

## What Is Idolatry? What Is Pure Worship?

Idolatry, according to the Bible, is the worship of anything or anyone other than the one true God. It includes the veneration of images, created things, false gods, or even the elevation of personal desires above God. Pure worship, on the other hand, is the worship of God alone, in the way He commands, with sincerity, truth, and obedience.

God's command regarding idolatry was made clear from the beginning. In the Ten Commandments, He declared:

"You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God..." (Exodus 20:3–5, LSB)

Idolatry not only involves physical idols but also spiritual adultery—setting affections on anything more than God. Paul warned:

"Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry." (1 Corinthians 10:14, LSB)

The seriousness of idolatry is emphasized because it replaces true worship and corrupts the heart. Those who practice idolatry will not inherit the Kingdom of God:

"Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters..." (1 Corinthians 6:9–10, LSB)

Pure worship, as Jesus taught, is worship directed solely to the Father, in spirit and truth:

"But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:23–24, LSB)

Pure worship requires more than ritual or outward actions—it demands heart devotion, obedience, and conformity to God's revealed will.

Jesus condemned those who honored God with their lips but whose hearts were far from Him:

"But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commands of men." (Matthew 15:9, LSB)

Thus, pure worship rejects man-made traditions that contradict or replace God's Word.

In summary, idolatry is the turning away from the true God to false gods or anything placed before Him. Pure worship is giving God alone the honor He is due, in accordance with His truth, motivated by love, humility, and obedience.

### Referenced Scriptures (LSB):

- Exodus 20:3–5 — “You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God...”
- 1 Corinthians 10:14 — “Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.”
- 1 Corinthians 6:9–10 — “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters...”
- John 4:23–24 — “But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”
- Matthew 15:9 — “But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commands of men.”