraft powers. He promises safety to voyages or travels, and promises to bring evil upon another who perhaps is an enemy or an **opposer**.

Satan promises success in special ventures: in life, in business, in life and of course Satan promises healing. And this one is prevalent in our time because he capitalizes on the inadequacies of healthcare in our land, and people are getting into trouble because they seek healing from any source at all. Satan promises to acquire power and control people. People want to acquire power and control others – to be in control.

Satan promises children. And again in our time when childbearing is problematic. People want children by all means and they go to places where they promise them in exchange for one thing or the other.

Didn't you know that even Satan promises rainfall in areas where it takes time before rainfall occurs for farming activities? He promises rainfall. In very many invisible ways he makes promises to people.

Friends, we shall stop here today; we shall continue in the next broadcast.

Maybe you are already convinced and convicted that you're there fully in idolatry. This is despite the fact that you attend church and are regarded as a Christian.

In another broadcast I shall dwell on the remedy for idolatry. The remedy for idolatry. However in the Book of 1 John 5:21, and I will like to read that place,'

1 John 5:21

²¹ *Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.*

That's the last verse in the Book of 1 John ²¹ Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

John Calvin said, if the heart of man is an idol-making factory then the ways in which those idols are destroyed should be of utmost importance to us. The bible is written with the purpose of confronting idolatry and providing the remedy for it. JESUS is the cure for idolatry. GOD The SON took to HIMSELF flesh and blood so that HE might bear the penalty for our idolatry in HIS own body on the cross. Then HE rose bodily from the dead. The FATHER (I mean our heavenly FATHER) commands us to worship HIM: JESUS CHRIST. HE is the solution to idolatry and I present HIM today to you today as the only solution to idolatry.

Let us pray. Pray along with me.

PRAYER

*LORD JESUS, I reject the idols in my heart and life. I accept YOU as my Lord and Saviour. I trust in all things and I say to Satan, I reject you; I break all allegiance to you and the idols and objects that represent your **rulership** and control over my life.*

HOLY SPIRIT, come into my life and take control...in JESUS Mighty Name.

Let me pray for you.

Heavenly FATHER as many as are abandoning their idols today and inviting YOU into their hearts, receive them, our FATHER, and make them YOUR own. I lose them from any bondage of the enemy. I pull them out of the prison house of fear

inside which the enemy held them. I break the yoke of idolatry and its consequences over their lives...in the Name of the FATHER, in the Name of the SON and in the Name of the HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN!