

“Putting God on the Throne of your Heart”

Scripture: Exodus 20:3 “You shall have no other gods before Me.”

Introduction:

You know the song we “We place you on the highest place”

*We place You
On the highest place
For You
Are the great High Priest.
We place You
High above all else
And we come to You
And worship at Your feet.*

A number of years ago I was sitting in church and this song was being sung. I stopped to think about exactly what I was saying and it dawned on me that to keep singing would be hypocritical because I wasn't placing God on the highest place in my life. So I hung my head in silence.

National Geographic had a show on Television about these Monkeys who would stick their hands in these very small holes in a rock cliff to retrieve nuts from a nearby tree that had blown into these holes or were carried their by some rodent. The Monkeys could barely get their hand in the hole and once the nut was grasped in the hand the Monkey could not get free.

Transitional statement:

Everyday whether we realize it or not we determine what is most important to us and put that very thing on the throne of our hearts. And may I suggest that what we place there will rule us.

Lets look at a few major things that we tend to put over God in our lives.

Lesson:

I. People, many times become the most important thing in our lives.

- A. If I asked you today what is the most important thing in your life what would your answer be. Many times we instantly answer our family, wives, husbands, kids etc.

B. In the past I have put family on the throne of my heart and that lead to serious problems between us. A friend of my at the time named Elbert Watts told me something that seemed quite corny at the time. He said Dan, go home every day and tell you wife she is #2. The point being that God is #1.

C. Jesus had to remind his disciples about this very thing.

-Matthew 8:21-22 "Another of the disciples said to Him, "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father." 22 But Jesus said to him, " Follow Me, and allow the dead to bury their own dead."

-Matthew 10:37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me."

-And Luke uses hyperbole in:

Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple."

*Emphasis on putting God 1st

D. God's people during the time of Samuel had similar problems putting people on the throne of their hearts.

-Read 1 Samuel 8:1-7

"And it came about when Samuel was old that he appointed his sons judges over Israel. 2 Now the name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judging in Beersheba. 3 His sons, however, did not walk in his ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain and took bribes and perverted justice.

4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah; 5 and they said to him, "Behold, you have grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations." 6 But the thing was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." And Samuel prayed to the Lord. 7 The Lord said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them."

*You see putting people on the throne is the same as rejecting God.

II. Possessions can and often become most important to us.

- A. When my wife and I first got married we were dirt poor except for a gun collection that I had been working on for years as a teenager that was worth an great amount of money. We lived in a little trailer house that Bonnie Padgett “aka grandma Padgett” had put in her front yard.

One day I came home from work and opened the door and saw the living room a mess and thought man there is spring cleaning going on today.....but why was the TV and Stereo missing. Well as it hit me I reached for my shotgun that was gone.

I’ll never forget the anger that filled my heart. My ears began to fill hot and tingly. I was so angry that I got a shock absorber, that I had bought for the car, out of it box and proceeded through the house to kill whatever had taken my stuff. It took two years for that anger to go away.

Now I hang my head in sorrow for the evil that filled my heart over possessions.

- B. Jesus meet a man who help possessions highly

Matthew 19:16-22 “And someone came to Him and said, "Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?" 17 And He said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is only One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments." 18 Then he said to Him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER; YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY; YOU SHALL NOT STEAL; YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS; 19 HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER; and YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." 20 The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept; what am I still lacking?" 21 Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." 22 But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property.”

*He thought to highly of his stuff
-Maybe it was his home
-Bass boat
-Golf clubs or Power tools.

- C. Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5

-They apparently placed quite a premium on their possessions

- D. Jesus reminds us that possessions are temporal
- Here today and gone tomorrow
 - They last only a short while
 - We basically came into the world naked and we will return to God in the same manner.

* Jesus says in Matthew 6:19-20-21

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 “But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;”

*He sums it up with verse 21

-“for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

*You see, we treasure the things we place on the throne of our hearts.

III. Work is something that many people putting 1st in their lives.

- A. If you're a work-o-haul-ic raise your hand.....yea me too.
- B. We can become so rapped up with our work that it will actually become the most important thing in our lives.
- C. I used to be a construction superintendent and I loved being busy all the time and having contractors call the house all evening and the thrill of building great buildings. I would load my wife up on the week ends and take her out to show her my jobs. I'm not sure she loved it as much as I did.....ha!
- Without even realizing it I had put work 1st in my life. It was what I dreamed about and savored in my mind.
- D. The harder we work the more our work consumes us.
- Its ironic that God is the one that blesses us with our work and we tend to place it above Him.
- E. Solomon experienced this same thing.
- In the book of Ecclesiastes we see King Solomon had built many great parks, cities, and buildings. Looking back over it all he realized that it meant nothing and the only real thing that had mattered was his relationship with God.

*Brethren work is import.....The bible tells us if a man won't work he won't eat. But, work should never take the throne of our hearts.

IV. Now to the root of all the things we tend to make most important besides God.

- A. What do you think it is?
 - If you said Self your right!
 - Self lies at the root of all the things we put ahead of God in our lives.
 - Other people
 - Possessions
 - Work

- B. Looking back through the scriptures the biggest battle for godly people is to not act from selfishness.
 - Filling my desires
 - Seeking my good.

- C. Jesus tells us in Matt 16:24
 - To Deny ourselves
 - Take yourselves out of the picture

- D. And plug in Christ
 - Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."

- E. Paul says to put other people ahead of yourselves.
 - Philippians 2:3-4 "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others."

- * The story is told of the little girl who was on her mom and dads bed while her mother was getting ready for church. There was a picture of Jesus on the wall above the head board and a dresser with a mirror at the foot of the bed. The little girl said hey mom every time I stand up I can't see Jesus in the mirror (Because by standing up she placed herself between the picture and the mirror. But when she laid down and took herself out of the way she could clearly see the Lord.

Conclusion:

Remember the monkey with his hand caught in the rock because he valued a nut more than his life. The reality is the Monkey died because it wouldn't let go of the nut.

It seems ludicrous for a monkey to put a nut on the throne of his heart, but don't we place things just as crazy 1st in our lives.

The thrones of our hearts are built for God and Him alone.

Today as we sing the song of invitation.... "We place you on the highest place" I would ask everyone to look down and not at your neighbor and consider if you really mean it or not. If not please don't sing because it would be hypocritical for you to simply say the words that you don't mean or keep in your lives.

Please.....If your not singing come down front here and pray with one of the sheperds.