

Honor  
*You Sit On a Throne of Lies*  
Clay Weed

**TALK IT OVER**

Key Scripture:

**Exodus 20:1–4 (NLT)**

*1 Then God gave the people all these instructions:*

*2 “I am the LORD your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery.*

*3 “You must not have any other god but me.*

*4 “You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea.*

**Psalm 107:8–9 (NLT)**

*8 Let them praise the LORD for his great love*

*and for the wonderful things he has done for them.*

*9 For he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.*

**Joshua 24:14–15 (NLT)**

*14 “So fear the LORD and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD alone. 15 But if you refuse to serve the LORD, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD.”*

**Romans 1:25 (NLT)**

*25 They traded the truth about God for a lie. So they worshiped and served the things God created instead of the Creator himself, who is worthy of eternal praise! Amen.*

**1 John 5:3 (NLT)**

*3 Loving God means keeping his commandments, and his commandments are not burdensome.*

Start **talking**. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- If you could choose one object to symbolize the essence of who you are, what would it be and why?

Start **sharing**. These questions are to help get your group thinking and to create openness.

- **Read Exodus 20:1-2.** Consider the context in which God delivered the Ten Commandments. How does understanding God as our rescuer influence our response to His commands?
- In reading **Exodus 20:4**, what does the commandment against making idols reveal about the nature of our worship and relationship with God?
- Think about the idols mentioned in the sermon, such as power, beauty, and wealth. In what ways might our culture encourage the worship of such idols, and how have you experienced this in your own life?
- **Psalm 107:8-9** praises God's satisfying nature. Share a personal experience when something temporal brought happiness, and how it compares to the lasting satisfaction found in Jesus.
- Considering the action steps mentioned in the sermon, how can we practically "Reflect in order to Reveal" and "Repent in order to Restore" in our daily lives?
- **Read Joshua 24:14-15.** What are the idols that you may need to put away to serve the Lord wholeheartedly? How does this choice impact your daily life?
- **1 John 5:3** relates love for God to keeping His commandments. Discuss the relationship between love and obedience in your spiritual journey.

Start **doing**. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Take a personal “idol inventory” and make a plan to replace those idols with time spent in God’s presence, such as in prayer, worship, and reading Scripture.

Start **praying**. Be bold and pray with power.

- Teach us, O God, to prioritize our relationship with You above all else. Grant us the wisdom to recognize when our affections are misplaced and the strength to reorient our hearts back to You. May Your Spirit guide us in taking a personal inventory of our lives, identifying anything that competes for Your rightful place in our hearts. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

**Question: "What are some modern forms of idolatry?"**

**Answer:** All the various forms of modern idolatry have one thing at their core: self. Most of the world no longer explicitly bows down to idols and images. Instead we worship at the altar of the god of self. This brand of modern idolatry takes various forms.

First, we worship at the altar of materialism which feeds our need to build our egos through the acquisition of more "stuff." Our homes are filled with all manner of possessions. We build bigger and bigger houses with more closets and storage space in order to house all the things we buy, much of which we haven't even paid for yet. Most of our stuff has "planned obsolescence" built into it, making it useless in no time, so we consign it to the garage or other storage space. Then we rush out to buy the newest item, garment or gadget and the whole process starts over. This insatiable desire for more, better, and newer stuff is nothing more than covetousness. The tenth commandment tells us not to fall victim to coveting: "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor" (Exodus 20:17). God knows we will never be happy indulging our materialistic desires because it is Satan's trap to keep our focus on ourselves and not on God.

Second, we worship at the altar of our own pride and ego. This often takes the form of obsession with careers and jobs. Millions of men—and increasingly more women—spend 60-80 hours a week working. Even on the weekends and during vacations, our laptops are humming and our minds are whirling with thoughts of how to make our businesses more successful, how to get that promotion, how to get the next raise, how to close the next deal. In the meantime, our children are starving for attention and love. We fool ourselves into thinking we are doing it for them, to give them a better life. But the truth is we are doing it for ourselves, to increase our self-esteem by appearing more successful in the eyes of the world. This is folly. All our labors and accomplishments will be of no use to us after we die, nor will the admiration of the world, because these things have no eternal value. As King Solomon put it, "For a man may do his work with wisdom, knowledge and skill, and then he must leave all he owns to someone who has not worked for it. This too is meaningless and a great misfortune. What does a man get for all the toil and anxious striving with which he labors under the sun? All his days his work is pain and grief; even at night his mind does not rest. This too is meaningless" (Ecclesiastes 2:21-23).

Third, we idolize mankind through naturalism and the power of science. We cling to the illusion that we are lords of our world and build our self-esteem to godlike proportions. We reject God's Word and His description of how He created the heavens and the earth, and we accept the nonsense of atheistic evolution and naturalism. We embrace the goddess of environmentalism and fool ourselves into thinking we can preserve the earth indefinitely when God has declared that this current age will have an end: "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness" (2 Peter 3:10-13). As this passage states, our focus should not be on worshiping the environment but on living holy lives as we wait eagerly for the return of our Lord and Savior. He alone deserves worship.

Finally, and perhaps most destructively, we worship at the altar of self-aggrandizement or the fulfillment of the self to the exclusion of all others and their needs and desires. This manifests itself in self-indulgence through alcohol, drugs, sexual sins, and food. Those in affluent countries have unlimited access to alcohol, drugs (prescription drug use is at an all-time high, even among children), and food. Obesity rates in the U.S. have skyrocketed, and childhood diabetes brought on by overeating is epidemic. The self-control we so desperately need is spurned in our insatiable desire to eat, drink, and medicate more and more. We resist any effort to get us to curb our appetites, and we are determined to make ourselves the god of our lives. This has its origin in the Garden of Eden where Satan tempted Eve to eat of the tree with the words "you will be like God" (Genesis 3:5). This has been man's desire ever since—to be god and, as we have seen, the worship of self is the basis of all modern idolatry.

All idolatry of self has at its core the three lusts found in 1 John 2:16: "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." If we are to escape modern idolatry, we have to admit that it is rampant and reject it in all its forms. It is not of God, but of Satan, and in it we will never find fulfillment. This is the great lie and the same one Satan has been telling since he first lied to Adam and Eve. Sadly, we are still falling for it. Even more sadly, many churches are propagating it in the preaching of the health, wealth, and prosperity gospel built on the idol of self-esteem. But we will never find happiness focusing on ourselves. Our hearts and minds must be centered on God and on others. This is why when asked what is the greatest commandment, Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:37). When we love the Lord and others with everything that is in us, there will be no room in our hearts for idolatry.