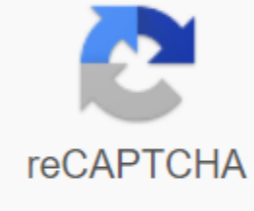




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Tim keller counterfeit gods

Some people are driven by money. Others, success. Some live for family, or for religion. The fake gods consider common external (money, love, family) idols and inner idols (success, power, control) and come to the conclusion that all these earthly idols do not fulfill the true desires of your heart. Only Jesus Christ can find true peace and satisfaction. The truth is, we all worship something. Something makes us in bed in the morning, controls our inner voice, and pushes us to strive in life. Money, jobs, kids, hobbies, celebrities, comfort, happiness, and the list can be further away. Everyone is driven by something. Everyone has an idol. Fake Gods is Pastor Tim Keller's book about idols. Keller examines common peaceful idols, concluding that the only true idol that matters is Jesus Christ. The Setting Counterfeit Gods was written in 2009, at the heart of the financial crash and recession in the United States. Tim Keller, author, is pastor of the Presbyterian Church of the Redeemer in Manhattan. The Redeemer is one, if not the largest church in New York. He's a wonderful preacher, a writer. The story of Keller and the Redeemer is amazing, but another time. It is important to understand the climate in which this book was written. In 2009, the United States was in a pretty deep recession. Financial markets were falling, the mortgage industry was being scams, and the economy was in recession. Keller was at the heart of it. The sermon was by the people on Wall Street and the financial district of New York who were devastated. What a great opportunity for this book to bring hope to those who are desperate. While the message of this book is timeless, we cannot ignore the circumstances or underestimate the need for hope in those difficult times. Idols What are idols? Keller begins the book by defining idols. Keller defines an idol as: Everything that is more important to you than God. Anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, everything you seek to give you is what only God can give. If we take Christianity out of it, the idol is what governs your life. Everyone has an idol. Everyone worships something. Idols can be turned outwards. Like money, sex or drugs. But idols take many other forms. Inner idols are extremely strong thoughts and feelings that we value. Examples include respect, power, status, control, greed and comfort. All these idols act in our minds, but ultimately control our lives. It is important to understand that idols are not just bad things. Things that are generally seen as good can be turned into idols. Work, success, family, even religion itself, can be an idol. Anything can be an idol. In fact, good things in life can become the most sinister and deepest idols. Why do we have idols? Idols give us security, self-fulfillment and purpose. We put our hope and faith in them because they perform dreams and desires. The common theme in the book is that even things that bring you joy in life will be destroyed if they become idols. For example, it is natural that people want the best for their children and protect them. But taken to the extreme without letting your children fail, you can destroy their self-esteem and self-confidence. If a child does not know what it is like to fail, he can go through life with fear of failure. They won't know how to react if they lose their jobs, or how to act when they've come to life. Idols usually start with something that's at the heart of it. For example, the desire to be successful is noble and pure. We must strive to be successful in life. It is when to the extreme, when success becomes an idol, that it destroys you. You may be starting to work 80 hours in it. Take on a few side projects. Step on others to get ahead. Participation in groups. Focus your life on work. If you have made success an idol, you will do your best to be successful. Recognizing idols How do you recognize the idols in your life? Everybody needs money. Isn't it natural that we work hard to become successful? The world is ultra competitive, isn't it not only good, but needs to work and compete? Isn't spending time with family and loving your children is important? Of course they are. But aren't they common idols? So what makes something an idol? Things become idols when they control our lives. When we get depressed or paralyzed in fear, thinking about losing them. What are you afraid of? What if the stock market collapsed and your investments were useless? Will your life be ruined if you lose your job? What if your wife left you? Idols are at the heart of your deepest fears. Another way to tell if something has become an idol is to see where you spend your resources. Where do you spend your time and money? What do you think about when you have free time? Those are areas of your life where you begin to understand your idols. Where your treasure is, your heart will also. After defining idolatry and recognizing idols, The Fake Gods examine common idols and give examples of how all things, even good things, become idols. Happiness All want to be happy. Exactly what being happy means different to everyone - after all, everyone has different idols. But ultimately, everyone wants to be happy. How we define happiness is how we prioritize our lives. Keller gives many examples of how people idolize things with the ultimate goal of being happy. People become workaholics because it makes them feel better about their lives - how they are better than others. We spend hours in the gym to be attractive, look good, Thin. Being good looking gives us confidence. We idolize how we look and what other people think of us. Keller concludes that all idols eventually don't fall before Happiness. If a workaholic loses his job, or attractive people gain weight, they are devastated. Their self-esteem depends on their idol. Sex Sex is a very famous idol. It's depressing to say, but the industry is a \$1 trillion growing industry. Why? People idolize sex. Our culture promotes sex. Apps exist to promote one night's worth. Sex itself is not evil. After all, it is a gift given to us by God himself. But when sex is idolized, it turns into sin. Love It is natural for us to love others. For example, I love my children very much. But what happens when we idolize our children? We monitor them, protect them. We don't want them to fail, so we interfere in their lives and protect them from failure. What we don't understand is our love for our children can ruin them. They become dependent on us. If they have never experienced failure as a child, they will not know how to handle it as an adult. Money Money is a huge idol in people's lives. The pursuit of money or success is not an idol. But if you determine your life, how much money you make, or prioritize money over everything else, you will never be satisfied. How do you know you worship money? Does your retirement account give you comfort? If you lost it all today, would you fall into a deep depression or despair? Success A by is the alcohol of our time. We live in an ultra competitive world. We need to work harder than ever before to stay competitive. For some, the desire for success - to be the best - gives them confidence and strength. The more success we have, the more we want and the less meaningful it becomes. If you are seduced by force and success, even if you are not religious, look at the life of Jesus. Jesus had the highest power. He raised people from the dead, cured diseases and worked miracles. He had the power to do anything. But he was a servant, a teacher. He sacrificed his life for the sins we commit. Interestingly, today's most successful leaders are modest, sympathetic and focused on doing good for humanity. They are modeled by Jesus. 2,000 years ago, Jesus showed us the ultimate example of leadership. Studying Jesus, understanding how He worked, how He thought he appreciated how he treated people, will give you the mentality and tools to succeed. Power The way down to go up, way up to go down. Always be humble. A close cousin to success is power. We want to control our lives, to have power and influence. After all, power gives you a false sense of security. Power is fleeting. One day you have it, and the next you can lose it. What's interesting is that those in power tend to live in fear and anxiety about it. They have a lot to lose. How do you do money in a company, or have the right to influence big budgets or groups of people, you have a lot more focus on your decisions. If you let that happen, you could be terrified. Power is not just a personal idol. Idol. also a cultural idol. Peoples aspire to power. National pride can lead to prejudice. Believing you're better than anyone else. Pride leads to destruction, war and loss for humanity. Hidden idols there are hidden idols in our lives that the book screams. Some of them are personal idols, some are corporate idols. Corporations idolize profit over people. This eventually leads to their ruin, but they do it anyway. It makes them be unethical and cruel to people. Cultures have idols. Today's cultural idol is me. America was founded under faith and fear of God. Over time, culture has moved from idolizing God to idolizing the country itself. Today we idolize individualism and be yourself. Religion itself can be an idol. Religion can become toxic. People who think they are better than others turn people into religion. Some people focus their lives on doing church things - being involved in small groups, studying the Bible, participating in prayer groups, etc. Replacing our idols We all idol something. We can't just remove idols, we have to replace them. We have to live for something in our lives. The question is, what are we going to live for? Identify your idols How do we identify our idols? Think about where you spend your time, money and attention. What does it take for your mind to think about anything? What do you usually think about what gives you comfort, confidence and strength? Where do you spend your time and money? What are you most afraid of? True performance Eller comes to the conclusion that true fulfillment can only come through Jesus Christ. All earthly idols will eventually disappoint. It is God's love for us that He sent Jesus to die for our sins. Keller tells us to set our hearts on Jesus. To put to death what belongs to your earthly nature - sexual impurity, to be lost, evil desires, money and other earthly idols. When we really hem our hearts and minds on Jesus, we become free. Jesus paid the highest price for our sin, and by loving and following him, we have eternity in heaven. And this promise is the ultimate comfort and satisfaction for our lives. 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