

## Freedom from Idols

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**God will allow situations to reveal what is in our heart.** (Exodus 32:1-8)

When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him. ...<sup>8</sup> They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, 'These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.'" Exodus 32:1, 8

**God uses trials to expose our idols and strengthen our faith.**

So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while.<sup>7</sup> These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world. 1 Peter 1:6-7 NLT

- **Power** - a longing for influence or status
- **Control** - a longing to have everything go according to my plan
- **Comfort** - a longing for pleasure
- **Approval** - a longing to be accepted or desired

**Choose to trust God, even when he seems distant.**

He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."<sup>39</sup> He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." Matthew 26:38-39 NLT

Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me. Psalm 23:4 NLT

For additional study, read *Counterfeit Gods* by Timothy Keller.

## Let's Connect

- What does "living your best life" look for you?

## Let's Talk About It

God created you to live in freedom and wholeness. To experience the transformation God desires to work in your life, you must be willing to let go of some things. While we may not be worshipping physical "idols", we do give other things more influence in our lives than we should. God will often use tests and trials to expose our idols and strengthen our faith. As we are honest and identify areas in our life that are more important than God, we can choose to turn to God to meet our deepest needs in ways our idols cannot.

Exodus 32:1-8; 1 Peter 1:6-7; Matthew 26:38-39; Psalm 23:4

- Which part of the message made an impact, caught your attention or challenged you?
- Read 1 Peter 1:6-7. Fill in the blank: "If I have \_\_\_\_\_, then I'll feel like my life has meaning, value, significance, security", or "If I don't have \_\_\_\_\_, then I won't feel like my life has meaning." Explain why you think and feel that way.
- Which of the four primary idols Pastor Gregg mentioned do you personally identify with? How have you seen them influence your life and affect your relationship with God?
- Which area of your life do you feel God prompting you to trust Him in a greater way? How can you begin to trust God to meet your deepest needs instead of your idols?

## Take a Step

- How can you take a step this week to trust God to meet your deepest needs instead of your idols?

## Here's My Prayer

- God, You created us to live in freedom and wholeness. I invite you to come into my life and reorder my priorities. Take first place in my life and reveal any idols that are in the way of experiencing the free and abundant life you have for me. Help me to trust in You to meet my deepest needs instead of other things.