

No More Idols

I just knew that Joe (not his real name) was my special delivery from God. He had to be. He fit the requirements on my list. Plus, the Bible says: "Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart" (Ps. 37: 4, NKJV).

Joe finally noticed me and asked me out. It was difficult to contain my excitement. Let's just say I went to sleep smiling.

We started dating, but six weeks later, Joe bailed out, ending the nascent relationship. I was absolutely devastated. Wasn't Joe the answer to all my years of praying? Maybe the devil was trying to intercept my blessing! I could not accept that and refused to give up on the dream.

Years went by, but Joe never pursued me again. My hopefulness turned into despair, embarrassment and rejection. Now I felt like a failure because I had never wanted someone so badly and invested so much energy into building what I hoped would be a permanent romance.

Over time, the lessons from this failed relationship sunk in, and now I realize that at some point in life we all face disappointment and heartbreak in our relationships with those we love or would like to love. We long for unconditional, undying love and acceptance. As women, we desire to have one man choose us from among all others, and when we are chosen, we want him to have eyes only for us until his dying day.

It is so easy, if we are feeling dejected, rejected and unprotected, to become consumed with those feelings. We forget that God always keeps His promises.

What has God promised you? Are you choosing to hold fast to that? God's Word says, "No good thing will He withhold from

those who walk uprightly” (Ps. 84:11).

The only relationship that should define us as women and make us complete is an intimate one with Christ. Colossians 2:10 says, “You are complete in Him.”

When my dreams for Joe and me derailed, the Lord spoke to me softly: “Cheryl, you idolize love and relationships. You need to spend more time with Me. Let Me whisper in your ear and tell you how much I love you. I won’t reject you or use you.

“Let your self-esteem as a woman flow out of our relationship. Then you will have the proper view of yourself. You will be confident. Secure. You won’t be clingy and desperate for a man and fall apart if he walks away, because I want you.”

The Word of God strictly forbids us to worship or idolize things—that includes people! Exodus 20:4 says, “‘You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth.’” The Word goes on to say that God is a jealous God.

There is nothing wrong with the desire and longing for love. That is how God wired us. But the desire itself can become an idol in our lives.

Years after the breakup with Joe, I asked God what went wrong. He answered ever so softly: “You idolized him. You were obsessed.

“You woke up with him on your mind. You went to bed with him on your mind. You were consumed with him. You idolized him.”

I was shocked because I hadn’t thought about the word “idol” in years. I always thought of it in the context of the children of Israel making graven images and worshiping them. But an idol is anything that means more to us than God.

You can learn from disappointment and rejection and become a better person for having experienced them. See them as

necessary learning tools for your journey of faith. I did, and I am grateful to God for being the love of my life.

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