

CHAPTER 2

NO OTHER GODS, PART 2



Biblical Lessons for Students, Athletes & More

Individual or Group Experience

FOCAL VERSE

"Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you."

Matthew 6:33

WISE WORDS

"Idolatry happens when we take good things and make them ultimate things."

Timothy Keller

Introduction

Before we begin reading chapter two, let's recount John Piper's definition of idolatry: "Idolatry starts in the heart; craving, wanting, enjoying, being satisfied by anything that you treasure more than God. It is the thing loved or the person loved more than God, desired more than God, treasured more than God and enjoyed more than God."

- **Does this statement seem unattainable? How can we keep good things from becoming false gods?** (*We will attempt to uncover how this is possible by exploring what God has to say about it*).

Page 9

Read the focal verse and quote by Timothy Keller in the shaded box above.

- **In your own words, what does Keller mean when he says "Idolatry happens when we take good things and make them ultimate things."?**

Pause after the last sentence on page 9 to answer these questions:

- **What is a "me ball" player? If basketball is not your game, how would you describe this type of person in relation to another sport or passion?**
- **Have you been guilty of being a "me ball" player? Do you know anyone like this? How does this type of player or person make you feel?**
- **How can we be "me ball" players in our spiritual lives?**

Page 10-12

- Read through the bullet points on pages 10-12 together. Pause after each one to ponder the "false god" being questioned.
- After *each* bullet point, ask: **Are you more committed (or devoted) to your phone, Netflix, SnapChat, etc., or your relationship with God?**

But first...

During session one, we talked about conviction vs. condemnation.

- What's the difference between the two?
- Did you experience conviction since our previous session? What about condemnation?

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Our affections will never rise to the things above if we give them endless satisfaction to things below.

John Piper

ARE YOU PLAYING
ME
ball
WITH GOD?

Page 13

Before "Chalk Talk," pause to reemphasize the two quotes in paragraph two (below).



"I believe God places dreams and passions in our hearts that he wants us to pursue, but none of them are as important as the pursuit of Him." — Kari Kieper

"Placing him first in your life should be your daily goal, the main pursuit in the midst of all your other pursuits." — Paul Chappell



- **Have you purposefully placed Jesus above all your other pursuits?**

NOTE:

- The "Player Application" section on page 13 is critical. If leading a group, pause to ponder the question: *"Have I ever made a genuine and personal decision to commit my life to Christ; to pursue Him above anything or anyone else?"*
- THINK about that question. (No need to answer out loud).
- Tell the group that you are available after class if anyone wants to talk about this in more detail.
- If an athlete/member is "unsure" if they've *truly* made this decision, you can ask: *"Do you believe your current life or lifestyle is proof that you made this decision in the past?"*
- If their answer is "yes," you may want to reinforce scriptures such as John 5:24 and John 10:28 and remind them that the Christian walk is a lifelong process of becoming more like Christ over time.
- If the answer is *"I think so,"* or *"no,"* invite them to read the following scriptures with you: John 3:16, John 1:12, and Romans 10:9. Make sure you do not miss the opportunity to pray with them to receive Christ if they are ready to commit to following Him as Lord. (Refer to the prayers on page 37-39 to guide you).
- Encourage the group to keep attending the study! "The Fundamentals" of the Christian faith will follow chapter two and may clear up questions they have regarding the Christian faith.

Player Application

Read through the player application in its entirety, then answer the following:

- **Are you guilty of playing "me ball" in your spiritual life?**
- **What areas in your life are taking priority over your relationship with Jesus?**
- **What can you start doing *today* to tear down false gods in your life and begin pursuing Jesus as your first passion?**

Page 16

- End with Post Game Prayer.

A Look Ahead

We will begin a journey through "The Fundamentals" of the Christian faith during the next session. You don't want to miss it! Even Believers who have been following Christ for a long time might be surprised at what they will learn! **The best athletes in the world cling tightly to the fundamentals. It should be no different in your spiritual life!**