



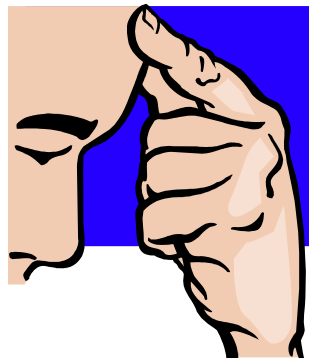
## The Sin of Idolatry (Part 3)

**I**n looking at the sin of idolatry, we've noticed some of the more brazen forms of such activity. However, idolatry doesn't have to be in the form of a carved image or statue. Idolatry is anything that monopolizes our attention away from God. It could be television, fishing, golf, family, our jobs, the Internet, and any other thing that would interfere with our relationship with God; anything can be an idol. It is important, therefore, that we identify anything that would hinder our relationship with God and take appropriate steps to remove that stumbling block from our life.

Ezekiel prophesied to individuals who were guilty of setting up idols in their hearts in Ezekiel 14:1-11. These individuals appeared to be seeking God by coming to inquire of God's will (Ezekiel 14:3). However, God told Ezekiel that they had come hypocritically. They really had not abandoned their idolatry; it was still foremost in their own minds. So while their external actions appeared to be correct, their hearts were still wrong because they had not abandoned their idolatry in their thinking. They were placing something else before God in their own minds.

Let's note that some attitudes are inherently idolatrous. Colossians 3:5 makes it clear that covetousness is idolatry. Covetousness is a desire to gain

something, anything, to the point that we would be willing to abandon what is right to get whatever it is that we desire. When we are Covetous, in essence, we are placing something in the world (whether it be an object or a person [i.e. Exodus 20:17]) above God; we are desiring some thing more than we desire God and such is the essence of idolatry. Consider as an example of such behavior the rich young ruler (Luke



18:18-23). He had placed God high up in his priority list. He had kept God's commandments from his youth. However, when Jesus told him to sell all of his goods and give them to the poor, he went away sorrowful. God may have been high on his priority list, but God wasn't number one. He loved something more than he loved God.

Idolatry can be either external (outward display of worship to a graven image) or internal (putting God in second place in our heart) or both external and internal. This is in essence

why we have what Jesus calls the first and great commandment. "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength..." (Mark 12:30). If God is first in our hearts, souls, minds, and strength, then both the internal and the external are focused upon loving God instead of other things. Jesus made it clear that even physical concerns such as food, clothing, and shelter ought not to take priority in our mind. It is His kingdom and righteousness that always comes first (Matthew 6:33).

Physical idolatry is still a problem in many parts of the world today, and even among some who profess to be Christians. However, spiritual idolatry is likely the bigger temptation in our culture. We are surrounded by a society that places a high value upon possessions and bombarded each day with appeals to pursue such possessions. In such a society we must constantly be aware of the condition of our heart to ensure that we do not become complacent and succumb to putting God less than first in our lives. By understanding our priorities and analyzing our decisions through a Christ centered perspective we can maintain the kind of relationship with God that He desires for us to have with Him.

Kevin Cauley

### Letting It Make Sense



“Part of the reason many in this world struggle with coming to grips with the truth is they are trying to comprehend it based on the wrong wisdom.”

Have you ever wondered why something seemed so clear to you, but others didn't appear to get it? Perhaps they did not want to get it. Or it could be their focus was so tainted by preconceived ideas they really couldn't understand. Someone has said, "Talking sense today isn't quite good enough; it must sound like nonsense so a nutty world can more easily understand." [source: "1600 Squibs And Quips", compiled by E. C. McKenzie] Have you experienced conversations or situations where such seemed to be the case; the nuttier the idea the quicker it was accepted?

Part of the reason many in this world struggle with coming to grips with the truth is they are trying to comprehend it based on the wrong wisdom. Some things don't seem to make sense until one begins to develop the "mind of Christ." (1 Corinthians 2:16) Worldly views of things -- even of Jesus (i.e. 2 Corinthians 5:16)

-- make it difficult to understand the true SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE. That's where Nicodemus struggled in his discussion with Jesus regarding being born again. (note John 3:4 & 12) It didn't make sense physically, but as Christians, we know how it does SPIRITUALLY.

In Paul's first letter to the church at Corinth he noted... "(20) Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? HAS NOT GOD MADE FOOLISH THE WISDOM OF THE WORLD? (21) For since, in the wisdom of God, THE WORLD DID NOT KNOW GOD THROUGH WISDOM, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe." (1 Corinthians 1:20-21 ESV)

Had the world (in its wisdom) understood what was going on, Paul declared they would not have crucified the Lord. (1 Corinthians 2:8) There is wisdom beyond ourselves to which we must look. If man's wisdom were enough,

would not this world be a better place to live than it is? Those who simply go with their feelings or personal inclinations will always struggle with the wisdom of God.

Paul went on to point out... "The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them BECAUSE THEY ARE SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED." (1 Corinthians 2:14 ESV)

Religion based on a crucified Christ was a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles. (1 Corinthians 1:22). However, to come to know our Lord's power over death and His ability to renew life gives us all the hope we need to press on toward the eternity that awaits us. May we continue to view life through SPIRITUAL eyes while maintaining a faith resting on what God has revealed.

Have a great day ACCEPTING THE WISDOM FROM ABOVE!

Carl Hanson



### Bible Studies for the week of November 20th, 2005

- AM Sermon..... "Savior, Teach Me"
- Scripture Reading..... John 3:1-2
- PM Sermon..... Evidences: The Bible's Inspiration
- Scripture Reading..... 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- Sunday Class ..... The Book of Matthew
- Wednesday Class..... The Book of Zephaniah

### Kevin's Korner

**W**e tapped into the ol' savings account this past week and purchased a new microwave. Mary Lynn and I liked the new microwave that someone generously donated to the church recently and so we got one just like it at Wally World. So far we've been pleased with its abilities to pop popcorn and make warm beverages (just in time too, I might add).

We had our first taste of Winter this past week. We've had some cool temperatures this fall, but this is the first drop into the mid twenties that we've had since last winter. We bundled up Eddie in his new Texas Longhorns coat that his grandmother sent him this past week and he looks so cute in it.

I've been spending some time at the community center working out on the equipment there and meeting new people. I'm hopeful that some of these new con-

tacts will eventually turn into opportunities to study God's word. I ask you to pray for my efforts in that regard so that I may say the things that need to be said and also that God would bring those who are seeking into touch with me there.

This past Monday I made a trip over to Mountain Home to meet with the gentleman with whom I worked while in Brazil. Randal Matheny was in the country for a lectureship and he came to Arkansas for a few days to visit his family. He has gone back to Brazil now. I took some of our old video tapes to him for his family to have since we pretty much have DVDs now. He flew back to Brazil this past Wednesday/Thursday. We had a good visit while he was here. He is the editor of "Forthright Magazine" which is an online magazine that is overseen by the eldership here at Berryville. So I was glad to be able to

meet with him and talk about the things that are happening.

Speaking of the Internet work, for the month of October we had an average of 441 visitors per day for a total of 13,690 visitors per month. We had visitors from 66 different countries. The site served up about 31000 pages. The Forthright Magazine web site also did well for the month. That site averaged 207 visitors per day for a total of 6430 visitors in the month. The site served up 20,240 pages. All together this puts us at over 600 visitors per day and 50,000 pages a month of material being distributed.

Due to brother Eddie Cloer's presentation this past Sunday night, the scheduled report on my Brazil trip was postponed. That presentation is now scheduled for the Sunday evening of December 4th. Brother Cloer collected \$3303.00 for his work.



**"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).**

### Records for the week of November 13th, 2005

Sunday Bible Class .....	59
Sunday AM Worship.....	74
Sunday PM Worship.....	47
Wednesday Night Study.....	50
Contribution.....	\$1661.72
Budget.....	\$1662.00



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# Praises, Prayers, and Proclamations

## Announcements

- We are thankful to God for this new Lord's Day. It is the day we honor His Son and the Love that He has shown us through Him. Let us worship in spirit and in truth!
- Please remember the following in your prayers: Myra Brock, Vaughn Farmer, Bill Fort, Trish Foster, Brian Guess, Opal Hull, Rhonda Ray, Julie Sooter, James Tabor.
- Our monthly potluck is today after our morning service. All are invited to attend especially our visitors. Please stay with us for a wonderful time of fellowship.
- Our week Bible study at the nursing home will continue on Thursday afternoon at 2:00 with Luke 6.
- Next Sunday night after services we will have a youth devotional here at the building. Please bring chips, drinks, chocolate and other goodies to eat. The main course will be provided.
- Our yearly holiday party hosted by Ken and Debbie Smith is scheduled for Saturday, December 10th, at 6:00 PM. Please bring a gift under \$5.
- Our pantry item is: Canned Peaches.

### God's Salvation Plan

1. **Hear** the Gospel—Romans 10:17
2. **Believe** on the Lord & His Word—Mark 16:16; John 8:24
3. **Repent** of your sins—Luke 13:3,5; Acts 17:30
4. **Confess** Christ—Matthew 10:32,33; Luke 12:8; Romans 10:9
5. **Be Baptized** for the remission of sins—Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; Galatians 3:27
6. Live a **faithful**, dedicated life—Revelation 2:10; 2 Peter 1:5-10

## Welcome!

Visit our web site: <http://www.the-churchofchrist.com>

## Family Times for Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class: .....	9:30 AM
Sunday Morning Worship: .....	10:20 AM
Sunday Evening Worship: .....	6:00 PM
Ladies Bible Class: .....	10:30 AM
Wed. Evening Bible Class: .....	7:00 PM

## Serving Each Other

	20 November 2005	27 November 2005
<b>Sunday Morning</b>		
Songs:	Ken Smith	Bill Fort
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Clay Bozarth	Dan Hand
Scripture Reading:	Matthew Morrell	Ray Duncan
Lord's Table	Leon Duncan	Rusty Windle
(assist)	Ken Smith	John Gass
	Jerry Roller	Matthew Morrell
	Michael Morrell	Jerry Roller
Closing Prayer	Glenn Quigley	George Eddings
<b>Sunday Evening</b>		
Songs:	Glenn Williams	Rusty Windle
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Rusty Windle	Glenn Williams
Scripture Reading:	Ray Duncan	Jack Gentry
Lord's Table	Jerry Roller	Leon Duncan
	Dale Pinkley	John Gass
Closing Prayer	Dan Hand	Bill Fort
<b>Wednesday</b>		
Songs:	Barrett Brown	Bruce Foster
Opening Prayer:	George Eddings	John Gass
Invitation:	Kevin Cauley	Leon Duncan
Closing Prayer:	Dale Pinkley	Rusty Windle

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