

Works of the Flesh / Fruit of the Spirit

Part 6

Scripture: Galatians 5:16-26

Scripture Reading: Psalm 24:1-6

INTRO:

Well, we have come to sin number 5 in Paul's list of 'works of the flesh' as found in Galatians chapter 5. And so far the first 4 we looked at, all centered around some form of physical immorality and were tied together with that common theme, that is, sins committed with the body. Some of them are narrow terms such as adultery and fornication and others are more broad terms as with words like uncleanness and lewdness which could include a varying array of different sins and categories within them.

And I think that the reason Paul used such broad terms is so that the principle of it would remain relevant over the ages. Because adultery will always be adultery, fornication will always be fornication, but uncleanness and lewdness may have many changing and new aspects over the centuries. Not that such things were never there in the past, but that such broad terms could and would still cover all such things

in the future, so that the principles of it would continue to be relevant no matter what era or time the world would be in. because as I see it the world has added much to these categories of uncleanness and lewdness.

Because as we go through Paul's list, as we already have with the first 4, we probably initially thought 'well those don't really apply to me' and we look at them, check them off and then read on. But when we get to the deeper principles of these words and where the origins of such sins come from, we find that each one of these has application to our lives. Even though we don't outright live in adultery or fornication, or uncleanness and lewdness there are still the little things that God is warning us to be watchful for, for those little beginnings in our soul.

And the next two of idolatry and Sorcery are no different, we may look at them and read them and think 'idolatry' 'not a problem with me' and 'sorcery' 'definitely not' and read on, not thinking of the deeper principles behind these two sins. These next two sins of idolatry and sorcery do go hand in hand in many aspects of human history, and have many things in common, both in the world and in the bible. But in some other ways they are still separate, and unrelated. and for today we will only be covering the sin of idolatry in this message.

E. IDOLATRY

And as we begin to look at the word idolatry, in the Greek it is eidololatreia ea-do-lo-la-tri'-ah, Strong's 1495, and it comes from two words, one meaning services rendered or services hired or sacred services and the other is an image. Sacred services rendered to an image or more simply the worship of false gods. It is only used 4 times in the New Testament, 3 times as idolatry and once as idolatries.

In 1 Corinthians 10:14 it is used in the context of something to flee from, in Galatians 5:20 it is listed as sin, in Colossians 3:5 it is something we are to put to death and in 1 Peter 4:3 it is something we spent enough of our past lifetime in doing.

Now even though the word only appears 4 times in the New Testament, the words idol, or idols and image or images are found over 275 times in scripture, it is not that idolatry is not address but rather it is usually called idol worship, worshiping idols, bowing to an image or images, which is all idolatry.

In the Old Testament the word idolatry is translated from the Hebrew word teraphim ter-aw-feme' Strong's 8655. Which is translated in various places as image, idol, idolatry and also as teraphim which is simply a transliteration of the Hebrew word.

A quick side note, a transliteration is when you take the original word of one language and use it in your own language with your own letters to create the same phonetic sound and keep the same meaning.

An example of this is when we use the word pajamas in our English language, because pajamas is not an English word, it comes from the Hindi and Urdu word pājāma which comes from the Persian words for ‘leg’, which is ‘pa’, and ‘garment’, which is ‘jama’. So instead of always calling it a ‘leg garment’ or ‘undergarment’ or ‘night clothes’, the English language transliterated it and we just call them pajamas. A transliteration from Persian to English and continues to mean the same thing.

Now most of us will probably know what an idol is, or what an image is but this word teraphim is probably a new one to you. It is only transliterated like this once in the New King James Version and 6 times in the King James Version.

This Hebrew word, teraphim ter-aw-feme’ is a plural form of the root word rapha’ raw-faw’ Strong's 7495, and the definition of rapha’ raw-faw’ according to the Online Bible Hebrew Lexicon; is to heal or make healthful or is used to describe a healer. It is used in scriptures verses like Genesis chapter 20 verse 17;

*So Abraham prayed to God; and God healed **raw-faw'** Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants. Then they bore children;*

Genesis chapter 50 verse 2;

*And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians **the raw-faw'** to embalm his father. So the physicians **the raw-faw'** embalmed Israel.*

Numbers chapter 12 verse 13 when Miriam was turned leprous and;

*Sø Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "Please heal **raw-faw'** her, O God, I pray!"*

Now if we go back to the word teraphiym ter-aw-feme' which again is a plural form of rapha' raw-faw' now becomes the word for idolatry, idols, or images, or family idols used in household shrines or worship.

So how do we go from a word meaning a healer or physician to the plural meaning idols? Well if rapha' raw-faw' means to heal or refer to a healer, then teraphiym ter-aw-feme' becomes something like the healing ones. And the reason or the purpose of having teraphim, the healing ones is for divine healing... for the health and wellness of the people, healers of what can otherwise not be healed by earthly physicians.

It then becomes the worship of a deity for the protection from harm and to help with the uncontrollable things of life. This is the purpose of worshipping the image both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, the services rendered to an image for the protection and wellbeing of the people.

Because isn't that part of the human nature, on one hand we want to be self-sufficient, we want to be that self-made-man, to be independent, to be healthy and wealthy and prosperous in all that we do. And we know that when things are like this we have no need for a rapha' raw-faw' of helpers and healers, we have no need of teraphim to help us along.

But when things turn bad, and our self-sufficiency ends and our independence is gone, and our health and wealth are no longer with us and there is no way for us to make our ends meet, what is then the natural thing in man to do? Man looks for a helper, a helper who is beyond this physical world and is able to aid in a supernatural way out of these troubles and diseases he has. He looks to teraphim, to idols and images to something or someone greater than this world to help him. And this has been the default of man almost from the beginning of creation and in almost every religion.

And man is so desperate and foolish in this area as Psalms 135 verses 15-18 speak of the nations and their idols saying;

The idols of the nations are silver and gold, The work of men's hands.

16 They have mouths, but they do not speak; Eyes they have, but they do not see;

17 They have ears, but they do not hear; Nor is there any breath in their mouths.

18 Those who make them are like them; So is everyone who trusts in them.

These false idols these images as the verse says cannot speak, cannot see, cannot hear and nor is there any breath in them, that is there is no life in them, and he says those who make them are like them; mute, blind, deaf and dead, and so is everyone who trusts in them, and yet people all over the world put their faith and trust in idols.

Can these people not see that this is foolishness that these earthly things cannot help? Turn to Isaiah chapter 44, here we have a longer more detailed version of what we just read in the Psalms. Isaiah chapter 44 starting in verse 9;

Those who make an image, all of them are useless, And their precious things shall not profit; They are their own witnesses; They neither see nor know, that they may be ashamed.

10 Who would form a god or mold an image That profits him nothing?

11 Surely all his companions would be ashamed; And the workmen, they are mere men. Let them all be gathered together, Let them stand up; Yet they shall fear, They shall be ashamed together.

12 The blacksmith with the tongs works one in the coals, Fashions it with hammers, And works it with the strength of his arms. Even so, he is hungry, and his strength fails; He drinks no water and is faint.

13 The craftsman stretches out his rule, He marks one out with chalk; He fashions it with a plane, He marks it out with the compass, And makes it like the figure of a man, According to the beauty of a man, that it may remain in the house.

14 He cuts down cedars for himself, And takes the cypress and the oak; He secures it for himself among the trees of the forest. He plants a pine, and the rain nourishes it.

15 Then it shall be for a man to burn, For he will take some of it and warm himself; Yes, he kindles it and bakes bread; Indeed he makes a god and worships it; He makes it a carved image, and falls down to it.

16 He burns half of it in the fire; With this half he eats meat; He roasts a roast, and is satisfied. He even warms himself and says, "Ah! I am warm, I have seen the fire."

17 And the rest of it he makes into a god, His carved image. He falls down before it and worships it, Prays to it and says, "Deliver me, for you are my god!"

18 They do not know nor understand; For He has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, And their hearts, so that they cannot understand.

19 And no one considers in his heart, Nor is there knowledge nor understanding to say, "I have burned half of it in the fire, Yes, I have also baked bread on its coals; I have roasted meat and eaten it; And shall I make the rest of it an abomination? Shall I fall down before a block of wood?"

Hardly anyone who is caught up with idolatry in this world comes to the question; ‘shall I fall down before a block of wood?’ ‘Shall I bow to a statue of stone?’ shall the inanimate things of this world give me health and life?

Because no matter how strange the worship seems, it is the protection and provision of health and wellness and eternal blessing that humans seek outside of their physical capable means, through the powers and deities that are not of this physical tangible world. And most of them do this in the manner of worshipping a manmade tangible object, or as the bible says, they fall down before a block of wood, or some other natural element found in this world.

And even though man looks in hundreds of places and makes up a thousand different shrines in search of such help, there is only one who can truly help us. And that is the God of the bible, the one who created us, created this world and all that we see. no one else in this world is like Jehovah our God. The self-existing one. And since there is none in the world like Him, we are told not to make anything in any likeness of Him.

This is why He spoke to Moses in Exodus chapter 20 starting in verse 4 saying;

4 "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or 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 on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,

This is the second commandment of the Ten Commandments, there is nothing we shall make, carve, cast, or form to the likeness of any image to portray it as the image of our God. And not only to portray or create such an image or idol but as verse 5 also says you shall not bow down to them nor serve them.

If we do, it violates the first command which says you shall have no other gods before Me, and yet I think almost all of the religions of the world practice this. That is to bow or pay homage to some physical object, not even always to a god, but to objects or articles that becomes sacred or hallowed in their worship and become hallowed objects that portray certain aspects of that religion. And they fall down before a blocks of wood or stone.

And I think that Christianity is on of the only religion that does not have any such images or relics or objects of veneration. And even in this one area Wikipedia makes the distinction between Catholic and protestant Christianity as it says;

The Christian view of idolatry may generally be divided into two general categories: the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox view which accepts the use of religious

images, and the views of many Protestant churches that considerably restrict their use.

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And it made me think of the words of Jesus when he was talking with the Samaritan woman at the well where He says;

"Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

And I thought to myself is there anything in true Christianity that we have adopted as an image or as a physical tangible thing we worship or view as holy, or use to express our religion or faith? I looked around my office, my home, and our church, to see if there is anything we as Christians hold up as holy relic, and the only thing I could find or think of would be our bibles. But we don't worship the bible, we don't pray to the bible, we don't class it as a holy article of our religion, it is a holy book that is true, it is separate from all other books, that is a fact. But not holy as in a sacred thing, if it was we would feel more guilty of them being worn out from using it and reading it.

We treasure the words not the paper and covers. Even an internet article dealing with what to do with old bibles said;

we love and cherish the word of God, we don't worship the paper it is printed on or the leather than holds it together.

And even when I thought of the bread and juice at communion, at the service they are symbolic but only for their representation in the service, not that we worship the bread as the Catholics do in the Eucharist. Even Menno Simon says;

Christians have no idols any more, they only use bread and wine as such...

And again not that we worship the bread and wine, but they are the only physical things of this world that we use in illustrating or portraying the blood and body of Christ in communion.

As I said Christianity is probably the only religion that does not have such idols or other objects of veneration in its system. But this does not mean that we are immune to such thinking or practices, far from it.

In fact Christians and especially here in North America are probably one of the worst when it comes to idolatry of other forms.

Not the worship of idols as we have looked at as in a deity portrayed in wood or stone nor as a relic of our worship but more along the lines of the first commandment which says;

3 "You shall have no other gods before Me.

And not that we place other gods before our God, or that we place another deity before our Lord, but of the things we place before God in order of priority in our lives, in some of the things we do, in the everyday events of our life. D. L. Moody is quoted as saying;

You don't have to go to heathen lands today to find false gods. America is full of them. Whatever you love more than God is your idol.

I'm sure when I began this message, none of us would have said that we were idolaters, for there is no image in my home, and there are no relics in our lives, there are no idols that we bow down to as a family.

And the last time which I was in your homes I didn't see any such things either, none of you have some kind of carved image in the corner of your house or a shrine or image hanging on your walls, none of you have some likeness of any earthly or heavenly creature in your home which is there to portray your God.

Now, I haven't seen the inside of your closets, and I don't really want to because that is where one usually goes to look for skeletons and not idols. You see we have no problem when we read verse 4 of Exodus chapter 20 which says;

4 "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or 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;

We do not have any physical idols or other relics we worship to or through in our lives. And we absolutely agree with what verse 3 says;

3 "You shall have no other gods before Me.

Or even verse 5 which begins to conclude the command of verse 4.

5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them...

And on the surface we would say 'I totally agree with these verses, I don't have other gods I worship, I don't bow down to any other deity, other than the one true God of the bible'. And I would totally agree with you on those statements, but how about some of the other things that we 'prioritize' before our God... Not necessarily in the form of another god or an idol, but what other things do we serve or value more than our Lord?

Now I don't think that any of us struggle with the normal literal definition of idolatry, as in bowing down and worshiping other gods, but are there things that we put ahead of God? And when someone points them out it become uncomfortable and come a little to close to the heart?

Because not only is it other things that men will go after when things are difficult, but also when there are times of ease there will be a whole host of things we will go after and place in priority before our God.

And remember, when we are looking at those smaller pieces of the bigger picture, in making these verses applicable to our lives, to make this list applicable to our everyday life, we must be willing to take an honest look at the things we may hold dear to our hearts. Because we should know by now that almost anything in Paul's list can be traced to something we have, or need to deal with in our own heart. And when we come to the case of idolatry we know it is not some carved image we bow down to, but anything that takes precedence over our God in our life that can become an idol, in become a form of idolatry.

And quoting from the website 'Rethink' in an article titled '10 Surprising Modern Day Idols' author Jeffery Poor says;

For anything or anyone can become an idol if we place the value for that thing or person above our value for God.

A.B. Simpson said:

'as long as you want anything very much, especially more than you want God, is an idol.'

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Anything that takes priority over God can become an idol in your life.

And as we go over some of these, don't look to others in the room, don't think of others in the congregation, I want us to look at ourselves, and I include myself in that as your pastor. you see I don't just stand here and preach to you and point the finger to you saying 'oh look at what you are doing'. No, most of the time I'm preaching to myself when I compile these messages. Sometimes I feel what Moses must have felt when he had to watch God write 'thou shall not murder' on the tablet and then relay this to the people, knowing full well he himself had murdered an Egyptian so long ago.

You see God's word speaks to all of us, and when it says the works of the flesh are evident which are... and He's speaking about idolatry, I need to check my own life to make sure that by the word of God I do not allow such things into my own heart. And this one of idolatry is no exception and it can have many very sneaky aspects.

It is so sneaky that it is almost difficult to categorize them because so many of them blend together not only belonging to one thing or another.

As one author put it saying;

Idolatry seems like a pretty simple concept in the Bible, right?

Don't bow down to golden statues? Check!

Don't worship false gods at their altars? Check!

As I said earlier we so often just go over this list and go check check check, and on with our reading. Well, the same author goes on to say;

Identifying our own idols can be tricky, but there are a few questions that can help get the ball rolling:

Do I love or treasure anything or anyone more than God?

Do I prioritize anything or anyone before God?

Does anything bring me more pleasure than the things of God?

Do I place my identity in anything over my status as a child of God?

Do I look to anything or anyone to meet my needs instead of God?

Do I seek fulfillment or satisfaction from anything outside of God?

Do I seek comfort outside of God?

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And as we will see it can often be normal everyday actions or things that can be turned into idolatry. And we will only go over some of them to give you some ideas of what can become idolatrous in our lives.

And one of them is one we all look at in the mirror every morning and that is the idol of self or the image of self and the many aspects of self that can become an idol to us in our lives.

In one article the author noted that;

We are a self-obsessed people, or at least, I am.

Throughout the day, I filter everything through the lens

of how it affects me, and in social settings my focus usually lands squarely on myself.

EOQ

And this idol of self can come in so many different forms. What about physical appearance or my looks, my image, How much time and effort do I put into my image, and you know I don't mean wearing your Sunday best for Sunday morning. I mean that in back of your mind you think 'I must be perfect in every aspect of my appearance' not for God to see, but for the world to see.

What about the clothing you wear does it half to be the latest fads and fashions, making it say some statement about you, remember I'm not calling clothing the idol in this part, it's the idol of self that gets caught up in these things.

The idol of self, how about your social image in the digital world, how are you portraying yourself on the internet, how are you portraying the pictures of yourself of your social media account, is it based on photos I take of myself, the number of likes I receive, or the opinions I must give, or the statements I must make, all these can be linked to the idol of self. Now days we call narcissism, which all reality is just another form of idolatry.

How much priority do I place in keeping up my image on these social platforms? What do I not all do to promote my image or myself to the world? And much of this has its roots in one primary sin called pride. Pride can come in all kinds of different shapes and forms.

Pride is that act of raising the view of self above everything else including God. How high do I hold self as opposed to how high do I hold God?

What about money... how important is money to you, is it just the means of interacting and transfer of services and commodities rendered? Or is there a deeper hold or a deeper drawing that money has on you, or do you feel that there must be more of it to be happy, how panicky do you get when there less money, do we trust our bank account, or do we trust God with our bank account.

This can be a touchy one, because someone may say you cannot survive in our world without money; well turn to Matthew chapter 6 in your bible, in Matthew chapter 6 verses 25-33 it primarily talks about worry, but what's behind the scenes of worry can also be the dependence on money. And I'll give you my own small commentary with each verse;

25 ¶ "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your

body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? (Is life not more than just making money)

26 "Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? (our value is who we are not how much we make)

27 "Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? (or buy it for that matter)

28 "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; (and they don't make any money)

29 "and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. (Solomon who had all the money a man could ever want)

30 "Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? (because truly all money will be thrown into the oven at the end of this age)

31 *"Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' (as believing that God is inadequate to meet our needs but that money will)*

32 *"For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. (notice that money is not in this list of needs)*

33 *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. (and notice that money is not in this list of needs)*

If we are always self sufficient and we never give God the chance to help us in our need, He never can, if we always manage to make our own ends meet, it never gives him opportunity to do it for us. And we must be watchful that money doesn't become our idol.

Along the lines of money what about the items we buy, our nice things, our toys, our hobbies, our interests, and there are far too many things to list to ever cover in a single message. But how much focus is on some of these things, your trinkets and your treasures, how much priority do they take over God?

Entertainment, movies, tv, books, how much time do you spend on these then reading the bible?

How about your phone. Now days I think only 1% of your phone is used for phoning and the other 99% is for entertaining, amusing, and watching and listening, playing and maybe working. How much screen time are your eyeballs seeing as compared to your bible time?

Anything in this world can become an idol... Anything,

Self, security, approval, relationships, your career, your health or image, your comforts, your possessions, sports and leisure's anything that you place above or in priority before God can become an idol,

Time and space do not allow me to unearth every part of life that can be an idol to us, even now I'm only scratching the surface. The big picture is that idolatry is a work of the flesh, and we easily go over that one and check it off and say nope, not me, didn't commit that sin, and then be on our merry way. You see this is one of those where you are going to need to do your own homework. To look at things in your life, and I mean seriously look at things and ask yourself am I idolizing this thing in my life, is this taking precedence over my time or my relationship with God, and by the way, don't over think it, or don't over do it. God wants us to enjoy legitimate things; he wants us to enjoy some of the things we enjoy in this life, but all with moderation and submission to God in giving him priority.

If you find such a task difficult, ask someone close to you, someone you trust, and ask them, how do they view this thing in your life in how much time you give to it, or what priority do they see it in your life.

Because we all still have lives to live, God did not call us to be life depraved monks in some monastery, no, the word continually tells us to be lights in this world.

Matthew chapter 6 verse 14 through 16 Jesus speaking says;

"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

15 "Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

We are to be a light in this world, and to be a light in this world, we need to be in the world, not of the world, but a light in the world. And while we are in the world, we must honestly look at the things in my life and ask this question, am I being a light for God or am I portraying something else that I elevate above my God?

Is it taking me away from His word, reading or study, is it taking me away from prayer, is it taking me away from Sunday morning church service, and Sunday school, is it taking me away from that Wednesday night bible study.

Is it taking me away from my focus on God, and remember, we are not just talking about the extraordinary things of life, but also the normal, when those normal things of life begin to take precedence over our spiritual walk that it becomes idolatrous. Because even religion or religious practices can become idolatrous

David Peach in his article ‘10 idols of your heart to remove’ he says;

Religion can easily become an idol. Sadly, it often does. There are some religions that have admittedly thrown out the teachings of the Bible in preference to their own books or teachings. (As) They claim new revelation from the Lord.

EOQ

And their own religion becomes the idol.

You see God gave us all of this to enjoy, but when we enjoy this more than God, we are in trouble. I often say, I hope that God will never test me the way he allowed Job to be tested.

In allowing Satan to take everything away from him. Because if I look at my life, and all my things and my family and if the Lord would come and begin to take things away from me, at what point would I stop Him and say no Lord you can't take that.

Would it be at my job or bank account, would it be at my home, or my possessions, or would I stop Him when it came to my reputation, my image. Or would I stop Him at my family, my children, or my spouse, or my own life? Where would I draw the line in saying 'no Lord you can't have that, because I value that more than I value you?

When we think of it like that, idolatry begins to have a whole new meaning doesn't it?

Could we be like Job, that when all was taken away, his possessions, his children, his reputation, his livelihood, that in all this Job did not sin with his lips nor charge God with wrong? Could we do that? What Job went through is the stuff nightmares are made of, and I'm not only talking to the congregation, I'm talking to myself as well. At what point would I say no Lord, you can't have that, it means more to me than you do...

Some months ago, our son Jonah, got his log truck stuck in the bush, and in the attempt to pull him out the chain they were using snapped, and the link that broke came up over the hood of his truck and smashed through his windshield showering his face with glass shards, took out the sun visor and then went up over his head and into the back of the cab.

And later one of his co-workers noted to Jonah's brother Joshua, who also works at the same place, said something like 'your brother is pretty lucky to be alive, God was sure good today', to which Joshua replied soberly, Even if my brother had died, God would still be Good,'

If something fatal had happened, could his wife Monica say that God is still good, could his son who is not even 2, grow up and say in years to come, that God is good. After such a fatal incident would I the father and your pastor, be able to say that God is still good? Or would we, if we had the power to say 'no Lord you can't have him, he's more important to me than you'. Do I hold fast to some of these people more than I do God? Do I place people who are closest to me ahead of God? If God came today to take one of your loved ones home, what would your answer be?

Idolatry, it's not just about falling down before a block of wood, or worshiping some stone image, it's about anything in my life that I place ahead, of or above God, ANYTHING, and say no Lord, you can't have that, you can't have this thing, you can't have that person, I'm not parting with whatever it may be, because it is more important to me than You. Think about it, what does God mean when He says 'you shall have no other god before me'... no other god, no idol, no other thing we put before our God, no other person, and we may struggle with this last one, but this is why Jesus Himself said;

"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

And so in conclusion, may the Lord give us wisdom in this thing of idolatry, may we be ever watchful in looking for help in other places other than the Lord, and I don't mean not going to the doctor for a broken arm, or to the dentist for a tooth ache, I mean the help and well being of our soul, the help we need when it comes to the uncontrollable things of life, when there is no earthly means to find help but that we would turn to the Lord in these times of troubles. And also, when things are well and prosperous that we do not lift

other things up and above our God, that we prioritize things higher than or Lord, and this includes people as with our spouse and children. Because if I do not take a hard look at the things in my life now, at the things I idolize in my heart today, I may be consumed and controlled by them later.

Well may the Lord give us wisdom in discerning these things.