

God May Be Calling You to Topple These 'Christian' Idols in Your Life

I'm not talking about a Buddha statue sitting on a fireplace mantel of a Christian home.

I'm not talking about Christians who have some sort of feng shui going on: that dream catcher on a bedroom wall or the prayer rug pointing east; thinking they can mingle the God of the Bible with other gods and religions.

Nope—not talking so-called inclusive Christianity.

I grew up in the church of the 80s and 90s, when Christian idolatry was in full swing.

Mega-TV evangelists broadcast in every Christian home were the last word and authority on theology, and few people took the time to examine whether or not this name-it, claim-it theology was actually biblical.

The Christian music market was exploding into the stratosphere as Christian music artists moved from doing concerts in churches to doing them in huge stadiums.

The topic of church growth was burgeoning, and megachurches were beginning to burst at the seams.

The bar for success was raised, and there was a clear distinction between successful ministry and the minister who was, well, average.

Combine that with the blossoming message of "Don't settle," "Don't be average," "Mediocre is a bad word," "Reach for the stars" and "You can be anything you want to be."

Image and perception became crucial.

Measurable results were the goal.

God's call was equated with notoriety, nickels and numbers. If you were successfully fulfilling God's call, surely people would know about it and the more God blessed your ministry, the more the word spread.

God's blessing was equated with:

The amount of popularity you enjoyed

The size of your bank account

The square footage of your home

This definition of success came with a great price. Once the ante was upped, those who achieved success now had to maintain it.

The perception of a perfect life, a perfect marriage and a perfect home had to be maintained.

Because anything less than perfection meant that God's blessing must be waning.

Who are we really worshipping?

We were made to worship.

Mankind was created with a desire to look to someone greater than himself as a standard for achievement. And God's design was that He would be that standard.

We were designed to look to God as our standard.

We were designed to make God's approval our measure for success.

There is great danger in elevating fallen man to a standard of success and achievement. Not only because it sets them up for failure at some point—it is a mirage. It is a distortion of

truth.

The very foundation of idolatry is distortion. It takes what God designed—worship—and distorts the image so that someone or something else becomes our object of adoration.

And it's hard to see it in our own lives.

It sneaks in with our favorite speaker or blogger, a singer or worship leader we highly respect. If we are not careful, that respect begins to turn into adoration, and that adoration comes with certain expectations of what that marriage blogger's marriage and family must be like ... what that worship leader's personal life must look like ... what that pastor's home life must be like ...

And suddenly, in the news we read about a moral failure and divorce, their son announces that he's gay, or that worship leader was spotted in bar drinking beer or smoking a joint.

That image is shattered.

Our idol has fallen from its throne and shattered in a million pieces on the floor, because he or she wasn't created to be worshipped and adored.

They were made to worship, not be worshipped.

Friends, Christian idols are falling from their thrones one by one. Hardly a week goes by that I don't read of a pastor's moral failure, financial crisis, divorce, or family crisis.

We read of Christian stars gone rogue with their personal behavior and their theology being hijacked by political correctness.

God is shaking our perception of Christian success.

There is no formula for spiritual success.

Spiritual success can't be measured by notoriety, numbers and

nickels:

How perfect your family looks
How perfect your marriage looks
How many book deals you have
How big your bank account is
How Pinterest-perfect your home looks
How branded your face is

God has a different kind of measuring, and it's His pleasure.

You can't see that, you can't elevate that or wear it like a badge.

You can't even measure that, blog about it or write a book about it.

Because God's pleasure wasn't meant to be bragged about, it is based on the reality of our relationship with Him, not perception of reality.

Each person looking to God alone as the standard, not to fallen man as a paragon of Christian success and God's blessing:

Do you look at things from the outward appearance? If any man trusts that he is Christ's, let him consider again that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's. For even if I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord has given us for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed, lest I appear to frighten you by my letters. "For his letters," they say, "are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." Let such a person consider this: that as we are in word by letters when we are absent, we will also be in deed when we are present.

For we dare not count or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. They who measure themselves by one

another and compare themselves with one another are not wise. But we will not boast beyond measure, but within the boundaries which God has appointed us, which reach even you. For we are not overextending ourselves as though we did not reach you, since we have come to you, preaching the gospel of Christ. We are not boasting of things beyond our measure in other men's labors. But we have hope that when your faith is increased, our region shall be greatly enlarged by you, to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you and not to boast in another man's accomplishments. But, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord. For it is not he who commends himself who is approved, but he whom the Lord commends.

Rosilind Jukic, a Pacific Northwest native, is a missionary living in Croatia and married to her hero. Together they live in the country with their two active boys, where she enjoys fruity candles and a hot cup of herbal tea on a blustery fall evening. She holds an associates of practical theology and is passionate about discipling and encouraging women. Her passion for writing led her to author a number of books. She is the author of *A Little R & R* where she encourages women to find contentment in what God created them to be. She can also be found at these other places on a regular basis. You can follow her on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Google +.