

Small Group Material

The Danger of Idols: Exodus 32. 1 - 14

Welcome What was the most defiant thing you ever did against your parents wishes?

Worship When Moses was such a long time up the mountain, the Israelites said to Aaron, 'Make us gods.' He made the Golden Calf.

What are we tempted to make as 'gods' in our lives? Take a post-it note or piece of paper and write down anything which comes to mind. (Leader - pray asking the Holy Spirit to bring things to mind.)

Burn them if you can! You may have an open fire or wood-burning stove. Or you could even go outside and burn them in an empty tin can with a hole in the bottom. Or throw them in the waste paper basket!

Yield your life to God by saying together John Wesley's Covenant Prayer.

(Leader - you can either give everyone a copy or read a line at a time which everyone repeats.)

I am no longer my own, but yours.

Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will.

Put me to doing, put me to suffering.

Let me be employed for you or laid aside for you,

exalted for you or brought low for you.

Let me be full, let me be empty.

Let me have all things, let me have nothing.

I freely and heartily yield all things to your pleasure and disposal.

And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

you art mine, and I am yours.

So be it.

And the covenant which I have made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven.

Amen.

(as used in the Book of Offices of the British Methodist Church, 1936)

Then pray over the prayer as a group.

Sing together Give us clean hands (Chris Tomlin)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=onGbkeWkA64>

or Be lifted up (Paul Oakley)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=syDsQtqbo_s

Word Read Exodus 32.1-14. Think of this story as a drama with two scenes in it.

A. Scene 1. 32. 1-6

How long has Moses been away on the mountain of Exodus 24.18? How do you think the people felt being in the middle of the desert without any leader?

Is there an attempted 'coup' here?

How do their actions violate the ten commandments that they had received earlier? (Exodus 20. 2-4)

What does Aaron do to try and limit the damage? Where did the people learn to worship in this way? And where do you put the blame for making the golden calf?

B. Scene 2 v7-14.

How do God and Moses feel about the Golden Calf? On what basis is each justified with taking a stand (God: v7-10; Moses: v11-13)?

Why does God back down, v14?

What about God does not change, v34 & Numbers 23.19?

For discussion: What do you do when you feel that God has stopped speaking to you? (Do you... try to get his attention, run

wild, take your gold (other resources) and make another God copy, blame the leadership of the church, fall back on secular methods available outside the church, wait for God to break the silence?

How do you feel about Aaron's behaviour?

What are the idols that you are tempted to worship today?

(Success, money, sex, pleasure, family etc)

How can God changing his mind encourage you about situations which look hopeless? And also about the effects of your prayers?

Witness

Pray against sex trafficking, one of the great idols of our time (30million sex slaves today). Look up World Vision or the International Justice Mission for pointers to pray.

Pray for Encounter on December 2nd. Pray for our young people to be able to stand firm against the idols of our day. What are those idols?

Have you planned for a Christmas social? Discuss what you could do that you could invite friends, family or neighbours to.