

DISORDERED LOVE

²¹ *Dear children, keep away from anything that might take God's place in your hearts.*

I John 5:21 NLT

“Idolatry is worshiping anything that ought to be used, or using anything that ought to be worshiped.” - Augustine

“Idols are idols whether they are metal or mental.” - Martin Buber

“More tears are shed over answered prayers than unanswered ones.” - Truman Capote

I. Everyone has an ultimate commitment/concern.

* Whatever has ultimate worth-ship to you equals your ultimate concern.

A. If we have an ultimate commitment to the ultimate—God—all is well.

B. If we put any good creaturely reality into the ultimate slot, we have an idol.

C. Good creaturely things—family, children, career, money, achievement, critical acclaim, social standing, romantic relationships, peer approval, competitive skill, beauty, or intelligence, etc.—can never bear the freight of our hopes and longings for significance, security, safety, and fulfillment.

II. On the worship of idols! (Exodus 20:4,5; Romans 1:25)

[Exo 20:4-5 NIV] ⁴ *“You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,”*

[Rom 1:25 NIV] ²⁵ *They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator--who is forever praised. Amen.*

A. An idol is a good thing turned into the supreme thing.

B. An idol is anything more important to you than God.

C. The category mistake in idolatry occurs when any creaturely thing is expected to provide what only God can give.

D. Abraham and Isaac (Genesis 22:2)

² *Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, whom you love--Isaac--and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.”*

* Isaac could never sit on the throne of Abraham’s life.

E. Jacob and Rachel

* Rachel was never created to be the center of Jacob’s shattered life.

F. When is a spouse a spouse, or a child a child, or money money? When God is first above them all!

G. No human relationship can bear the burden of God-hood.

III. The hierarchy of values

- A. God the infinite person first
- B. Finite persons second
- C. Things and occupations third
- D. Love is disordered when these three categories are mixed up.

IV. The cure for idolatry (I Corinthians 10:14)

¹⁴ Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry.

- A. We acknowledge the idols. (Genesis 35:2,4)

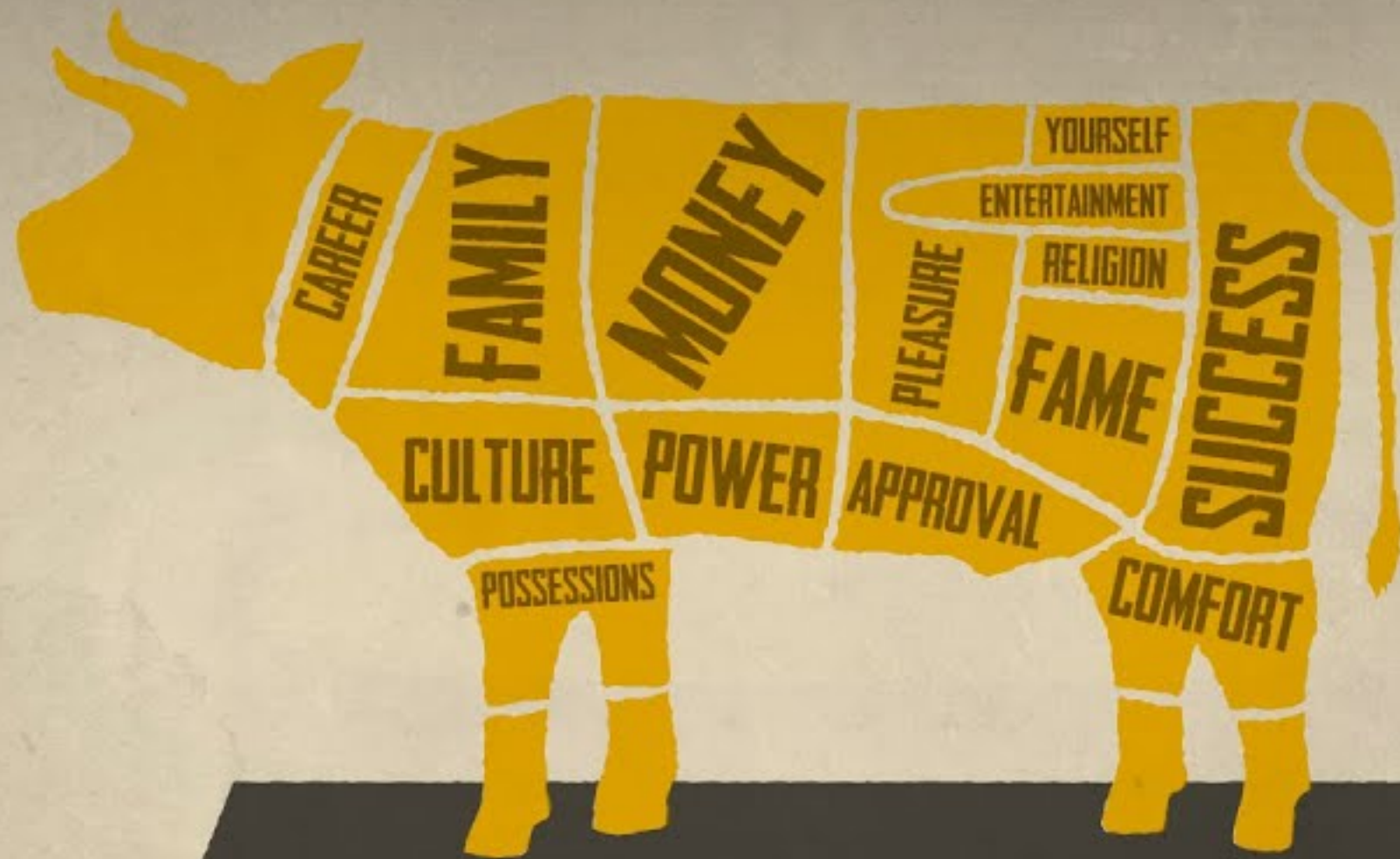
² So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, “Get rid of the foreign gods you have with you, and purify yourselves and change your clothes. ...” ⁴ So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods they had and the rings in their ears, and Jacob buried them under the oak at Shechem.

- B. We let God have his proper place again. (Colossians 3:1-5)

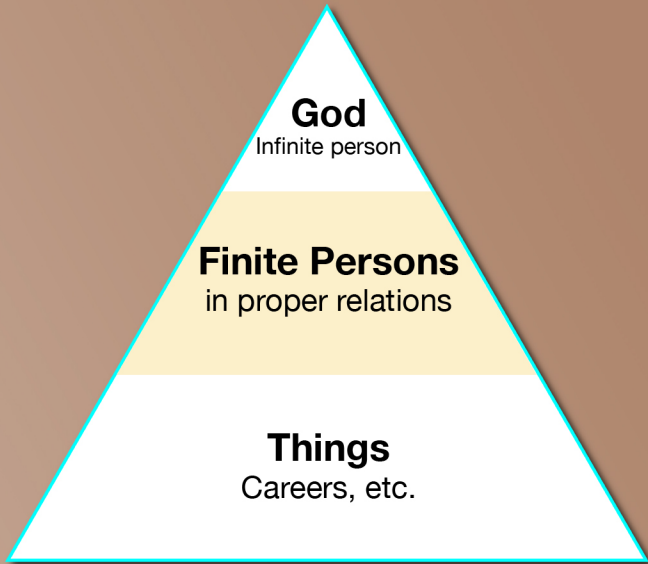
¹ Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. ⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

- C. Idols are always destroyed before a move of God occurs. (II Chronicles 31:1)

¹ *When all this had ended, the Israelites who were there went out to the towns of Judah, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. They destroyed the high places and the altars throughout Judah and Benjamin and in Ephraim and Manasseh. After they had destroyed all of them, the Israelites returned to their own towns and to their own property.*



idols



God

Infinite person

Finite Persons

in proper relations

Things

Careers, etc.