Bonfire [Sanctified Worship]
Discussion Guide

Summary

In this sermon, Jonathan continues a series on sanctification, focusing on the topic of idolatry. He explains that idolatry is not limited to ancient carved statues but includes anything we place on the throne of our hearts in place of Jesus. Whether it is approval, control, comfort, pleasure, status, or career, these false gods promise satisfaction but ultimately drain us of life because they cannot deliver what only Jesus can. Jonathan draws from Deuteronomy, First John, First Corinthians, Colossians, and Philippians to show that God's call is not simply to avoid idols but to actively flee from them and replace them with a singular devotion to Christ.

Jonathan outlines a practical framework for dismantling idols in our lives: name the idol for what it truly is (worship of something other than Jesus), grieve the weight of that misplaced devotion, replace the idol with the reality of Jesus, and pursue community and accountability. He emphasizes that sanctification is not a self-improvement project but a courageous act of surrender, where the Holy Spirit does heart surgery on the things we have hidden. The sermon closes with a call to stop negotiating with idolatry and instead run toward the only One who can truly satisfy.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You today with open hands and honest hearts. We acknowledge that we do not always come to Your Word ready to hear everything You want to say to us. So before we begin, we ask that You soften our hearts and open our eyes. Give each of us the courage to be real, not just polished. Help us to set aside our defenses and our pride, and let Your Spirit lead this conversation wherever You want it to go. We trust that You are gentle with us even when Your truth is hard. Meet us here today, Lord, and do what only You can do. In Jesus name, amen.

Ice Breaker

What is one thing you absolutely cannot start your morning without, and why does it feel so essential to you?

Key Verses

- Deuteronomy 7:25
- 1 John 5:21
- 1 Corinthians 10:12-14
- Colossians 3:5-10
- Philippians 3:12-19

Questions

- Jonathan described idolatry as anything that takes the place of God in our hearts and lives. Before this sermon, how would you have defined idolatry? Has your understanding of it changed at all?
- Jonathan asked a direct question: what do you want more than Jesus? Without giving the easy Sunday school

answer, what does your daily schedule, your spending, or your emotional reactions reveal about what you actually treasure most?
- The sermon listed several common modern idols including approval, control, comfort, pleasure, and status. Which of these do you find most personally challenging, and why do you think that particular one has such a strong pull on you?
- Jonathan pointed out that God did not just tell Israel to avoid the idols in the promised land. He told them to burn them. What is the difference between setting boundaries around something and actually destroying it? Can you think of an area in your life where you have been setting boundaries instead of burning the idol?
- Paul uses the word flee when talking about idolatry, a word that implies running from physical danger. Why do you think Paul chose such urgent language? What does it say about how seriously we should take the pull of idolatry in our lives?
- Jonathan said that the reason we keep returning to the same sins is often because we have not yet decided that what Christ is offering is better than what the idol is promising. Do you agree with that? What makes it so hard to believe that Jesus is truly better?
- The sermon outlined four practical steps: name the idol, grieve it, replace it with the reality of Jesus, and pursue community. Which of these four steps feels most difficult for you personally, and what makes it hard?
- Jonathan was vulnerable about his own struggle with comfort and security, and he shared that he brought it into the light by telling his wife and others. How does confession and community change the power that an idol holds over us? Is there someone in your life you trust enough to share your struggle with?

Life Application

This week, set aside fifteen to twenty minutes in a quiet place and ask God to show you one specific idol in your life. Write it down and call it what it truly is, not a habit or a personality trait, but worship of something other than Jesus. Then share it with at least one trusted person, a spouse, a friend, or someone in this group. Ask that person to check in with you and ask the hard questions. Practice replacing the moment you would normally turn to that idol with a simple prayer, telling Jesus that you want Him to be enough.

Key Takeaways

- Idolatry is not just about ancient statues. It is anything we place on the throne of our hearts in place of Jesus, including approval, control, comfort, pleasure, and status.
- God does not call us to simply manage or reduce our idols. He calls us to flee from them completely, because an idol kept close is an idol we will eventually return to.
- The sins we struggle with most are often symptoms of a deeper issue. We sin because we are worshiping something other than Jesus and believing that it will give us what only He can provide.
- Sanctification is not a self-improvement project. It is the courageous work of surrendering false gods so that Christ can reign completely in our hearts, empowered by the same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead.
- We cannot dismantle our idols alone. Naming them to God and to trusted community brings them into the light,

breaks the power of shame, and opens the door to genuine healing and transformation.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for this time together and for the courage You gave each person of us to engage honestly with Your Word. We confess that we have all bowed down to things that are not You, and we are grateful that You do not meet that confession with condemnation but with grace. We ask that You keep the things we have discussed alive in our hearts. Do not let us walk out the door and return to business as usual. Where we have named an idol today, give us the strength to actually let it go. Where we are still afraid, meet us in that fear and remind us that the life You are calling us to is not smaller but infinitely larger. Fill every empty space that surrender creates with more of Yourself, because You are the only One who truly satisfies. Help us to hold each other accountable with gentleness and love, and keep us running toward You. In Your precious and holy name we pray, amen.