

freedom

FALLEN SPIRITUALITY
WEEK OF OCTOBER 25

This weekend, we continued our journey through Galatians by looking at two examples of “fallen spirituality” listed among the acts of the flesh: idolatry and witchcraft. The tendency of the flesh is to take good gifts from God and elevate them to the place of ultimate value in our lives. True freedom in Christ means learning to walk by the Spirit so that nothing in creation takes God’s place in our lives.

PAUSE

As you begin this study, read these verses slowly a few times. Ask the Lord to show you areas in your life where you are experiencing His freedom and also those areas where He may be inviting you to grow.

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. ... So, I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Galatians 5:13, 16

STUDY

1. This weekend we celebrated baptisms in each of the services. Were there any testimonies that really encouraged you as you witnessed the baptisms? If so, what were they?
2. What are one or two key insights that stood out to you from the message this weekend, and why?
3. The message briefly addressed witchcraft and the occult before focusing on idolatry. What did you learn about the danger of occult practices (crystals, horoscopes, New Age practices, etc.)?
 - a. How have you seen the rise in popularity of occult practices over your lifetime?

b. Have you ever been tempted to engage in such practices? If so, what drew you to them?

c. **Read Deuteronomy 18:9-13.** Why does Scripture call believers to have nothing to do with these practices?

d. If someone has participated in these things in the past (or is currently involved), what steps did Michael encourage them to take?

4. This weekend, the message primarily focused on dealing with our idols. Michael defined idolatry as “Taking something in creation and making it your ultimate value in life—more than the Creator.”

a. In your own words, how would you explain what an idol is?

b. How is this definition or description of idolatry new to you, or how have you understood it this way before?

5. Scripture repeatedly shows that idols always fail to deliver the freedom and fulfillment they promise. Read the following passages:

- **Exodus 20:3-6**

- **Psalm 16**

- **Jeremiah 17:5-8**

- **Ezekiel 14:1-11**

- **Matthew 6:24**

a. What stands out to you from these passages about the nature and danger of idolatry?

6. Augustine wrote, “Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee.” In addition, Blaise Pascal spoke of a “God-shaped vacuum” that only God can fill. How have you experienced the emptiness that comes when we try to make something other than God fill this vacuum in our lives?

7. We are all tempted to take good gifts from God and give them a place of ultimate importance in our lives. What idols have you struggled with in the past?

a. How have you seen God tear down those idols in your life?

b. What did you have to surrender to tear down those idols?

RESPOND

The message asked two simple but searching questions: “*What ... Is idolatry?*” and “*What ... Are Your Idols?*”

At the end of this study, we’ve included a list of potential idols taken from the *Re:Generation* discipleship ministry at Rocky Peak. Spend some time praying over this list. Be honest with yourself and God. Write down any potential idols you sense the Spirit highlighting—specific people, possessions, pursuits, or pressures that have been competing for the place only He should hold.

Choose one area where an idol has been gaining ground. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how to take simple, concrete steps of obedience to help you lay down this idol and walk in the Spirit. For example, this might include a prayer of repentance and renunciation, a prayer for God to be your ultimate priority, the decision to cut out or limit some activity in your life, an act of generosity, an honest conversation, the decision to make your one-on-one time with God a priority, etc. It could be anything! Write down anything He reveals to you. This week in your Life Group, we encourage you to pray for one another in these areas.



Potential Idols

SELF/PRIDE

- My ability to determine what is wrong and right
- My ability to be in charge or in control
- My opinion of me
- The praise and worship of others
- My personal success or financial worth
- Being right
- My personal time
- Power
- Fame

FAMILY/RELATIONSHIPS

- Marriage or an "ideal" marriage
- Spouse's love or certain behavior from spouse
- Children
- A child's love or certain behavior from child
- Friends' affirmation
- Identity in a certain social group
- This one particular person with me

APPROVAL/AFFIRMATION

- A high opinion from others
- Attention from others
- Approval from _____
- Recognition
- My uniqueness
- Desired by _____ (person or men or women)
- Not being noticed or desired (shame-based)
- Invisible, not being known

BEHAVIOR/DOING

- Following certain rules/standards
- Highly productive
- A future goal or achievement
- A position in my career or society
- Being the best or better than _____

MATERIALISM

- Money (certain level – "not wealthy" / wealthy)
- Financial security or prosperity
- A certain neighborhood, house, clothing, or car
- Overly frugal
- Possessions
- Being or becoming a benefactor

PHYSICAL

- A certain physical look
- Body image/ideal weight
- Youthfulness
- Strength, stature, and stamina

EMOTIONAL

- Understood by others
- Needed by others
- Keep everyone happy
- Love from _____
- Ability to fix someone else
- Revenge

RELIGIOUS

- Religious or spiritual respect
- Ministry success
- Vocational ministry position
- Certain level of disciplines or service
- A certain spiritual gift

ACHIEVEMENT

- Certain career for significance
- Success, "a self-made man"
- Always go above and beyond
- Academic achievement for my children or me
- My child's success in _____
- Retirement age, prestige, or ease
- Fear of failure

PROTECTION

- Safety
- Health
- Security
- Life (fear of death)
- Control over _____
- Justice

PLEASURE

- Fun
- Pain avoidance or relief (through food, drug, vacations, sex, etc.)
- Sex
- Vacations