

3 Things That Deceive You Into Settling for a Fake God

I don't know about you, but when I was a kid, I loved watching game shows. I always thought it would be cool if I ever got my name called to "Come on down!" on *The Price Is Right*. If I ever did make it on the show, I guarantee I would bid a dollar no matter what product they were pushing!

I also enjoyed watching *Family Feud*. Just imagine yourself in the fast-money round of *Family Feud*, and you have 20 seconds to guess the top three responses to "Things We Exchange the Glory of God For." You give your answers, and then the host comes back with "Survey says . . ."

1. The pleasures of the flesh.
2. The pursuit of success.
3. The approval of man.

Unfortunately, this is not a television game show but the way we live our everyday lives.

For example, many people today try to find meaning and satisfaction in sex. This is why pornography is so rampant. Sexual immorality and promiscuity may make us feel safe, loved, looked after and in control, but in the end, they leave us feeling more guilty, broken and demeaned.

For others, success is the drug of choice. We run after success or recognition thinking that once we find it we will have arrived. Self-destruction could not describe better this unhealthy exchange.

And for many of us, the pressure of being liked and accepted consumes our every thought. We don't say no for fear of letting someone else down. We find ourselves stretched too far and too thin, sacrificing time with vital relationships in

order to please someone whom we may not even know. We obsess over what people think of us and run after what we feel will give us a sense of worth, all the while headed down a dead-end road.

I'm reminded of the oft-quoted Christian philosopher and apologist C. S. Lewis, who wrote in his essay "The Weight of Glory:"

It would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.

How tragic that we replace the infinite joy, peace and security found in the presence of God with things that are temporary, destructive to our souls and ultimately lead to death.

When we look at Scripture, we see story after story of God inviting people to come into his presence and find their worth in knowing and being known by him. Oftentimes these encounters happened on mountaintops: Abraham was called to sacrifice his son, Isaac, on Mount Moriah and learned there that God would provide for him and meet his needs; Moses was allowed into the presence of God and given the Ten Commandments on top of Mount Sinai; and Elijah battled the prophets of Baal and found God to be an all-consuming power on Mount Carmel.

God called his people to these mountaintop experiences to reveal Himself and to give them purpose and direction. He's calling us, too, through His Word and His Son Jesus to leave all the earthly and shallow things we substitute him for and come meet him today. Will you respond to His call? {eo}

Jarrett Stephens is the author of *The Mountains Are Calling:*

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