

Tearing Down Asherah Poles in Our Lives

In our day when rivalries rage and we are encouraged to limit our divine image through self-identification, I feel compelled to issue a call to worship our unrivaled God.

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God. The Lord is one! And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (Deut. 6:4-5).

Don't mistake this designation of “one” to mean that our God placed first in some universal god contest. The reference to “one” is not as much about assigning a numerical value to God as it is about clarifying that God is the one and the only. One means there is no other. There is no god No. 2, 3 or 4. He alone is worthy, for He alone is God. This correlates with what Jesus said was the greatest commandment:

“Jesus said to him, ‘“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the first and great commandment’” (Matt. 22:37-38).

Our love for God is to be a unified expression of heart, soul and mind with one focus and one accord. God alone is the center of our focus and the only one worthy of our worship. God understands that we do not do well with a divided heart, and He will not tolerate any rival gods, so it is a good arrangement. This command is not because God is insecure about His position with us; it is for our protection so we will not be diverted and led astray.

This can be a confusing Scripture in our day and age when not many people declare themselves to be worshipers of other gods. We are more likely to bow to man-made idols rather than deities with ancient names. From the very beginning, God

warned his children:

“You shall not make for yourselves idols; neither set up a carved image nor a standing stone, nor shall you set up any sculpted stone in your land to bow down to it, for I am the Lord your God” (Lev. 26:1).

Most of us have not erected pillars or figures of stone in our houses or yards, but that does not mean we are not carrying idols in our hearts. An idol is anything that you give your strength to or draw your strength from other than God. It is where you go to get your life. It could be what you run to as a refuge. This could range from something as mundane as food or as far reaching as your involvement with social networks. God is our strength, life and refuge. No person, relationship, organization or thing is to have power over you except God.

For some of us, our feelings are an idol. If we feel beautiful, we believe we are beautiful. If we feel good, we believe we are good. If we live by our feelings alone, they will lie to us and it will not be long before we are led astray.

The truth is you are beautiful because our God beautifies the meek with salvation (Ps. 149:4). You are beautiful because God makes all things beautiful in their time (Eccl. 3:11). Do not allow the foolish idols and image makers of what this world calls beauty to speak into your life when God has already spoken blessing over your life! David the worshipping warrior described the practice of idolatry this way:

“Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men’s hands. They have mouths, but they cannot speak; eyes, but they cannot see; they have ears, but they cannot hear; noses, but they cannot smell; they have hands, but they cannot feel; feet, but they cannot walk; neither can they speak with their throat. Those who make them are like them; so is everyone who trusts in them” (Ps. 115:4-8).

Notice the phrase “those who make them become like them.” This means when you elevate what is human, you become limited to what humans can create. Idols are forms without function. They hold the appearance of life without any of the power of quickening it in others. Thus, their worshippers compromise their God-given senses, losing their voices and their freedom of movement.

Ask the Lord to reign over any areas in your life where you’ve unwittingly set up idols. When you worship God, you are transformed into His image from glory to glory. Because there is no one like our God, there is no greater way to bring out what is unique in you than to pursue only Him.

*To learn more about our unrivaled God, check out **Lisa Bevere’s** book Without Rival.*