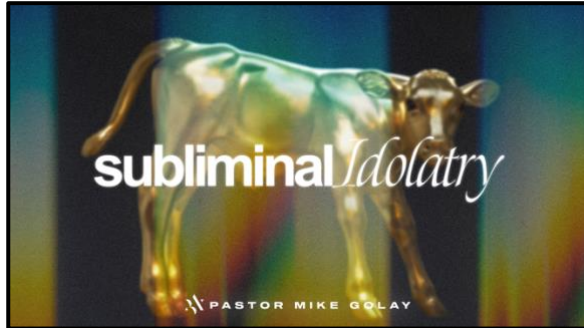




Mike Golay
Subliminal Idolatry

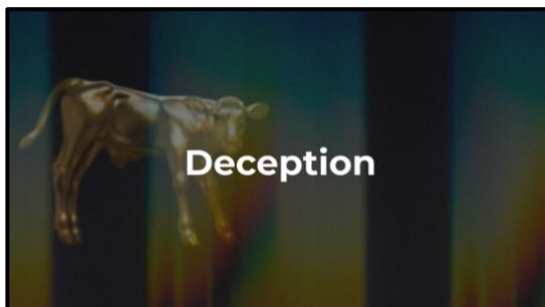
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Today, this afternoon, I'm going to be throwing at you some theological curveballs. We're going to be challenging you. I'm going to be hitting you in the spiritual kidneys a little bit. Rabbit punches, okay? I'm going to be preparing

you for where we're at in the culture today, and also what the Bible said about what we're going through as not just a nation, but as an international community. And I want to do this kind of from the foundation of 1 John. John was the one that wrote the book of Revelation. John was one of those that was very close to Jesus. And in 1 John, a lot of people don't realize this, but 1 John has a lot of themes about the end times. But it ends with a very peculiar phrase, which I'm going to get into in just a minute. And I've entitled this: "Subliminal Idolatry" And the question I have for you is: "Could you be committing idolatry in the worst way and not knowing that you are?" I see some people kind of like, it's kind of that *yes-no*-type nod. It's very hard to do, by the way. Some of you are like, yes. Some of you are like, no. Some of you are unsure. Let me just throw a few things at you, and then let's get into this, and see where the cards fall in your life and mine.

As we've said, 1 John is probably one of the most underrated epistles when it comes to



discovering what the end times will look like. So, for example, let me just run down a few, some of the samples of what John talks about in his epistle in the mere short five chapters. First, he talks about

deception coming. Not just in his day, but also in the future. What really is deception? Deception is an alternate reality that we're convinced of. We're convinced of an alternate reality, and we buy in to basically a lie. We have been duped, we've been fooled, and we subscribe to whatever is presented to us, all in, and then we find ourselves maybe later in life regretting it, maybe later in life even subscribing more to it, and we see that happening in our culture today. **1 John 2:3–6**, “³ **Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.**” Now, remember, when he says ‘His commandments’, he’s talking about the teachings and the commandments of Jesus, not the Mosaic-law code. Okay? So, keep that in mind. A lot of people confuse the two. “⁴ **He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments,...**” And what was Jesus’ commandment? To love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and to love your neighbor as yourself. All the rest of the commandments of Moses hang on these two. That’s what He taught. Right before He left, He says, love one another as I have loved you. That’s a commandment of Jesus. The commandments of Jesus are what he’s talking about here: “⁴ **...He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.** ⁵ **But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.** ⁶ **He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.**” So, one of the most obvious things of a true believer that’s prepared for the end times is someone who actually keeps what Jesus taught in loving one another. See, if you claim to be a believer, and you’re constantly sowing discord, and you’re constantly creating drama everywhere you go, you know, remember Pigpen of the Peanuts [cartoon], you know, that little, that guy was always dirty, wherever he would go, he would create chaos. If that’s you spiritually, you’re a fake. You’re not real. You are a fake. It says it right there. In the end times, we know that there will be divisions. There will be a lot of discord. And John calls it out.

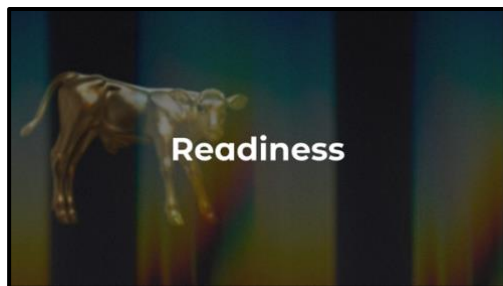


Antichrist. He talks about the Antichrist within the first epistle of John. Look at this. **1 John, 2:18: “¹⁸ Little children, it is the last hour;...”** You ever notice that in the epistle of John, he actually comes right out and says, this is the last hour. See, they didn’t know the timing. And so they just—they said everything after the resurrection of Jesus is the last days. Even in the book of Acts, he quotes from the Old Testament and they talk about the last days, the last days, waiting for the second coming. **“¹⁸ Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.”**

So in the Q&A—those of you who made it—we talked about AI [artificial intelligence], and we talked about how the devil is going to use and is using technology to deceive the nations, to have people subscribe to different philosophies, different ways of life, different behaviors. People have—in the last 100 years through technology—have made life decisions that they’ve committed to, that nowhere ever in human history we have seen before. I’m talking about confused sexuality. I’m talking about the return of some of the ancient religions. When I was just in the Air Force two weeks ago, I was down at the maintenance squadron. One of the guys comes to me and says, “I would love to find a group for Norse Paganism. Since this is North Dakota, there certainly are groups here.” And I said, “Well, not really because most of the people from the Scandinavian immigration were Lutheran. They had converted to Christianity because Norse Paganism was seen as inferior, less powerful. And Christianity offered less demands for higher rewards, worshipping a higher God, that other so-called gods fretted, tucked tail and ran out of fear.” And he’s looking at me going, “Uh, okay.” I said, “Well, but if you’re still interested, I’m sure that the college may

have a group or two.” There are Jedi in the U.S. military. Seriously. There are Wiccans. You name it, we’ve got it. If you want a spiritual buffet table of craziness, just go to the register of the religions that are registered within the DOD. That alone, you’ll be shocked to see what my world is made of, and the philosophies and the religions that I have to serve. But John is saying even in his day, there were many antichrists, but he does admit that there will be a big Antichrist coming, which they all agreed on as apostles. They just didn’t know when that time would come. See, you’ve got that theme.

And then you’ve got readiness. Readiness is a big thing and probably the major theme of the epistle of John. Did I call it the gospel of John? Sometimes I say that. It’s the epistle of John. There were three of them. This is the first one. I want to read these texts, and then I want to kind of give you a little gut punch and a question. Readiness. He prepares the people in different categories. He calls them children. He calls them adults. He calls them different levels within their spiritual journey. In **1 John 2:26-27**, **“²⁶ These things I have written to you concerning those who try to deceive you. ²⁷ But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.”** Amen, right? You know that the Spirit of God is living in you. Many of us can actually pinpoint the day of our salvation. Many of us can actually remember specific examples of how the Holy Spirit revealed something to you, gave you wisdom, gave you a vision, gave you an insight, gave you something to guide your path to avoid destruction. I can see the satisfaction and the agreement. We are in a community of believers right here. And that is the one of the proofs of being ready is that we’re walking in



accordance with His principles, we're understanding what the Spirit is trying to do in the ages. Now we get to chapter [1 John] 4:12–19, **“¹² No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. ¹³ By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶ And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.”** That's why it's important that we love one another, especially in these last days. So he's talking about readiness, of abiding in Jesus, walking with Jesus, loving one another. That's what it means to be ready. And then verse 17: **“¹⁷ Love has been perfected among us in this:...**” This is how it's been perfected. **“¹⁷ ...that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear because fear involves torment....”** How true is that, huh? When you're living in fear, isn't it just tormenting? You can't sleep, you can't concentrate. Okay? **“¹⁸ ...But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. ¹⁹ We love Him because He first loved us.”**

Notice here that the readiness part, he's talking about the day of judgment for the believer, which, of course, would be the post-rapture Bema Seat of Jesus, where we have to stand before Jesus, and we are then evaluated for how much we walked with Him, and for how much we didn't. The one, when we've walked with Him, you know, that's the gold, silver, and all the precious metals. You know, you put the fire to the works of our life, and how He's entrusted us a spiritual gift and exercised it over time. Those are the things that will transfer into eternity. On the other hand, all the fluff, all of the wasted time, all of the time that we spent doing fluff activities, I don't want to mention what those activities are specifically because people online will write in and say,

“Why did you say that? I do that sometimes.” And then there’s the conviction, we’ve got to go into these dialogues, and it’s a headache, so I’m not going to go that way. Okay? Fluff, wasted time, do the math. You know what I’m talking about, I know what I do to waste time, you do too. We will be judged, and that will be the refiner, and then we’ll receive rewards, and whatever is not, whatever is fluff doesn’t last. It’s not like we’re judged for Heaven and Hell, okay? This is about rewards or just loss because we’ve wasted time.

Now let me ask you this, we’re not done yet. There is the Rapture that occurs, and it is written about in 1 John. I didn’t really know this or really focus on it until recently. So we’ve talked so far about deception, Antichrist, readiness, and now the hope of the Rapture, and then I’m going to give you a gut punch. The hope of the Rapture is mentioned. **1 John 3:2–3, “²Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”**

No more headaches, backaches. No more skin diseases, diabetes, no more corrective lenses. No more health concerns, no more fogginess. Imagine being high energy, maximum capacity. Imagine flying. You see a wall, no problem, you just walk straight through it. Imagine a full symmetry body, no bone diseases. Imagine. That’s part of the inheritance. Now after he goes through all of these themes, the very last phrase of the book which is the theme of this topic right now he says in **1 John 5:21**, after all of this as exciting as it is and as challenging as it is he says, “²¹**Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.**” There’s no “Greet Rufus over there in this city. Say hello to these three people in Colossae.” “²¹**...keep yourselves from idols. Amen.**”

You know, I was at my uncle’s house in Seattle, and we had a great dinner, and it was time for me to go and we left, and he escorted me out to the car, and he said, “Where are you staying?”

I said,” Oh I’m staying at the W hotel.” He said, “Stay away from the women,” then he gave me a hug and went inside. Okay, okay, what does that mean? And he winked he said, “Stay away from the women.” And I did! Okay? Stay away from, keep yourselves from idols. Do you find, am I the only one that finds that bizarre? He could have ended this by saying, “Ah, we, the saints, in such and such a city greet you. Be encouraged, don’t give up. We’re praying for you. Amen.” No, keep yourselves from idols. I believe that in the end days with such a theme from 1 John, and John was selected to write the great and mighty Revelation. Let’s not forget that.

There is something to this phrase that is worth digging into and I’m going to show you the results as a tour guide, and as a lawyer of what I’ve found. And It’s not going to be an easy journey.



And we are going to do that in the next 40 minutes. In fact, if you have your Bibles you’d better grease up the binding because we are going to be using your Bibles. Now I’ll put most of these up on the screen as well but let’s get into it. First of all let’s

look at what a definition of an idol actually is. And you’ll see that we have a little calf in the background and there’s a reason for that. That should bring you some anticipation of where we’re going to go. What could this mean? Well, let’s look at what it means at least in [dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com). And I want you to focus on numbers five and six because the first four are things that you and I would not be able to relate to; but the last two—a figment of the mind, in other words a fantasy, or number six a false conception or notion which is a fallacy—are the two things that I want to focus on pertaining to the end times and why we should keep ourselves from idols. I didn’t make up this definition, this is from [dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com). Okay? Fantasies and fallacies.



Typically, when we think of an idol we think of going to India or South America or up north and we find totem poles, and we find different statues to different ancient gods, we find a lot of snakes, a lot of rituals, a lot of hands up in the air. And we say, “Yeah, I can easily steer away from that stuff. That’s easy. I am holy, I am sanctified, and I will not succumb to such an obvious idolatry.” How easy is that! Okay, well, way to go, good job. Let’s go to the next slide.

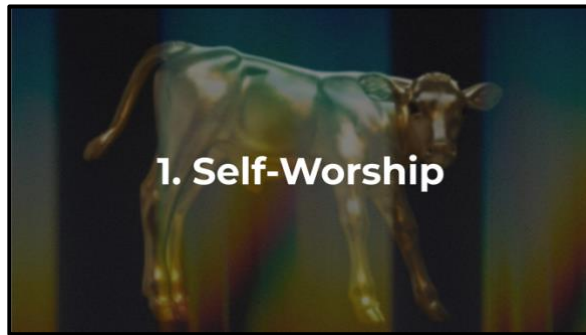
Yeah, this is getting a little bit more difficult but many of us honestly will say, “I listened to my uncle in Seattle, and I’m not going to go and do anything with the ladies at the W hotel in Seattle.” Okay? But what about the quest for notoriety or stardom? I’m sure most of us would say, “You know, I’m content in my relationship with the Lord. I don’t need to be on the front news. I don’t necessarily need to be in a movie.” Maybe some of us would love that. Not that there’s anything wrong with that in itself. That’s one of the things we’re going to be looking at idolatry, how the good things can become idols. (There, I let the cat out of the bag. I will come back to that.) Now, a lot of us may not have an issue with drugs. A lot of us, you know, may not be social media addicts where we need and feel a false sense of self-worth when people like our posts that never end. There’s never an end. Because they like one post, then what are you going to do about it the next day and the next day and the next day? It’s a feeding frenzy. Some of us have our eyes on the prize, the cash. We want to win the lottery. We want that ultimate job that pays out. Now, these pictures, I’d say many of us can identify with. And certainly these can be idols. What about—let

me ask you this question. If you were the devil, not that you are, just—let’s just, let me play around a little bit here. I’m going to be your tour guide and lawyer. Okay? If I—if you were the devil and you hated you, and you want to destroy yourself, would you do things that are obvious idolatry or would you try to creep in with something that’s neutral, and then make that over time an idol, where you’re literally locked in for life? If you could pull that off, wouldn’t that be genius? For example, who would ever criticize you for going to your daughter’s foot—your daughter’s dance, or your son’s football game? Nobody. Who would ever say, “Shame on you for going to the gym three times a week?” Who would ever dare say, “Wow, you’re a horrible person because you’re successful in business and you’ve employed hundreds of people.” Nobody. If the devil was able to transform something that’s seen as good and honorable within society and successfully make it an idol, how? Loving it more than God Himself. That would be a genius. The level of deception and ability of the devil to do that to you and me, that would have to be next-level stuff.

Now, are you ready for the gut punch? Chances are every single one of us in this room has some form of an idol, somewhere lurking in some closet of our soul. And if we’re going to be truly ready for the second coming and the Rapture, wouldn’t it be nice to say at least right here, right now, we took care of business and cleaned out one idol at least from one room of our soul? So the question is: Are you ready to do a soul-audit with the Scriptures this morning or this afternoon? You’re excited. Woohoo! Yeah, let’s—Okay. Well, you asked for it. All right?

Well, let’s look at the first part here, and that is self-worship. And I’m going to be sharing a little bit of my own journey and how I’ve made some mistakes over my life. And hopefully you can learn from me maybe what not to do, maybe what to do. And let’s just enter into this as a body of believers that’s family. Let’s have a family conversation right now. Okay? That’s all I want. Self-worship in the end days is actually predicted to be the ultimate idol for the world. And I’m

going to, like a lawyer, I'm going to substantiate that. Okay? This is the known go-to passage that



you've heard in hundreds of conferences, many of which we've put on, over the span of the last five years. But notice very carefully in **2 Timothy 3:1–5**, it says this, **"¹ But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: ² For men..."** not

women, only men. [Laughter] Women will never, women would never do these things. They wouldn't love themselves. They wouldn't become lovers of money or gold diggers or proud. Only men, okay? Ha ha—just kidding. You know that when the Bible says men, it includes, you know... Alright. **"² For men will be lovers of themselves,..."** and women, **"lovers of money, boasters,..."** Have you ever loved yourself or money or boasted about yourself? **"² ...proud, blasphemers,..."** maybe as a non-believer, **"² ...disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control,..."** Have you ever had that bout where you just said, "Ah, it doesn't matter. I'm just going to go all in, and I'll just deal with the consequences later." **"³ ...brutal, despisers of good, ⁴ traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure..."** lovers of pleasure, **"⁴ ...rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!"**

Wait a minute. We are some of those people. The difference between the believer and the non-believer is the believer wants to keep this stuff hidden because it's shameful because they know it's wrong. Whereas the world is like, "What's wrong with this? You should have seen how I treated my mom the other day, man, I just let her have it." You know, they're proud of these things. In fact, they actually promote this kind of behavior. If you read it in the Greek, it says that they're promoting the last few words and that they're against the first half. They're literally all-in,

in the public eye, whereas the believers struggle with this. And we when we commit these kinds of sins, we, we feel bad. We—sometimes it gets us depressed, it gets us down. But we want to, we have that tendency to repent and to get back in the game and say, “God, give me the strength for tomorrow.”

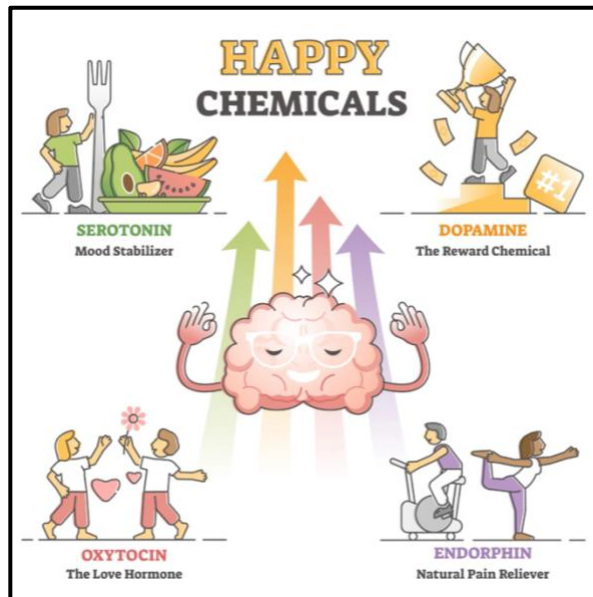
Now listen very carefully. In the last, let’s say 50–60 years, we’ve—this comes back to the AI question. I promised you we would talk about this. The internet was invented or became public rather. Computers, PDAs—do you remember when RIM created Blackberry? Remember, we used to call them *CrackBerries*? *CrackBerry* was then really challenged by Apple, and then Microsoft and Samsung and all these other companies came in the wire. Now we have AI. We have world connectivity through social media apps. For the first time ever in human history, we are connected on levels that the ancients would have said is absolutely impossible. Impossible. When it comes to social media apps, when we first started out, do you remember “MySpace”? Remember that? Okay, some of us don’t. Then there was Facebook and many others. There’s an evolution that has catered to the individual. Do you remember playing Wolfenstein 3D, which was amazing graphics back in the 90s? You don’t know? Maybe not. Now they have these virtual reality headsets of where you can play video games and live in these fantasies. And there’re fallacies right down the road. I’m going to let the Spirit of God do His work in your heart. I don’t feel like I need to do that, but as a tour guide and as a lawyer, do the math. For the first time in human history, right before we believe the second coming will happen, right after the resuscitation of Israel, right after Jesus’ predictions of wars, rumors of wars, earthquakes, pestilences, all of these things are going on, which you would expect if we were in the end times. But one of the things that you may not expect is, “Children, keep yourselves from idols.” That’s the best advice I can give you. And that is the last statement John gave in his epistle.

And idolatry is found and saturated in technology because it caters to *you*. It makes you feel good about you. It gives you a false sense of self-worth so you can walk away and have this assurance that someone appreciates you. It can become very addictive. You can conquer the boss on a video game to feel good about you. You can watch a television series, enter into this fantasy, identify with some of the actors, and feel good about the journey about being you.

And as we walk around, we have these fantasies that our marriage will look like the one we just watched. We have these fantasies that I will grow muscles and go into beast mode, and conquer the boss of a video game. We have these fantasies that our social media profile will grow, grow, grow, grow, grow, and have the recognition of the nations, and we will feel like someone. Be careful. Be careful. As much as the Lord can use this, the devil is standing by like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

No other time in human history have we had psychological consequences with neurological chemical imbalances like we have in the last 40 years. I'm talking about serotonin, which regulates mood and sleep. Let me throw that slide up there. These are the happy chemicals. No other time in human history have we had oxytocin issues. That's the one that regulates our emotions and our connectivity with human beings. For example, when you put your hand on a little baby and caress the little baby, the baby draws into the hand. When you hug a loved one and embrace that person, your body, your brain is releasing oxytocin. Endorphins, those are natural pain relievers and stress reducers. But the big thing that I want to focus on is dopamine. Dopamine is the chemical that the brain releases right before we anticipate a great reward. The video game industry understands dopamine. The entertainment industry understands dopamine. Any kind of sensory company that brings entertainment value of any kind to you, understands that the human body is designed in a way to emit dopamine right before the big reward. So, if you wave a nice banana in front of a

monkey, the dopamine on the frontal lobes of the monkey's brain are going to be going crazy, and



that becomes an insatiable part, and the Bible called this long ago; and it's called lust of the eyes. Lust of the eyes is a dopamine rush for something that we should not go after. No other time in human history have we seen these chemicals so far out of balance because of what the world is able to provide. Did you know that there are engineers of visual? Just for junk food alone, they use different colors like reds and

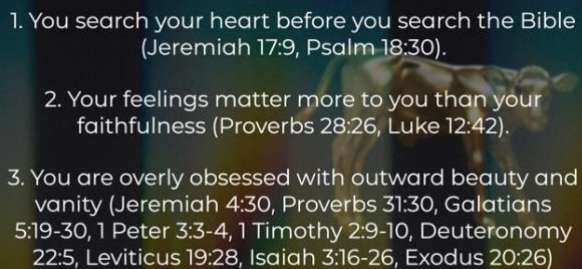
oranges, and they use different textures. Have you ever looked on a Dorito and seen all the specs? And you're just like, whoa! That's dopamine going to your head. You want to eat that, you know? Crunch! This is what, anything that has to do with sensory.

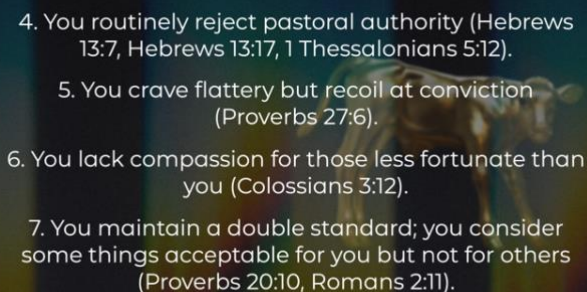
Now what happens if these chemicals are constantly being emitted in your brain? You get an addiction. If you analyze a heroin addict's brain and somebody that is a video-game junkie, the brain is very similar because they got used to dopamine rushes for the reward mechanisms. In this case, heroin is the reward mechanism to escape from pain or some reality; or a video game, which is to escape into a fantasy. No other time in human history have we had these opportunities. "Mike, are you saying that video games and entertainment is wrong?" No. No. I'm saying we're at a unique time in human history that if we indulge so much with ourselves, we could end up committing idolatry, and feeding into what was predicted of the world becoming lovers of self. And you say to me, "Well, how do I know if I'm committing self-worship and self-idolatry?"

Funny you should ask because I have a test right in front of me. You can always watch this video later. Where do you stand? I told you; this is not going to be easy.

Look, I had to go through this. I went through a very hard [year] last year. I had to do a lot of self-analysis, looking in the mirror, because I was, in the spring, getting a little bit out of control. I was traveling a lot with Amir. I was going from church to church. And some of this stuff was getting into my head. Like, “Wow, people... There’s a lot of people.” A lot of people we meet. They’re always saying nice things, and I found myself enjoying being away from my family. I found myself coming home to dogs that vomit on the ground, [Laughter] and kids that need to be rushed around to different places, and dishes to be done. What I failed to see is that I was becoming an idolater of myself. And I was failing to see the gift of dishes and dogs, and running my daughter to dance. It’s a gift.

Are you ready to do a self-test? [Laughter] Ten signs you might be guilty of self-idolatry.

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1. You search your heart before you search the Bible (Jeremiah 17:9, Psalm 18:30).
 2. Your feelings matter more to you than your faithfulness (Proverbs 28:26, Luke 12:42).
 3. You are overly obsessed with outward beauty and vanity (Jeremiah 4:30, Proverbs 31:30, Galatians 5:19-30, 1 Peter 3:3-4, 1 Timothy 2:9-10, Deuteronomy 22:5, Leviticus 19:28, Isaiah 3:16-26, Exodus 20:26)

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4. You routinely reject pastoral authority (Hebrews 13:7, Hebrews 13:17, 1 Thessalonians 5:12).
 5. You crave flattery but recoil at conviction (Proverbs 27:6).
 6. You lack compassion for those less fortunate than you (Colossians 3:12).
 7. You maintain a double standard; you consider some things acceptable for you but not for others (Proverbs 20:10, Romans 2:11).

Ah, this story isn’t over. This is only part one, okay. First, you search your heart before you search the Bible. Look, I put substantiating Scriptures here because we have to be lawyer-like. Two, your feelings matter more to you than your faithfulness. I’m not going to play the role of the Holy Spirit. I’m just going to let Him do His work in your heart. Three, you are overly obsessed with outward beauty and vanity. Four, you routinely reject pastoral

authority. “Ugh, I wish my pastor would do more on end-time stuff. Boy, I don’t even go to church

anymore. I just watch YouTube videos and I just sit and watch you, Mike, Amir, and Barry.” Okay. I would say go to church even if it’s not the church that’s the best. You crave flattery, number five, but recoil at conviction. Six, you lack compassion for those less fortunate than you. Seven, you maintain a double standard. You consider some things acceptable for you but not for others. Is that you? Chances are you might have a little self-worship going on there. Remember, children, keep yourselves from idols, even if it’s yourself. You use and manipulate people while simultaneously wanting their admiration. Nine, your prayers are primarily focused on your own wants and needs. You rarely pray selflessly for others. And ten, there are more. This will just get you started, okay?

8. You use and manipulate people while simultaneously wanting their admiration (Luke 11:42).

9. Your prayers are primarily focused on your own wants and needs; you rarely pray selflessly for others (Philippians 2:3-4).

10. You view church as being all about your blessing; your opinions, wants, and needs are always the main focus (Philippians 2:3-4).

You can—You can, you know what? Read the Bible, read the New Testament this weekend. And then see where you come out on that, okay? Number ten, you view church as being all about your blessing, your opinions, your

wants and needs are always the main focus. All right, now, do whatever you want with that. That’s just a list and we’ve provided some Scriptures there for you to follow up. If you want to watch the video after and click pause, you can look these up and see for yourselves if you’re really motivated to see if you’re committing acts of self-worship.

Did you know that in the end times, it’s really true, people will become lovers of self. It will crescendo to a point where there will be the mark of the beast as, quote, “the mark of man.” In fact, let me read this. This is from **Revelation 13:16–18**. It says very clearly, “¹⁶ **He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark...**” This is the beast that causes everybody to do this. “¹⁶ **...to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads,...**” So it’s mimicking the ancient Jewish tefillin, you know, where you have the box

on your head and on your arm, that kind of thing. It's kind of a counterfeit method. It's always an antithesis. There's the Christ and there's the Antichrist. This is the same kind of concept. **"¹⁷ and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. ¹⁸ Here is wisdom...."** Everybody asks, what is the mark of the beast? **"¹⁸ ...Here's wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666."**

If anybody know anything about numbers, seven is the perfect number of God. Seven days the Lord created all of the order of the world and the universe. And on the seventh day He rested as a capstone of perfection. What day was man created on? On the sixth day. There's also something else and we've talked about this in previous conferences and that is the Hebraic mindset of the power of three. Peter denied the Lord Jesus three times to put his foot down in the culture that would have seen that as an adamant absolute. "I do not know this man," he said it three times, and he was trying to say in the cultural milieu of his day that he is serious. Jesus picked up on this same theme, went to Peter at the very end of the gospel of John, and He said, "Peter, I love you." He said it three times for redemptive value. Peter denied him three times. Jesus said, "You have redemption value three times." When you have something that is mentioned three times, you're saying, "I am serious." Even in modern day Israel, you go to a friend, you say, "Hey, how's it going?" "Eh, pretty good." Wait for a few seconds. "Hey, how's it going, man? It's good to see you. You know, it's been a while." "Yeah, doing okay, doing okay." A few seconds go by. "Tell me, how is it going?" The third time, "Yeah, you know, my life, it's falling apart. My wife just left me. I lost my job, and I found I have taxes dating back to 1969. What am I going to do?" It's the power of three. What I believe this is saying, I could be wrong, is that people will want nothing to

do with God in the end days. They will love themselves, and they will love the beast that they worship, and they will say, “Me, me, me, us, us, us. No God!”

So my second point—there’s only two points to this teaching today—is this: “Is it possible to worship self and someone or something else simultaneously as well? Sure, if something else or someone else feeds your values and feeds what you love to see. And that is exactly the scenario we find for the recipe of the end times. And I’m saying as a lawyer and as a tour guide this morning, the infrastructure is already built unlike any other time in history where we have brain chemicals being emitted on levels we’ve never seen; where people are literally addicted to methods with the devil whispering in that they can get what they want, when they want, how they want; and derive self-worth from any of these equations, live fantasies and fallacies that will set them up for the ultimate kill, when the devil turns his back on them in the Tribulation, if they even last that long. The devil may be extremely, extremely evil. The worst. But he’s definitely not stupid. And he definitely knows how to manipulate, destroy, and deceive.

Number two, now you know we’re in that airplane and we’re starting the downward descent. And now we come to why I put the calf there on the slide. Worshiping God through a



thing or a person. You can expect in the last days self-worship, yes, but also an increase of idolatry on an unconventional level that we’ve never seen. So this reminds me of all the way back when Moses went up to the mountain of Sinai to receive

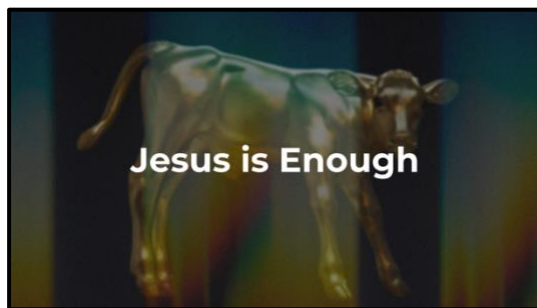
Torah. He’s up there talking to God. It’s a beautiful thing. You know, he’s expecting all the children of Israel to be patient and relax and wait while he’s taking care of business. He’s doing the Lord’s work. He’s going to bring the law-code down. It’s going to be a new era. They’ve just

escaped from the evil Egypt. And the people aren't patient. They're starting to get squirrely. [Hebrew accent] "Hey, Eli, what's it taking so long up there? You know, we've got to move on. You know, what is this?" And Abigail here, "Are you going to cook something for us or what? You know, we've been, this is a very difficult situation." It says in **Exodus 32:1–6**, **"¹Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, 'Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.'**" "He is gone. He is up on the mountain. Maybe he's dead. Maybe he's alive. But we have to move on. We've got to do something. So Aaron, you are the closest of kin. Make some idols and some gods. We'll worship them. And then we'll have the power we need to move forward." So quick after experiencing such miracles from the Lord. But watch this, they're not looking for pure idols. They're looking for a hybrid. See, they want the best of both worlds. They want God. They want the power of God. But they also want to be seen as cool and fit into the eyes of culture. That's something you would never want to do, right? You and I would never be tempted to want to fit into the culture at the same time have a fruitful relationship with the Lord concurrently, right? That's just, that's for crazy people, right? Spiritual schizophrenic people, maybe. But not me. Oh, not so fast. Look, verse two. **"²And Aaron said to them,..."** Aaron jumps in. He's like, "Okay, sounds like a great idea." He should have known better. He should have said, "Absolutely not, what you're asking for is absolutely unacceptable!" But no. **"²... 'Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.'**" It's not like they had a bunch of gold laying around that was, you know, dispensable. They actually had to make sacrifices personally to make this idol. **"³So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. ⁴And he received**

the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool,...” You see, they’re really making this into something here. “⁴ ...and made a molded calf...” Now, there’s a phrase I left out of the slide. I want you to turn to your Bibles now. What doesn’t the slide say? Look it up. I want to hear it. This is not on the slide. I don’t want you to be the sheep that just watches from the slides. I want you to look at your Bible and you tell me what the last verse, the last part of verse 4 says. Yep. “⁴ ... Then they said, ‘This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!’” Yeah. Aaron was there. “Everybody, this is your god that brought you out.” They recognized the works of God, and they took the works of God and slapped a fake idol on top of it. Have we ever done something like that? Have you ever done something in the name of God? Have you ever tried to sell somebody in the name of God? I’ll use an obvious example. This is extreme. This is something that the culture is doing right now. Have you ever been to a church where they’ll say, “It’s okay to be gay, lesbian, or sexually confused and still wear the Christian banner”? There are many things that in the end days, right becomes wrong, and wrong becomes right. And even God is implicated within the mix. God is now a she. We can change our sexual identity. Right is wrong, wrong is right. And this whole concept of attributing the works of God to a stupid golden calf that they had to make from the remnants of people’s jewelry just to make it work, is now getting credit for the very works of God. And they believed. They believed that through the calf they were actually worshipping the same God that brought them out of Egypt. So it’s not like a separate deity. It’s not like Zeus or Jupiter. This is the God of Israel that’s being worshipped through the facade of a calf. It’s almost even more evil. “⁵ So when Aaron saw it,...” verse 5, “he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, ‘Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD.’” And he uses the word L-O-R-D in capital, the feast to Yahweh. “⁶ Then they rose

early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.” To Yahweh through a calf.

Now you say, “Wow, that’s despicable. I would never do that.” You and I already have. Children, keep yourselves from idols. I got to a point in my career where I was enjoying being away. I remember one time I was in a hotel, and I was playing some music that my dad used to play when I was a child. We were finishing a basement bathroom, and I would listen to this music before he would come home and hope that he would want to work on this bathroom with me as a father-and-son project. And he did. And there I was sitting on a hotel bed listening to this song and I just wept because I hadn’t spent time with my son in months, and I didn’t even know who he was. You don’t ever want to be that. And then the devil uses that to condemn you, and then when you get home, you see the need, you may try a few things, but oh, you got to leave again. It’s a perpetual self-worship, self-hatred, self-worship, self-hatred. And it came to a head. That’s just one thing I’m sharing because I want you to see that every single one of us, there is a trick. The devil has a trick waiting. He has an alternate lifestyle that’s good. That’s good. He doesn’t need you to take a syringe and just inject heroin. These are the *good* things of life. It’s good to go to the gym. It’s good to have a career. It’s good to have family. And sometimes, we or situations, or jobs, or activities can become more important to us than God Himself and end in disappointment.



So, I’m going to land the plane now, and I want to go straight to the point where it says Jesus is enough. Jesus is enough. You don’t need to melt down jewelry and create a calf. You don’t need to get all those likes on social media. You don’t need all of it.

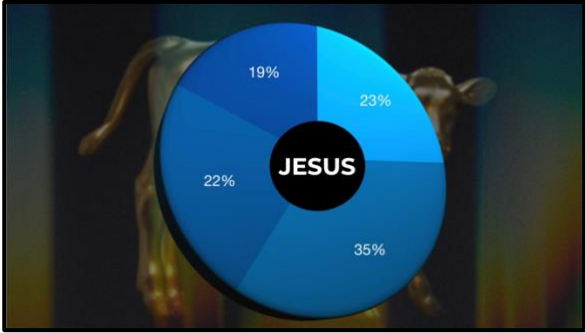
All you need is Jesus. And I’ll show you how this works.

In **Mark 10:28–31**. In these last days, friends, you are it. People are looking to you. You are ambassadors for Jesus. Most of the church doesn't know what you know about the Bible, and end times, and the timelines of what Israel's plan is, and what the Antichrist, and the Rapture and the—very few people know! People are looking to you. Look at this. This is the promise of Scripture. **Mark 10:28–31: “²⁸ Then Peter began to say to Him,...”** to Jesus, “**“See, we have left all and followed You.”** ²⁹ So Jesus answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you,...’” Watch this. This is amazing. “**“there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s,** ³⁰ **who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time— houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—...”** With persecutions. We want to blot that out, but we can't. “³⁰ ‘...and in the age to come, eternal life. ³¹ **But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”**” Jesus is enough. Jesus is enough.

If you say, “Well, I was raised in an orphan situation, or I was rejected by my parents, or I was abused.” Jesus is saying, “You may have had all of that, but as a believer, if you come to Me, you're going to have new family, you're going to have a completely new life *now* until eternity, which lasts forever.” You will have everything that you need for every single part of your life. It'll be beautiful. It's beautiful. And if that's not enough, Colossians chapter two gives it to you straight. **Colossians 2:8–10, “⁸ Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ....”** YouTube videos, sensationalists, alarmists, anxiety creators, fear mongers, all that. No, it doesn't say that. I'm just kind of adding that in as my own interpretation for the context we're in. “⁹...**For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;** ¹⁰ **and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”** Let me read it again.

Let's get it through our thick skulls. **“⁹ For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; ¹⁰ and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”**

I'm going to end there, even though there's more to say. I want to put the pie-chart up



though. Rather than—this is a proposal to you as a tour guide. Rather than say Jesus is number one, family is number two, work is number three, and then do a hierarchy of importance, I have found that the reality of life is that there are times where Jesus is the center of all things at all times; and then there are times in my life that I need to give more time to family than I do to work. And then there are times where I find that sometimes I have to give more time to work than family. But since Jesus is in the center, He manages this equation through the power of the Holy Spirit, and through the power of community and being connected with others for accountability's sake. So I've mentioned some generic percentages. Perhaps the 23% could be work. Maybe the 35% is family. Maybe the 22% is something else. And the 19% it might be finances. It might be hobbies. It might be family. It might be work. Whatever you want to slate in, those percentages can change based on the seasons of life that we go through. But one thing that will never ever change is that Jesus is at the *center*.

And it says in Hebrews [paraphrased 10:25] “Do not forsake the assembling of yourselves as is the custom of some, but all the more as you see the day approaching.” If you claim that you don't need church, chances are you're a self-worshipper. If you think that you need more than just Jesus, and you need the affirmation of some other device or some other activity, then you're a candidate for subliminal idolatry. We don't commit overt idolatry. The devil is too smart. He knows the only way he can get you is through subliminal idolatry. The question is, what needs to

be cleaned out of some closet of your spiritual heart so that you can be that much more ready for the long haul or the short haul? We don't even know. For the Rapture may even occur today. And it may even happen right after this conference, which would be epic, which would be cool. [Laughter] Wouldn't that be cool?

Lord, thank You for this discussion. We pray that You will do Your work. Start with me, and start with all of us as we move and become a role model and an example of what it means to worship You in spirit and truth to all those who love us and look up to us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

* Scripture is taken from the New King James Version unless noted otherwise.

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