

Session 2 – God vs. Idols

1. People either worship _____ or _____. Ironically, those that “worship” idols do not worship them at all. People “use” idols to serve themselves. They use them to vindicate themselves and justify living the way they want to.
 - Its sets up another source of _____ other than God and His Word.
 - This alternate authority “silently” gives permission to the person to do whatever they want to do.
2. In the Old Testament, people “worshipped” Baals. These gods were personifications of the forces of nature. This fertility religion was concerned with ensuring that crops yielded well to provide for people’s physical needs. Adherents believed that when rain fell to the earth, the male god (who lived in the sky and clouds) was inseminating the female goddess (who inhabited the earth). Those who practiced these religions believed they could manipulate the gods into having sexual relations by themselves having relations with a sacred prostitute. The human action was intended to move the gods to indulge in a similar action which meant the sending of rain. This historical fact is a good example of how people use idols to get or do what they want. An idol can be:
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - Matthew 6:24, “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”
4. The critical question is how can you be sure that you are worshipping God?

God

Create
Command
Redeem
Forgive
Rule

Us

God

Praise
Thank
Pray
Obey
Honor

Us

5. The above arrows are irreversible. If the arrows are reversed on either side, than there is an idol.
6. There are only two objects of worship:
 - A. _____: Speaking for, instructing, manipulating and even commanding God in order worship self (idol worship).
 - B. _____: Submitting, yielding, surrendering, and repenting and receiving God’s grace in Christ Jesus in order to worship Him only.
7. Regardless of how fervently someone clings to an idol, the startling fact remains that idols don’t do anything! They don’t speak, act, call, give, love, listen, or save. How can a false idea about God entice people into strenuous “religious” activity with no results?
8. God is very different than idols! Compared to idols, He actually does something. He acts in history! He breaks into time and space and acts on behalf of people to save them. He intervened on behalf of the Israelites who were in slavery, parted the waters of the Red Sea, and led them to freedom. **Read Exodus 14:21-22.** Would you have ever reverted to idol worship after seeing God’s deliverance that day?
9. God speaks, acts, calls, gives, loves, listens, and saves. He has acted in this world on our behalf and saved us from our sin and ourselves through His cross and resurrection in the person of Jesus Christ. Through Him, we not only have life eternal, but a full life here on earth lived with Him. **Read John 3:16.** How has this action revolutionized the world? How has it revolutionized you?
10. A person who believes in the life and salvation that comes through Jesus Christ is a _____ (John 14:6, John 17:3, Acts 4:12, Acts 11:26, 1 John 5:11-12).
11. The truth about our Savior Jesus Christ is made known in the Bible: the _____, which promises the coming Savior, and the _____, which tells of the Savior Who has come (Hebrews 1:1-2, Luke 24:27, John 20:31, Ephesians 2:20, 1 John 1:1).
12. The Bible is called the Holy Scripture because God the Holy Spirit gave to His chosen writers the thoughts that they expressed and the words that they wrote. This is called verbal inspiration. Therefore, the Bible is God’s own Word and truth. It is inerrant or _____ (John 10:35, Mark 8:38, John 14:26, Acts 24:14, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:21).
13. The Bible is a written testament of God’s action in and on behalf of the world. The Bible is _____ – a record about how He directed the events of man toward His fulfillment of history in Christ.

14. The Bible is also the authority for what Christians believe about God. The Bible is not the ideas or projections of one author's perception about the way God is or should be. *Many authors* who were inspired and prompted by God wrote the books that make up the Bible. Although the Bible is actually a library of books from different times and places in history, there is an uninterrupted, unbroken message from the beginning of the world to the end. **Read John 5:39.** What is the key to a correct understanding of the Bible?

15. _____ is the heart and center of the Scripture and therefore the key to its true meaning (John 5:39, Acts 10:43, John 1:18, 2 Timothy 3:15)

16. There are two main themes in the Bible:

- The _____ of God
- The _____ of human beings

These themes are repeated over and over again.

17. There are two main messages or truths from God which the Bible communicates: the _____ and the _____.

18. These two messages are very different from each other. We need to hear both, and to apply them to ourselves. "S.O.S."

A. The Law shows us our _____.

B. The Gospel shows us our _____. "The Gospel is that the Law has been fulfilled for us." David Scaer

19. Recognizing and understanding Law messages and Gospel messages helps us understand the Bible better. Read the following verses to better distinguish between these messages. After each one, figure out if the message communicates Law or Gospel.

- John 6:35 _____
 Mark 12:30-31 _____
 2 Corinthians 3:6 _____
 Ephesians 1:4-5 _____

20. Which message do you think people need to hear more?

LAW	GOSPEL
Tells us what <i>we</i> are to do	Tells us what <i>God</i> has done in Christ Jesus
Convicts us of sin	Saves us
Should be preached to <i>impenitent</i> sinners	Should be preached to <i>troubled</i> sinners
Serves as a guide for penitent sinners (<i>i.e.</i> Christians)	Creates a living & saving faith

The chart above gives a quick comparison between the Law and Gospel. When you are reading the Bible (especially pay attention to Jesus' words and actions in the Gospels) you will see the principle of "Law to the proud and grace to the humble" (Proverbs 3:34, James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5). Those that approached Jesus as self-righteous and sure of their own "goodness" were given the Law (example of the rich young ruler in Luke 18), but those who were humble and did not deny being sinners were given Grace (example of the woman at the well in St. John 4). The speaking of the Law will precede the speaking of the Gospel as it shows the seriousness of one's sin and that we are guilty before God and then the proclamation of the Gospel will follow to give the solution to our being guilty of sin (forgiveness in Jesus Christ).

See Appendix D for a comparison of Christianity and the "Other Religion" (idolatry)