



Fight the gods: Part 3



We have been talking about “Fight the gods,” and I have been telling you how natural it is to have a god. One of the things I showed you last week was that if you don’t deal with your past, it is what interrupts your calling. It interrupts the anointing and interrupts you because it causes God to end up facing against you since it leads you to create idols.

- If you don’t deal with your past, you will do things like Gideon did. He was small in his own eyes and thought he was nothing in the beginning; then when God made him something, he created a god in Israel.
- The god he created was an ephod, and an ephod was used by the priest to incant or inquire of God. He created a gold ephod, and the people ended up worshipping it, and Gideon never stopped them.
- He was a judge for 40 years; he had 70 sons and so many wives that literally the idol worship exploded after he died. One of his sons killed all of his other brothers, took over in his place, and created idolatry, while he himself was led to destruction.
- Consequently, Gideon, the man we knew who saved Israel with 300 people, ended up becoming a priest of idol worship because he never dealt with his past.
- Just because God calls you with a weakness doesn’t mean He wants you to continue with that weakness—because when you continue with your weakness, it creates the idol that ends up cutting the calling short.
- I taught you about the spirit of Jezebel and the spirit of Ahab, and I told you that you need an Ahab before Jezebel can exist. Jezebel needs an Ahab—Jezebel needs people of

significance to attach himself or herself to; and by attaching themselves to people of significance, they end up ruling the person of significance (even though they keep telling the person of significance that they're the one in charge).

Jesus' last temptation:

“Bow down to me and I'll give you everything.” This is how Jezebel works. When you become so passive about what it is that God has called you to, that you are not a person of confrontation, that you do not push away how the enemy comes to you, you will attract Jezebel.

- Behind Ahab was the spirit of wanting to succeed at anybody's cost. When success has become literally an idol, it will attract Jezebel because it will attract the people that you think you need to make it in life. But what's funny is that when you have attracted Jezebel, you're never in charge anymore.

Today's Discussion:

Gideon, Jezebel, and Ahab: the secret to overcoming idols in your life is dealing with your past—the weaknesses, the traumas, the things that you have endured in your past, determine how you think in the future.

- You must deal with the spirit of rejection, which is one of the worst spirits ever—like Jezebel, who needed rejection in order to exist. Like we discussed last week, she was a gift to Ahab; she was just a gift that two kings had agreed upon, and she was just the collateral that came with it.
- It was not a loving relationship; she was just the priestess of Baal, given by the priest of Baal to Ahab—who just wanted to succeed. So, the spirit that came with Baal was Jezebel, who was supposed to give him that success at the cost of anybody.
- You need rejection to have Jezebel because you must prove a point, and you need that for Jezebel to exist. Deal with your past.
- To begin to deal with the past, let's see how Matthew addresses this issue:

Matthew 6:23

²³But when your eye is unhealthy, your whole body is filled with darkness. And if the Light you think you have is actually darkness, how deep that darkness is!

- What this is saying is that it's hard to know you have an idol when you are unhealthy; meaning, if you can't see in the realm of the Spirit, you don't know you have one. If you're not living with God—praying, fasting—if you're not taking in the Word of God, your eyes cannot open.
- The only way to know a lie is if you know the truth. You do not know that you are living a lie until you find the truth, and we want to know the will of God because we believe that the will of God is the truth for our lives—that's what we call “purpose.”

- That means, whatever life I am living that is not purpose is a lie. That is why whenever a pastor or someone stands here [at the pulpit], and says, “Read, study, pray,” we’re saying, “See the Light so that you can recognize darkness.”
- That’s why the Bible says, “But when your eye is unhealthy, your whole body is filled with darkness.” The way you see and interpret life determines what you let in. If you can’t see the Light and the Holiness of God, your whole body—your temple of the Holy Spirit—is filled with darkness, because you will end up taking in and incorporating everything your eyes tell you is the truth.
- Therefore, you have Christians today living out ideologies that have nothing to do with Scripture, but they think it does. For example, the idea that because God is love, He accepts everything is darkness.
- Although “God is love, therefore love accepts people the way they are,” sounds Christian, if that were true, Jesus did not need to die. It’s not true. Things will sound Christian to you if you don’t have eyes to see.
- “Accept all things, be all things, and because God is love, it should be okay.” No, it’s not. Theories like, “Love the sinner, but hate the sin,” are not in the Bible because we must understand why hell exists in the first place.
- I’m showing you this verse because the second part is important: God help those who think they’re seeing the Light, but they are not. This is where most Christians are, **“And if the light you think you have is actually darkness, how deep that darkness is!”**

Does that sit well with you?

“**And if the light you think you have,**” means that you don’t have it; it means that there is a pseudo light that persuades people to think that they have light.

- Maybe because they pray, maybe because they can interpret a Bible verse, or maybe because they gauge their Christianity based on how bad another person is (i.e., “I am not as bad as this one.”).
- Just because one person tells two lies and you only tell one, you’re no better off than they are. So, God is saying, **“If the light you think you have is usually darkness,”** meaning there is darkness that actually appears bright!
- The Bible says that “wolves come in sheep clothing,” which is saying that darkness can appear as though it is light. This is equivalent to what false prophets do—it sounds good! False prophecy is not just that they sound good or that they’re quoting Scripture; it’s the source by which they are speaking that is what makes them false.
- It’s the underlying spirit which is driving them to proclaim what you will find is false (“By their fruits you shall know them.”). The fruit in prophecy is not just what they’ve said, it’s whether God backed it up.
- So, stop coming at me with this: “No, it’s of God! Look, what they’ve said is in Scripture.” If the spirit by which they’re speaking is not of God, then what they’ve said is false. By the way, the devil quotes Scripture!

- You must know how to out quote him just by knowing the context; that's where his quotes fall short, they're never in context.
- You must know the context so that when he's quoting, you put what he's saying into context. Notice that God says, "the darkness is deeper"; this is because you've been deceived by yourself. Just know that Satan can't make you do anything; so no, the devil did not make you do it.
- The devil can't make you do anything; he suggests based on your desires, and you bring life to it—that's how idols are created. But your darkness is deeper than everybody else's. What this verse is telling us is that if your eyes are dark, you can't see in the spirit—and don't pretend that you can.
- When you pretend that you can, your darkness is deeper than the one who already admitted that they can't see. Don't pretend! if you can't see, you can't see. Otherwise, by pretending, your darkness will be deeper.

Matthew 6:24

²⁴"No one can serve two masters [this statement is emphatic]; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money."

- "No one can serve two masters." This is an emphatic statement. Jesus is saying that for you to love Him and serve Him, you cannot be obsessed and in love with something else as well.
- And you can't call it a weakness—serving God and something else, believing that grace will cover you—you can't do that. "No one can serve two masters," sounds like He's calling you to decide.
- "For it's either you will hate one"—hate in the Bible is equivalent to murder. "You will murder one or will love the other—choose one." It's either love gives light or hate murders; "you will be devoted to one and despise the other."
- Despise—I can only be devoted to one spirit at a time, and I must despise the other; I can't love them at the same time. I can't love my sin and love God at the same time.
- I can't love my wife and my side chick at the same time. The point is that it's not possible to love God and have a weakness. Love has nothing to do with emotions, it's the decisions that you make which decide if you love.
- So, if I cheated on you, the contract that we have is broken, because love requires me to be dedicated to the process of love. Love, therefore, has nothing to do with feelings; feelings are the after effect of the decision you've decided to make.
- So, God says, "You can't love it [the other thing] and think you can still be devoted to Me, because whatever you're in love with, is where your devotion will be." Like how we can wake up at 5 am to go to work, but we can't do the same to read our Bible.
- You can do that because money speaks louder than the Word of God. **"You will be devoted to one and you will despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money."**

- What He is saying is that the process by which you humans have given yourselves to getting money, interrupts your devotion to Me, so choose one. Though this is hard, love should be emanating out of California more than any other state because it's a bigger sacrifice.
- You cannot serve God and be enslaved to another spirit, so which is your priority? Is your job your sense? Do not conclude that I am saying go and quit your job, but what is God saying?
- The key word is "enslaved." Money doesn't tell me what I need to do; rather, I do what God tells me to do to get money.

God's commands that apply to us:

GOD

- You shall have no other gods before Me.
- You shall not make for yourself a carved image.
- You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
- Remember the Sabbath day.

People

- Honor your father and your mother.
- You shall not murder.
- You shall not commit adultery.
- You shall not steal.
- You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.

All ten commandments were God's efforts to teach you how not to have an idol—all ten commandments.

- The biggest enmity to man is having another god in the sense that you are your biggest enemy, not the devil—because the devil doesn't make you do anything. He encourages you to do what you've already said you'd do.
- He tries to shape your mind to do it; the product of your desires ends up becoming the god, and your sins are worship to that god. The sin that Paul says, "so easily besets you"—the one that you can't seem to break away from—is worship to the god.
- When I act out in sexual sin, I am worshiping the god of lust. "Offer yourself as a living sacrifice, that is your reasonable worship." When we come here [to church], and worship God, and pray, our actions ("faith without works is dead") reflect us proclaiming who God is.
- All ten commandments are God telling you how not to have foreign gods. Number one is explicit; there are more to these sentences, but I need us to understand that the Ten Commandments are broken into two categories. The first four have to do with God, while the second half has to do with people.
- It is either we create idols because of our relationship with God, we want to attack Him directly, or we create gods to attack people—that's the way it works. It's either we have gods because we are attacking God directly; or it is because we don't value people, we don't love people, or we don't want people to look better than us.

- Therefore, we must create idols to look better than everybody else (two categories, as listed above).
- “You shall have no other gods before Me.” That was the very first thing on God’s mind—it’s a big problem.
- “You shall not make for yourself a carved image.” When you have dwelt on foreign gods in your heart, physical things become the manifestation of what you have been obsessing about. Idols today don’t look like back then when people were creating actual wooden things; today, idols are the actual tangible things that we are obsessing about.
- In the Book of James, the Lord says that we do not get answered prayers because we “pray amiss,” and amiss is when what you are praying for is wasted on your selfish desires. He says, “I do not answer prayers where what you want does not have anything to do with Me.” This is because they become the carved image, and God won’t bless you with your curse—with your idol.
- You shall not take name of the Lord God in vain. Taking His name in vain is not just a swear word or when you say things like, “Jesus Christ”; it’s much deeper than that. For me to take His name in vain means that I have lost reverence for Him and the people who fall under His commandments [the list under “God”]. Those who do this are usually in the church; they don’t live what they say, and that’s taking Jesus’ name in vain.
- That’s because you have entered this idolatry of this familiarity which becomes a spirit in itself; it breeds contempt. The next thing He says is, “Remember the sabbath day.” However, in the New Testament, Paul says, “It is no longer about a day; we are in the sabbath of God.”
- What this means is that every day is now the sabbath day according to Scripture. In the past, the sabbath day was for remembering God. Idolatry can be so evident in your life that you forget to remember God.
- So, God is saying, “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.” Now, let’s go to the side of the “people” (that list is longer). One, “If you do not honor your mother and father, you are in idolatry.
- This means that if you don’t honor your parents, this is the one promise in the Bible which states that you will not live long. Look at the way the Bible states things sometimes like, “The day you eat of this fruit, you will die.”
- Though they did not physically die [immediately], they never fulfilled their purpose. For example, if you lived to be 100 years old, but dishonored your parents at the age of 40, the next 60 years of your life will be without purpose.
- You must honor your parents even when they don’t make sense; however, if you’re submitted to nobody you are your own idol. Your parents must be the first ones that you must submit to.
- Everyone must be under submission to somebody; for example, if you’re going into ministry, you’ll must have spiritual parents. You cannot be free willy, thinking that you know it all. This is the reason why our parents come with problems: it is not true submission until they have problems. It is not true submission until you do not want to submit. Honor your mother and father.

- “You shall not murder.” You shall not value yourself greater than anybody else to the point where you hate and murder them because you think you more worth living than they are.
- “You shall not commit adultery.” This means the two of you [in marriage] must submit to each other, which means to submit and to love are the same thing. Do not submit to somebody who is so opposite of you, that you were blind when you said, “I do.” Marriage should be with your eyes open when God says, “That’s the one.”
- “You shall not bear false witness.” You should not be against your neighbor, and you must tell the truth even if you don’t like the people. God knows that it is the propensity of the heart to not like certain races, or certain types of people—and we teach ourselves to be racist. Therefore, you shall not bear false witness against someone that you don’t like, regardless of why you don’t like them.

Combining the rest...

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.”

- This means that you must keep your eyes and your business to yourself, and it doesn’t matter how much they have—if you must serve them, keep serving them. If you don’t have as much as them, do not enter competition with them to gain as much as they have.
- Because you will end up wanting his wife, his house, his male servant, his female servant, his ox, his donkey, etc. If the motivation for you to succeed in life is to beat everybody with what they have, He’s saying that you are coveting—you are in idolatry, and He doesn’t bless things like that.
- The reason I want to succeed is between me and God. Imagine this:
 - I walk into heaven, God looks at me, and it’s like the first look a parent gives a child when they’re in trouble; though they said nothing, they just look at you and you know that you didn’t make it. It’s like when they give you a certain look in public that lets you know you’ll be in trouble later.
- Success for me looks like this:
 - Imagine meeting Jesus and the first second you meet Him, the loving look in His eyes says it all. That’s success to me—when I look at Him welcoming me with His gaze. I will know that I made it. And so, I have no time looking at what someone else has.
- I have no time wondering what kind of anointing you have on your life. I don’t care what kind of ministry you have that people are literally sitting on each other’s laps because that’s how big the church is. I have no time.
- I am living for that with God. If you live for people, you will die for people—and not in a good way. So, everything in the commandments is against idolatry.
- Therefore, he [Matthew] breaks it into two categories:

Matthew 22:37

³⁷“You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and with all your mind.”

*This is the first and greatest commandment.

And the second *is* like it:

“You must love your neighbor as yourself.”

LOVE =
SUBMIT/OBEY

- The entire ten commandments are broken down into two categories, which is why in the New Testament, Jesus says that all ten commandments are combined into two: if you love God you won't go against Him, and if you love people, you won't create idols.
- But the problem is that love is equal to “submission and obedience.” You must love your God with all your heart; heart in the Bible is the entire essence of a man and a woman—everything about you.
- Your soul is the decision-making factor in your life. This includes decisions that are not based on emotions—this is where your soul is.
- Your mind: remember we spoke about the secret place; as you are dwelling on ideas, God must be loved in there.
- “And to love your neighbor as yourself,” that is hard; that is equally as hard as heart, soul, and mind because you are not allowed to love anybody less than yourself—that's hard. This is the reason why Jesus says, “If you have two, give one.”
- In fact, the more you fall in love with yourself and you're reading all those self-help books, you must supplement it with how to love your enemy. Because on the day God comes and asks the question, He asks you when He opens the book of life, “You did an amazing job investing in yourself, you have your peace of mind, you lived your best life possible; but who lived enjoyably because of your existence?” That will be the evidence if you understood the second commandment.
- Who else thrived because you thrived? Rich people know this, that's why they “give back” for tax purposes—somebody else must enjoy it, because I'm enjoying it. It's a principle in life.
- Therefore, I am teaching you how to destroy your idols: everything must be predicated on God—the love of God and the love of people. Now, let's get into the practicality of things, and 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 gives us the five points on how we are to cast down idols.
- Idols are the glorification of the spiritualization of your obsession, that's all they are. You obsess over something, and spirits become assigned to it, and it becomes practicality; Paul tells us how to fight these things, and I will break them down for us.

2 Corinthians 10:3-4

³We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. ⁴We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments.

- If you're going to do something in the realm of the Spirit such as tearing down idols, it must be done in the realm of the Spirit; even trying to talk yourself out of doing something doesn't work as a human.
- Temptations such as telling yourself, "Don't touch it" —you're just waking up and you haven't even touched anything, but in your mind you've just touched it, and you've even eaten it—suggest that we're not fighting as humans do. We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons; so, there's weapons for fighting idols.
- Our worldly weapons are often our mouths; we go through exercises to try to discipline ourselves. If it's not done in the Spirit, it does not have the same redemptive qualities. So, the first thing he [Paul] says is:
 - 1. To knock down the strongholds of reasoning.
 - 2. To destroy false arguments.
 - 3. We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God.
 - 4. We capture their rebellious thoughts.
 - 5. We teach them to obey Christ.
- I know that three points are easier to understand, but all five of these are important when tearing down idols in your life— like perpetual sins, the things that keep coming up. The Bible is trying to tell us that it all begins in our heads.

Driven by LOVE:

1. Knock down the strongholds of human reasoning (this is the hardest one). In the Old Testament, the way you destroyed idols was to physically tear them down; you had to tear them down first. The first thing that you need to do against an idol is knock it down, and the keyword is that it's a "stronghold."
 - This is the part of the temptation that is the hardest because it's the first principle that attacks the problem first. Strongholds are fortresses that cannot be moved. If we are fighting and we're in a stronghold, and arrows are coming behind my stronghold, I can shoot downhill and kill you first.
 - The Bible says that idols are behind strongholds. If you can discover a stronghold in your life, it wasn't built over night. It has a reason to be there, and you gave it a reason over the years, over the days, over time; you believed in it so much, and that's why it is a stronghold. The way for you to overcome it is to knock down that stronghold, and Paul gives it a name: it's human reasoning. He's saying, "You reasoned that idol into existence; you gave it a reason why it exists." For example:

Why do I want money?

Human reasoning says to pay the bills. So, money should exist to pay the bills. So, there is a legitimate reason for why your idols should exist; whatever idols you possess have a reason why they should exist, and you reasoned them there.

- Satan convinced you; he didn't actually do it, he just convinced you that there was a good reason to do it. Like with Eve—the human reasoning behind eating the fruit was based on a long discussion with Satan and him getting her to look at the fruit; she thought that it looked good, it looked like it tasted good, and her human reasoning concluded that God knew that if she ate it because it looked good, then (according to Satan) she would become like God!
 - The next thing that you do is to convince yourself of the reason why you think something should exist. For example, the reason why I want to succeed is because if I am on the top, money talks, and I get what I want, people serve me, I get to enjoy, etc.—human reasoning. Knock it down!
 - This is wrong; you are always convinced that it is right, but your spirit says that it is wrong—so knock it down.
2. Destroy false arguments. The arguments that Satan gives you for you to think the reasoning is right, you must knock them down. You can battle with a sin so long that over time you become okay with it, and you end up saying things like, “God, it's just me.”
- The longer the temptations last, the longer Satan is arguing with you that it's okay. We are not talking about the temptation that once you do it you feel guilt; we're discussing something that keeps happening and you believed Satan's argument. God says tear it down.
 - In this situation, Eve was supposed to look at Satan and say, “This argument that you're giving me, this image you're giving me, I cast it down; your argument is premised wrongly. Listen, no Satan, God did say don't eat it; but it's not that He wanted to keep me from being God, it is because I am *not* God.” That was supposed to be the response.
3. We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. This means that each time Satan gives you an argument and it makes sense because he paints a picture of what you could be if you had it, the painted picture in your mind is what makes you accept the argument, and it becomes a stronghold.
- Everything Satan proposes messes with you through pride. The image of “what I can be if I just do it” must be destroyed. “I want it because I can become this”—that image which you are working for must die.

- [Jesus said], “If any man will come after Me, he must first deny himself, pick up his cross and follow Me.” The image of what the idol makes you must die; that’s hard because our idols are our identity, it’s what we want the most.
 - If I am killing the image of what the idol says, that means that I must be remade.
4. We capture their rebellious thoughts. How was this argument meant to turn me against God? Because every argument Satan makes is intended to cause me to rebel against God. You must know what this idol (pride) was meant to do between your relationship with God, what false arguments you accepted, and why it makes sense.
- Then you must take that idea, take it to the Bible, and say, “Hey, idol, this is what the Lord says—not what you are.” Next week, I will show you how all three of Jesus’ temptations follow this [these five commands]. I will also show you how Joseph’s temptations follow this as well.
 - Every idol and temptation must be fought in your head if you’re going to win. First, having that idol must no longer make sense; then, the argument that makes it come alive must die.
 - Then the image of what it has told you that you will be, must be die, and then the rebellion that it wanted you to do against God must die.
 - And then you must know the Word of God that cancels it all before you can overcome your idols. So, therefore, a lot of us can’t seem to overcome temptations because some of us don’t know how to follow number one (knock down the strongholds of human reasoning). That is, “This makes no sense, but I’m doing it!”
 - For some of us, when we pray, we know that the enemy just lied to us, and we know that it is a false argument, but we’re not doing the rest.
 - Some of us keep pride at the root of our hearts; even though we know something is wrong and we know the reasoning is wrong, we just keep doing it.

Spirit of a liar:

There are some sins that the Bible says, “No liar will inherit the Kingdom of God.” The heart of a lie is pride; lying promises you things that are based on your pride.

5. We teach them to obey Christ.
- If you don’t take care of your pride, you will not stop lying—you must capture the rebellious thoughts. For some of us, were that each time you’re going through a temptation, you should open your Bible to quote the Scripture and say to your situation, “It is written!” But you didn’t follow steps 1-4. “What is written? To do what?”
 - You still have not fought with it in your head. “It is written to whom?” The sin is taking place inside of you! When you say “it is written,” that is the cue for Satan to leave you. However, if his work is already done in you, he can leave, but you’ll keep doing it; so what are you really saying it is written for?

- You haven't casted down the reasoning; you haven't found out why it's false. Your pride is still there, and the rebellion is still there. "Get thee behind..." Who? Satan? Satan will probably get behind you, but by that point, he already has you.

Next week, I will show you how Jesus had to cast down, find the false arguments, destroy the pride, capture where the rebellion was coming from, and then He said, "It was written," in each of the three temptations against Him.

- If you want to overcome, learn the above—and the practical examples will follow.