

CHAPTER 1

NO OTHER GODS, PART 1



Biblical Lessons for Students, Athletes & More

FOCAL VERSE

You shall have no other gods before me. Exodus 20:3 (NIV)

"The more time and devotion one spends in the worship of false gods, the less he is able to spend in that of the True One."

Isaac Newton

CHAPTER ONE - GROUP EXPERIENCE NO OTHER GODS, PART ONE



Page 1

- **Have you ever given much thought to the phrase, "ball is life," "dance is life," "soccer is life," or, (name your passion)?**
- **According to Dictionary.com, what does "ball is life" refer to?** *The all-consuming passion basketball players and fans have for the game; it represents someone who loves and lives for the game, plays as much as they can, thinks about it when they can't play, and finds meaning in their lives through basketball, (or...name your passion).*
- **Do you believe idolatry is still practiced today?**

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- **According to John Piper, where does idolatry start?** *Idolatry starts in the heart; craving, wanting, enjoying, being satisfied by anything you treasure more than God.*
- **Is it possible to idolize "good" things such as basketball, grades, relationships, and careers? Explain.**
- **What is the difference between "conviction" and "condemnation?"** *Conviction comes from the Holy Spirit and it's a good thing. The Holy Spirit convicts us when we're headed down the wrong path, leading us to confession and repentance. Condemnation is a tool satan uses. By definition, condemnation is an expression of disapproval. Satan wants us to "feel" that disapproval by heaping shame and guilt on us; he wants us to play mistakes over and over again in our minds. But God's finished work on the cross has set us free from condemnation.*

NOTE TO LEADERS:

Give group members an opportunity to introduce themselves.

- Optional: Get-to-know-you exercise.
- What do you hope to get out of this study?

Before diving into the study, ask group members to describe what they think an idol is.

Idol: An image or representation of a god used as an object of worship; a person or thing that is greatly admired, loved, or revered.

Be open and willing to discuss your own potential idols.

Close the class by praying or asking someone to pray the prayer on page 7.

"GOD IS NOT JEALOUS OF YOU. HE'S JEALOUS FOR YOU."

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- According to Exodus 20:3-4, what are the first two commandments given to God's people? "You shall have no other gods before me," and "You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below."
- What is meant by "God is a jealous god? He is jealous for you; jealous for your time and attention, above everything else (Exodus 34:14).
- Is it possible that there is someone or something in your life, (like basketball), that has inadvertently become an idol or false god? If so, would you considering sharing?

Page 4 (Chalk Talk)

We tend to identify ourselves with what we do or what we're good at. For example: "I am a straight-A student." "I am an athlete." "I am a teacher." "I am a mom."

- What if that identity (or passion) was taken away? Who would you say you are then?
- Would you be enough without it?

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PERSONAL TRAINING SESSION

- After reading today's lesson, do you have any reason to believe you may have constructed some idols or false gods in your life?
- Conviction can make us feel very uncomfortable, but why is it a good thing?
- Condemnation is a tool Satan uses to mess with our heads. It's one of his most powerful tools and can do massive damage. Be careful! We have access to that same tool. Read Romans 2:1. Why is it wrong to judge others?

A Look Ahead

In the days ahead, see if you can differentiate between feelings of "conviction" and "condemnation." Don't let Satan trap you in a prison of condemnation.

In chapter two, we will attempt to uncover some areas where we might be tempted to build false gods within the framework of our lives. Be thinking about areas in your own life where you may be "wasting time" when you could spend that time with the Savior.

