

MIYAGI week 5 - When they say you MUST. #sermons #miyagi

INTRODUCTION

Nightmare - Do you have a reoccurring dream? I do. It's a bit of a nightmare.

Playing for the CURRENT Man Utd team. I run out onto the pitch at Old Trafford, take a pic with the team.

Chase me off. I know I shouldn't be there, they know I shouldn't be there, everyone in the stands know I shouldn't be there.

But I WANT TO BE THERE.

It's TERRIFYING/FRUSTRATING/ILLUMINATING/DISAPPOINTING

CONTEXT

Chapter 2 the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar has a nightmare and he is terrified.

He seeks out someone to interpret the dream. Daniel is the only one who can help him.

In the dream Neb sees a HUGE statue. It has a head of gold, torso of silver, thighs of bronze, legs of iron, feet of iron and clay.

Daniel tells him that his kingdom is represented by the head of Gold, and that over time his kingdom would fall and be replaced.

Nebuchadnezzar falls on his face and thanks Daniel, exalts Daniel's God and promotes Daniel and his friends.

END of chapter.

Now lets read Daniel 3v1-7

Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Image

King Nebuchadnezzar made an **image of gold**, whose height was sixty cubits [90 feet tall] and its breadth six cubits [9 feet wide]. He set it up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

2Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent to gather the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

3Then the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. And they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. **4**And the herald proclaimed aloud, "You are commanded, O

peoples, nations, and languages, **5**that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. **6**And whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace.” **7**Therefore, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

This morning’s teaching is obviously all about IDOLATRY.

What is Idolatry? It’s not complicated.

Idolatry is trusting in **created things** rather than the Creator for our hope and happiness, significance and security.

Idolatry is not about 90ft tall golden statues. We don’t struggle with 90ft statues in our gardens.

This morning is about much smaller and less obvious idolatry.

We struggle with small thoughts, attitudes and opinions in our hearts.

But regardless of size idolatry is just as insidious.

Idolatry is the sin of treating anything as more important than Jesus Christ for you meaning in life, for your happiness, for your security and hope, or for your self-regard.

The reason why it’s important to understand the sin of idolatry is that it can be growing in our lives for a long time and get very deep in our hearts before there are any CLEAR, VISIBLE, EASILY SEEN SPIRITUAL SICKNESS.

Sin is not just doing BAD THINGS.

Sin is turning GOOD THINGS into ultimate [god] things. It’s sin because it ruins our souls, destroys community and dishonors God.

This is the REAL ISSUE in this mornings story.

Nebuchadnezzar’s God given dream is a cautionary tale. GET YOUR HEART IN ORDER.

Daniel’s interpretation is a challenge to Nebuchadnezzar’s pride/ambition/power and control.

The dream says YOU ARE STRONG, but you are not strongest. You are powerful but there are more powerful.

You may FEEL invincible, but you are replaceable. [all truths we need to hear and understand]

His response is immediate, emotional but it is only skin deep. His idolatry ran much deeper.

How deep does yours run this morning? Are you ready to answer this question?!

PRAY - Holy Spirit COME.

Idolatry is trusting in **created things** rather than the Creator for our hope and happiness, significance and security.

What created things do we TRUST IN more than God?

It's not rocket science. It can break down into three main areas.

Three G's [Girls, Glory, Gold]

Three S's [Sex, Stuff, Significance]

Three P's [PASSION, PRAISE, POSSESSIONS.

POSSESSIONS

What induces one man to use false weights, another to set his house on fire after having insured it for more than its value, while three-fourths of our upper classes indulge in legalized fraud . . . what gives rise to all this? It is not real want—for their existence is by no means precarious . . . but they are urged on day and night by a terrible impatience at seeing their wealth pile up so slowly, and by an equally terrible longing and love for these heaps of gold. . . . What once was done “for the love of God” is now done for the love of money, i.e., for the love of that which at present affords us the **highest feeling of power and a good conscience.**

Friedrich Nietzsche

Luke 12v13-21

The Parable of the Rich Fool

13Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” **14**But he said to him, “Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?”

15And he said to them, “Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, **for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.**” **16**And he told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man produced plentifully, **17**and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ **18**And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. **19**And **I will say to my soul,** “Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years;

relax, eat, drink, be merry.” **20**But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ **21**So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

Andrew Carnegie was a was a Scottish-American industrialist , business magnate, his steel empire made him the wealthiest man in the world by age 33. Concerned about the condition of his soul he wrote himself this note.

Man must have an idol—The amassing of wealth is one of the worst species of idolatry. No idol more debasing than the worship of money. Whatever I engage in I must push inordinately therefore should I be careful to choose the life which will be the most elevating in character. To continue much longer overwhelmed by business cares and with most of my thoughts wholly upon the way to make more money in the shortest time, **must degrade me beyond hope of permanent recovery**. I will resign business at Thirty five, but during the ensuing two years, I wish to spend the afternoons in securing instruction, and in reading systematically.

One of Carnegie’s biographers noted:

“despite his insight into his own heart, Carnegie obviously did not “resign business” two years later, and many of the very character-degrading effects he feared worked themselves out in his life.”

Carnegie knew that money was an idol in his heart, but he did not know how to weed it out.

The thing about IDOLS is that they cannot be removed, only replaced.

What you need to decide is does your IDOL make you a SLAVE or a FREE MAN?

POWER/PRAISE

“Achievement is the alcohol of our time,” we are intoxicated with rising to the top.

Gaining the respect and honor of others is a good thing. It is actually a God given directive. Psalm 8.

But the problem arises when SUCCESS/RESPECT/HONOR from others becomes an ULTIMATE THING. It’s a FALSE IDOL.

Being ENOUGH for someone else, will NEVER satisfy. We need to know that we are ENOUGH for HIM.

This was Nebuchadnezzar’s idolatry. He couldn’t handle the thought that HE WOULD BE

KNOCKED OFF THE TOP, that he would be humbled. [Golden statue an attempt to reconfigure the dream that God had given him, to force God's hand.]

You see this in NT, James 4v13 - Boasting about TOMORROW.

13Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"— **14**yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. **15**Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that."
16As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. **17**So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

Think about who WE are. The successes and achievements of yesterday are GONE. The plans and schemes we have for TOMORROW are completely out of our control. We have NOW. Right now. Our heart RIGHT NOW.

Who are you trying to please, impress, control who makes you feel SMALL, INSECURE?

PASSION

All you need is LOVE. Right? WRONG.

Our culture has made an IDOL out of love. And IDOLS let us down.

We have an insatiable DESIRE to FIND OURSELVES IN ANOTHER, and for ANOTHER TO FIND THEMSELVES IN US.

Many times we here people describe love like this:

"Oh he WORSHIPS the ground she walks on!" SERIOUSLY! We want this. To be desired, understood, seen, heard.EXCLUSIVELY.

Male heart - IDOLATRY - addicted to being INDEPENDENT /FREE to roam, not tied down, swipe right. TINDER CULTURE.

Female heart - addicted to being dependent , vulnerable.

Both are a form of SLAVERY, both BLIND US so we don't make wise decisions, choices.

LISTEN TO ME THIS MORNING. YOU WILL NEVER FIND YOURSELF IN A HUSBAND/WIFE/ OTHER HUMAN, you will only FIND YOURSELF in CHRIST.

Colossians 3v1-4

3If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **2**Set your minds on things that are above, not on things

that are on earth. **3**For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. **4**When Christ who is your[a] life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Listen to C.S.Lewis in Mere Christianity.

Most people, if they have **really learned** to look into their own hearts, would know that they do want, and want acutely, something that cannot be had in this world. There are all sorts of things in this world that offer to give it to you, but they never quite keep their promise. The longings which arise in us when we first fall in love, or first think of some foreign country, or first take up some subject that excites us, are longings which no marriage, no travel, no learning, can really satisfy. I am not now speaking of what would be ordinarily called unsuccessful marriages, or holidays, or learned careers. I am speaking of the best possible ones. There was something we have grasped at, in that first moment of longing, which just fades away in the reality. I think everyone knows what I mean. The wife may be a good wife, and the hotels and scenery may have been excellent, and chemistry may be a very interesting job: but something has evaded us.

MINISTRY

If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world [something supernatural and eternal]."

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, forgive us for chasing after the things you have made. No person or thing should be our hope or our trust.

You alone are self-existent and all sufficient. Lord God be our all in all. Amen.