

# 11/26/23- TRUTH & DECEPTION (#11)

## PASTOR LEE

Truth: Keeping  
Christ First!

- Pastor Lee; with all the challenges of life, tough to consistently keep Christ first in our lives.....but, in fact, nothing else matters...want our Church to be supportive of just that.
- John continues to speak of deception in 1 John.....but continues throughout this Letter to steer people back to the truth.

John's last  
Words: Avoid  
Idols!

- 1 John 20-21- And we know that the Son of God has come and given us understanding, so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. (21) Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

Who/What  
Do We  
Turn To?

- So the very last line of letter, he wraps up with 5 little words...see V 21. Why? How?... Why this 'wrap up'?
- Of course, very few of us see ourselves as an idolater...yet we are. Definition: "Anything or anyone that replaces God or becomes ultimate, something that we depend on to meet our needs". Could be person, place, thing, an experience....**ANYTHING THAT REPLACES GOD IS IDOLATRY.** Ultimately, what do we turn to (other than God) to fix or manage or make our lives acceptable to our own standards?
- Look at the Ten Commandments: You shall have no other gods before me; you shall not make for yourselves a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them. We could picture little stone or metal statues.....more 'pages religion-oriented'. Illustrative, in Ot, you'll read of a few kings who, in coming to power and trying to 'right' the Country, , had to go into the temples and order all the idols destroyed. (eg. King Josiah/age 16!)

Any Idol  
= Deception

- So how apply to us?.....(obviously, John mentions because we ((all)), today, have a propensity to idols. This letter is about **TRUTH AND DECEPTION**....how fitting that he should conclude the Letter with a warning about idols and their inherent deception.

Comes In  
Many Forms

- When we are worshiping idols...any shape/form of idol, we are worshiping the wrong God! The modern equivalent might be statues, trinkets, beads, etc. ((eg. Dashboard/mirror 'good luck stuff').....seems innocent but could be demonic! There IS a spiritual world...a battle...then and now.

Futility Of  
Idol Chase!

- Deut 32:17- They sacrificed to demons that were no gods, to gods they had never known, to new gods that had come recently, whom your fathers had never dreaded. You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you and you forgot the God that gave you birth.
- More material idols: money, luxuries, cars.....if such are at the forefront of your mind/soul....you have a mis-placed god.....an idol. The DECEPTION here is: 'THINGS WILL SATISFY' .....BUT NO!
- Again, are there idols in our lives that we place ahead of God? Do those idols define us and our lives? Do we think we're smart enough to dangle these idols at the forefront of our lives?.....see Paul's words below:

Subtle But  
REAL!

- Romans 1: 22-23- Claiming to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creepy things.
- Elevate ourselves.....create an image.....produces who we are/ identity.....morphing to our 'idol' .....a very sub-par replacement for God. Audaciously/ignorantly/selfishly, we celebrate this.
- Some idolatry more subtle....built around faith-false teaching.....spun such that we're in charge...not God (eg. telling God in prayer what He must do!).
- Grand irony:....with idolatry, stress just keeps building.....being in 'supposed' control doesn't work....then that's blamed on God!
- Want your needs met? .....only through the 'One True God. ....NOTHING REPLACES HIM!!!!!! .....with that which you try, that's an idol! Repent!

Ego-driven

#1 Call Your  
Idols Out!

- (1) Wrap up: self-assess yourselves and 'call it (any idols) out!' (Example- -Lee tells anecdote about gift of his Grandpa's ((Paw-Paw)) wristwatch- preached with it on-evolved into a source of strength and a feeling of Paw-Paw's continued 'presence'-WAIT— — was this the power of God or the power of Paw-Paw- - Lee self-analyzing: had this watch-gift evolved into an idol?!!!! In turn....and as further example, was his Grandfather's cherished/unrained-upon cadillac his own idol?.....but like the song lyrics Lee recalls ("Cadillacs end up in the junkyard).....we need to recognize that our idols ARE NOTHING...TOTALLY UNSATISFYING...DESTINED FOR A JUNKYARD!

#2 Restructure

- (2) After we 'call it out', we need to structure our lives so that is isn't, any longer, part of our lives. Rather, **STRUCTURE YOUR LIFE SO THAT CHRIST IS FIRST!** Start your day with Him.....first fruits to Him.....pray to Him.

#3 Stay Christ  
Focused!

- None of this is burdensome.....why would we depend on anything/one other than God and enjoy His "steadfast love" — — makes no sense- -everything else is junkyard stuff!
- Reiterating:- -John (Jesus' best friend)) said: **KEEP YOURSELF FROM IDOLS.**

**TRUTH > GOD**

**DECEPTION > IDOLS**