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I was thinking I don't really need to introduce Matthew this morning but then I forget that maybe there are a few people here who don't know Matthew. Matthew Clausmeyer will be speaking. He grew up in our congregation so see it's just natural for us to think everybody knows that but when he was what a senior Matthew or had you just graduated when your parents went to the mission of field. During his senior year his parents gave up a thriving business and took three kids and decided to be missionaries. His parents are with youth with a mission. His brother David and his wife Jeanette are with youth with a mission. Katie who was a sister as a nurse and I need to stop and let the children go to junior church. I'm sorry Lucinda. I think she was probably wondering do I have to sit here but so Matthew has been back and forth and a few years ago he works in the computer field and he moved back here and came back to Carmel Friends and we have been very blessed to have him here and he is gracious enough to speak to us about what's on his heart this morning. One other thing Matthew is going to visit his family in Colorado this week to celebrate the birthday of his brother which also means that since they're twins Matthew's having a birthday this week so we're congratulate you and say happy birthday to Matthew. Good morning. It's good to be back good to be speaking with you all again and I'm going to open this up today. We're going to start out with our quiet time in a manner friends. We are going to use this time to sit in the presence of the Holy Spirit which dwells inside every one of us and through which God revealed to us his scriptures and through which day by day he teaches and encourages and rebukes and exhorts us and so I'm gonna I'm gonna start that off with Psalm 62 5 my soul wait silently for God alone for my expectation is from him. Heavenly Father thank you for the chance to gather together today as your family as your children thank you for a chance to all sit together in the presence of our loving Heavenly Father. I ask now that you will open up the spiritual ears of my brothers and sisters and cause them to hear the words from you that you have laid on my heart. I pray that you filter out anything that I say that is not from you. I pray that you help us to grow during this time and I ask that your name would be glorified among us in Jesus name amen. Well I'm bringing up this little podium here because I'm too tall to see my notes if they're on this thing and God has been speaking to me this week about idolatry and that's partly what I'm going to talk about today but it's also more about the opposite of idolatry that I'll be talking about today but to begin with I listen to a lot of pastors and sermons and stuff on the internet and on my podcasts and stuff like that and recently a lot of people have been quoting a document known as the Westminster shorter catechism and I figure hey why not so I'm going to also talk about that and basically a bunch of guys sat down and asked and wrote out a list of a hundred questions about the meaning of life the meaning of God and all these sort of things and then they went through and prayerfully sought out answers in the scriptures and the very first question they asked is what is the chief end of man and the answer that they came to is the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever and that when I first heard it it was it kind of it kind of didn't sit right with me because the glorify God part yeah that's obvious but the enjoying part is a lot of times you grow up and and in church becomes work and and it you're trying to get yourself out of bed on Sunday and it's sometimes it's kind of a drag and and and sometimes you can you can forget to enjoy God but but when it comes right down to it that is our that is our ultimate source of joy is God nothing in this earth will bring us the enjoyment of God and that's what idolatry is idolatry is when the things of this earth receive our glory and give us false joy and so idolatry comes in many forms for me personally idolatry comes in the form of entertainment as as you may have heard I am in the video game programming industry and that's very much an entertainment industry and then when I get home from work I like to flip on a television or you know play games with my friends or whatever and and that's a that's a big part of our culture not just my culture but American culture is to relax and to be entertained and and most people's ultimate goal in their life is to minimize work and maximize enjoyment but we were created to give God glory and anything that brings us joy should in turn give glory to God Romans 11 36 says for of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever Amen first Corinthians 6 20 for you were bought at a price therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's first Corinthians 10 31 therefore whether you eat or drink or whatever you do do all for the glory of God in Revelation 4 11 you are worthy Oh Lord to receive glory and honor and power for you created all things and by your will they exist and were created so God has been challenging me this week past couple weeks really saying what are the things in your life that your your glory you're enjoying and giving glory to that's not going to me and can then he asked me can you redeem those things and and recognize that they are good things from me because every good and perfect gift comes down every good and perfect gift is from above and comes down from the father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning he says if this is truly a good thing then you should understand and know that it is from me and you should give me glory for giving it to you and if it's something that you can't glorify me for you know if it's a really violent movie or whatever then that's not something you should be spending your time with and so I have been going over all the little bits of my life and trying to trying to ask myself is this something that that glorifies God or is this something that can be used to glorify God in your job if you're a lot of people have jobs that it's just it's just about making money and our job should when we set out to do whatever task we're going to do whether it's our official job or whether it's a ministry or service here at church or whether it's just working at home we should say how can I glorify God with what I'm about to do and sometimes you're gonna have to change what you're about to do sometimes you're gonna have to stop doing what you're about to do and and and so I've been trying to filter everything that I do through that because I mean to be honest a lot of my business decisions are about you know what makes me what that makes money and I find that a lot of times those things fail for me and I think that that's actually a blessing from God because if I got too carried away with making money and not giving him glory for it then I would start to forget about him so I have been reevaluating everything I do and saying alright God how can I do this for you how can if I make money God it's because I want to to tithe and support missionaries or if I have to go into an office it's because it's I need to prison glorify God in my actions and in my speech among my co-workers or if I am an employer then I can just say to the glory of God I'm trying to create jobs and hire people in this difficult economy some people's idol is their reputation we're gonna talk about shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and when I was going up I always said Abednego but apparently it's Abednego it's and I didn't know that but I started reading it and I was like oh that's not important to the story but shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego if you haven't heard the story were three young Jewish men who were captured along with all the other Jews and brought to Babylon and Babylon's method for preventing cultures from uprising and rioting and and whatnot was to take the young men and train them up in Babylon school basically they convert them into Babylonians instead of Jews or Assyrians or whatever else and that way the DNA of Babylon would seep into the culture that they had taken over and that culture would begin to be watered out and after a while it that that other culture would be gone it would be assimilated so shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were in this in this program they were Jews and King Nebuchadnezzar set up a giant golden statue and he put out a bunch of instruments and he said any time you hear the music play you gotta fall down and worship the giant golden statue and the shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego didn't do it and of course word got back to Nebuchadnezzar and so these three young men were brought to before Nebuchadnezzar and he said you know don't you know the rules and they responded actually I think this one might be in your but I'm my version is New King James so it won't be exactly the same they responded oh Nebuchadnezzar we have no need to answer you in this matter if that is the case our God the case being that if they didn't fall down they would get thrown into a fiery furnace if that is the case our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace and he will deliver us from your hand Oh King but if not let it be known to you Oh King that we do not serve your gods nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up now understandably Nebuchadnezzar was upset by this and so he was so upset that they fired up the furnaces seven times hotter than they normally were they were so hot that the guys who were throwing the kids into the furnace died from the heat of being near the furnace but they threw him in and when they looked into the furnace the king looked in the furnace and he saw the three guys plus a fourth guy who looked like the Son of God standing in there and not getting burned up just kind of walking around relaxing so he called him out and said okay your God's the real God he saved you cool but most pastors at this point would say and the moral of his story is God will save you the end but that's not the moral of my story the moral of my story is will you burn you see when Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego stood up for what they believed there was no light from heaven or angel coming in with a sword or anything like that nothing happened guards came tied him up guards went off heated up the furnace guards led them away to the furnace guards pushed them into the furnace and all this time those three guys are like we don't know if God's gonna come through on this one and that's what they even said they said let it be no to you that he's able to deliver us but if not we will still not serve your gods they said God can save us but if he doesn't we're still going to do the right thing if reputation is your idol you won't be willing to burn for God I don't mean burn like passion I mean burn in a fire metaphorically it's not easy to have opinions and beliefs and behaviors that are counter to the prevalent culture and rather than having a king that will burn us we have all of our neighbors and family who will burn us with insults and unfriending us both in the real sense and the Facebook sense and and and you you will be outcast you will be ridiculed and stuff for standing up for your beliefs and you have to decide whether you worship and serve your image and your appearance and your reputation or do you worship and serve and love God he Romans 14 6 to 8 he who observes the day observe it to the Lord and he who does not observe the day to the Lord he does not observe it he who eats eats to the Lord for he gives thanks to God and he who does not eat to the Lord he does not eat and gives God thanks for none of us lives to himself and no one dies to himself for if we live we live to the Lord and if we die we die to the Lord therefore whether we live or die we are the Lord's God wants a people who are singularly committed in heart and passion to him the people in Carmel want to see Christians who are singularly devoted to God passionate about God they want to they want to walk into a church and see people who are just on fire passion for God and who hate sin and when we let little idols like reputation or entertainment or any of the other little things that steal our love away from God then we dilute it and we dilute our effectiveness and our ability to do the work that God has called us to Hosea which is a really great book if you ever have a chance to study it it's it's a story about how God came to this man named Hosea said you're gonna be a prophet which is not always as great as it sounds he says to be my prophet you are going to go and marry a prostitute and you're going to have kids with her and she is going to keep leaving you and being unfaithful and being a prostitute and you're gonna keep forgiving her and bring her back over and over and over again because that's what you guys are you're a prostitute and I am married to you and I still love you and I keep bringing you back to me so it's a great book you should read it anyways Hosea 6 1 through 6 come and let us return to the Lord for he has torn but he will heal us he has stricken but he will bind us up after two days he will revive us on the third day he will raise us up that we may live in his sight let us know let us pursue the knowledge of the Lord his going forth is established as the morning he will come to us like the rain like the latter and former rain to the earth O Ephraim what shall I do to you Oh Judah what shall I do to you for your faithfulness is like a morning cloud and like the early dew it goes away therefore I have hewn them by their prophets I have slain them by the words of my mouth and your judgments are like that are like light that goes forth for I desire mercy and not sacrifice and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings mercy and not sacrifice in other words God deserves God desires the works of the heart more than the works of your hands and if you think you can give him the works of your hands without your heart then then you are deceived and this is this is the trap that idolatry leads us into it tells us as long as you keep going to church on Sunday morning and as long as you're along at least one board and bring in food to the food pantry which everyone we still need to keep doing because they're kind of low as long as you keep doing these things then your heart can still belong to whatever else that's what idolatry tries to tell us and and just as a litmus test when when you come in here and when we when we worship worship and when we have quiet time is your is your heart just enraptured by the presence of God or are you distracted by what happens later today and what happens later this week where is your heart belong and that's a great way to find out is are you just excited and eager and can't wait for the time you get to spend with God or does the time with God get in the way of what you're really looking forward to and I'm not accusing anyone because I only know my own heart but I know that I have not been perfect in that respect by all at all so the eyes second Chronicles 16 9 I love this verse it's in your bulletin for the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to him some versions say fully committed to him God God wants God deserves glory and we were created to glorify him we all glorify something we all have something that we love talking about and that we're passionate talking about what that thing should be is God because he deserves it more than anything else we could talk about and he is the greatest source of enjoyment he he he will satisfy you more than any of the other little vanities of our life but he won't he won't share that throne so if you want to experience the joy that comes from knowing God you have to clear off that throne of anything else that that's stealing your glory he is good and he he he wants such good things for us and if you commit and dedicate your heart and your works to him he will bless you and he will glorify you and the outcome might not be what you're expecting but it will be it will be God and he will be with you and you will enjoy him so that is a good place to stop I am gonna invite the worship team back up now as I close with prayer Heavenly Father you you truly are wonderful and beautiful and you you deserve all of us God because you paid for us with the life of your son and even though we did not deserve one more breath one more heartbeat after our first sin you continue to give them to us because of love out of the hope that someday every man and woman on this planet will come to the faith of your son Jesus and be adopted into your family so God search our hearts help us to find the little things help us to find the little foxes that spoil the vineyards help us to root out anything that's stealing our love and our glory and our devotion from you teach us how to commit everything we do to you both in heart and in action be with us this week as we go about our business but teach us how to keep you constantly on our mind in Jesus name