

Read: Matthew 4:1-11

The Biggest Idol of All

Matthew 4:11

Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Do you know what an idol is? An idol is a false god. An idol is someone or something you worship instead of the true God.

When the devil tempted Jesus in the wilderness, he tried to bribe Jesus to bow down and worship him. "I will give you all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor," the devil promised, "if you will just bow down and worship me."

That was a lie. All the kingdoms of the world and their majesty don't belong to the devil. They belong to God. Jesus knew that. He knew that we are to worship and serve only the true God.

The devil still tempts us to worship different kinds of idols. Sometimes he uses the power of money. He wants us to believe that money is the most important thing in our lives because it can buy lots of stuff and do lots of fun things.

He can even take an object like a phone and make it more important than God. Just think about how much time we spend playing and scrolling on our phones. If you doubt that your phone has become an idol for you, just ask yourself the question: "What would make me more upset, if my parents told me I couldn't go to church this week or if they took away my phone for a week?"

Anything that becomes more important to us than God is an idol.

The greatest idol the devil uses to tempt us, however, isn't our phone or money. To see the biggest idol in your life, just go look in the mirror.

Think about it. Every time we do what we want instead of what God wants, we are showing that we love ourselves more than God. We are making ourselves our own gods.

Sadly, all of us have numerous idols in our hearts and lives which play tug of war with our faith. Thankfully, we have a Savior, Jesus, who was tempted like us in every way, but didn't sin. Jesus obeyed and loved perfectly in our place. Then on the cross, he suffered the punishment we deserve for all the idols we have harbored in our hearts and our lives.

Because of Jesus, God forgives you and gives you heaven. Money can't do that for you. Your phone can't do that for you. Only God can and does.

So worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- What is an idol?
- In today's devotion, what did the devil try to tempt Jesus to do?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- In addition to money and phones, give another example of something which can become an idol in our lives.
- Why does Jesus deserve to be the number one thing in our hearts and lives

Questions for Middle School and Above

- *Agree or disagree:* Because God doesn't want us to have idols in our lives, it would be a sin to love even our families and friends more than him. Explain your answer.
- Why is it so comforting to know that Jesus didn't sin when the devil tempted him?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, forgive me for all the idols I have in my heart and life. Help me to love you above all things. Amen.