WARNING AGAINST IDOLATRY
Deuteronomy 4:14-31; Romans 1:18-25

Memory Verse: "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry" (1 Corinthians 10:14).

Introduction
The Lord commanded Moses to teach His statutes and judgments to the Children of Israel that they might do them in the land they were going to possess.

The first commandment the Lord gave them on Mount Sinai was, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). The nations around were idolatrous. Possibly the greatest and most common temptation they would have to meet was idolatry, which was an abomination unto God and "changed the truth of God into a lie." It was an unprofitable practice, for Isaiah says, "Yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble" (Isaiah 46:7).

There are other things besides graven images which are idols. Because the hearts of some people are corrupt, they are given to uncleanness and sin (Romans 1:24). Anything in the heart which comes before and ahead of the love for God could be called an idol. For example, one is taught to love others; but when that love is marked with undue reverence or excessive admiration, it can become idolatry. An idol is not always a person. Any thing or even an idea could become an idol.

Some people are not saved because they love the pleasures of the world more than they love God. Others are afraid of what their friends might say, so they think more of their friends than they think of God. Do you love God more than anyone and anything, or is there an idol between you and your Maker? God is a jealous God. He should have first place in our hearts. "Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deuteronomy 6:5).

Item 1: What is idolatry? Idolatry is anything in the heart which comes before and ahead of the love for God, Deuteronomy 4:14-19; Exodus 20:1-5.

Item 2: Mention few things some people worship apart from God. These are:
(b) Elements, Deuteronomy 4:19; Romans 1:21, 25; Jeremiah 8:2; 2 Chronicles 33:1-5.
(c) Pleasures, 1 Timothy 5:5; 6:6-10; Psalm 49:11-14; Isaiah 5:8-10; Luke 12:15-21; James 5:1-6.

**Item 4:** What promise is given to those who seek God? 2 Chronicles 7:14; Jeremiah 29:13, 14; Amos 5:4, 6; Hebrews 11:6; Luke 11:9-13; Malachi 3:16, 17.

**Conclusion:**

Who are you serving – the living God or an idol? Perhaps some, like the Children of Israel, have turned from God to serve the work of men’s hands. Spiritual ruin and death is the judgment pronounced upon them. Even then, “if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; (for the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant” (Deuteronomy 4:30, 31).

God is ever listening for the prayer of a backslider and every sinner. He has promised that He will be found when one seeks with all his heart and with all his soul (Deuteronomy 4:29). There is hope for those who are not serving God. If they “shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin” (2 Chronicles 7:14).

If Satan should come to tempt you to serve another besides God, you can use the same weapon against him that Jesus used, when He was tempted of Satan: “Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matthew 4:10).

**Challenge:** Who are you serving – the living God or an idol?