

Anchored in the Drift: Dealing with Idols

Study Guide: (Daniel 3:1-3) *Lead-in message by Pastor Missy Carfield – Bay Point Church*

Key Scripture Passages

- **Daniel 3:1-3** (NIV): King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, sixty cubits high and six cubits wide, and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. He then summoned the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials to come to the dedication of the image he had set up. So the satraps, prefects, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates and all the other provincial officials assembled for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up, and they stood before it.
- **Romans 1:18-23** (NIV): The wrath of God is being revealed... For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him... they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. *(Core text on humanity's tendency to substitute idols.)*
- **Exodus 20:3-4** (NIV): "You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below." *(First and second commandments – idolatry is God's top concern.)*
- **Responses to Idolatry:**
 - 1 Corinthians 10:14 – "Flee from idolatry."
 - 1 Corinthians 10:19-20 – Avoid idols.
 - 1 John 5:21 – "Dear children, keep yourselves from idols."

Main Points

- **Humanity is incurably religious** We will bow to something. When we turn from the true God, we don't enter a vacuum — we create substitutes in our own image (Romans 1:21-23).
- **Idolatry defined** Anything we put before God: tangible (statues, images) or intangible (heart idols). Old Testament examples: Baal worship blurred sensuality and "worship." The three Hebrew boys (Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego) resisted because they were steeped in Scripture and understood idolatry's nature and consequences.
- **Modern idols (the "7 P's")**
 - **Possessions** / standard of living
 - **Plenty** / abundance / love of money
 - **Pride** / self-achievement / celebration of self
 - **People** / spouse, children, friends
 - **Pleasure** / entertainment, amusement
 - **Projects** / clubs, hobbies, politics
 - **Power** / influence, control
- **Consequences & God's Response** God may "give them over" to their desires (Romans 1:24), leading to seared hearts. Yet grace remains, and He invites repentance.

- **Application** Examine your heart. What do you instinctively bow to? The culture drifts; believers must stand with clarity like Daniel's friends.

Quotable Quotes

- "Can't you decide what to do with God?" (*from the 5-year-old in the Reader's Digest story*)
- "Man is incurably religious... we will bow down to something."
- "We create gods in our own image."
- "Idolatry is the most basic issue about which God is concerned. It's the first commandment."
- "Flee... Avoid... Stay away from idols." (*1 Cor 10:14, 1 Jn 5:21*)
- "Is there an idol that you are willing to bow down before?"

Further Thought & Discussion Questions

1. As you review the "7 P's" (Possessions, Plenty, Pride, People, Pleasure, Projects, Power), which one(s) is the Holy Spirit highlighting in your life right now? What practical step can you take this week to put God first in that area?
2. The three Hebrew boys resisted idolatry because they knew Scripture deeply. What intentional practices can you adopt (or strengthen) to gain that same clarity and conviction?
3. How does the tension of "driving with an out-of-alignment axle" describe areas where an idol may be competing with God in your daily life? What would full surrender look like?