

New City Catechism Class Week Seventeen

Q17: What is idolatry?

A17: Idolatry is trusting in created things rather than the Creator for our hope and happiness, significance and security.

Romans 1:21 & 25 "For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.... They exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator...." (ESV)

Discuss the question:

- If you asked your neighbor or co-worker, "What is idolatry?", what would they say?
- What comes to your mind when you think about the words "idol" and "idolatry"?
- Where have we seen idolatry in previous catechism questions?
- How is idolatry related to sin?

Discuss the Scripture:

- Where do we see *idolatry* in the text?
- Who is this passage talking about?
- What does it mean to be "futile" in your thinking? (Rom. 1:21)
- What happens to these people who reject God and exchange the worship of God for idols?
- How can you honor God and give thanks to him?

Discuss the answer in light of the Scripture:

- What are we trying to gain when we engage in idolatry?
- What does it mean to put your *trust* in something?
- What, other than God, do you find yourself "trusting in" for hope, happiness, significance or security?
- How does God fulfill all of these four desired outcomes (hope, happiness, significance, and security)?

In one of the New Covenant promises in Ezekiel 36:25b, God says, "I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols." Can you see how the Lord has been working in your own life to get rid of idols and grow you in holiness since he saved you?

Are there areas in your life where you still struggle with idolatry? How can you pursue repentance with regard to these idols that are remaining in your life?