

THE SHEMA

MIND



HEART

Week 2: Idolatry “God vs gods”

Deut 13:1-3

† OPEN

Welcome to our series “**The Shema**” where we are looking at the classic Jewish prayer to examine how we love God with all our **mind and heart**, which Jesus emphasized as the greatest commandment. We focused specifically on what loving God with all our *mind* involved. Not surprisingly, given that our “*heart*” is the fountain from which all of life springs, it will take far more than one message to explore the significant ramifications of loving God with **ALL our heart**. The remainder of our series will examine various things that compete for our hearts so that we can faithfully live out the greatest commandment. Our focus in this first message will be exploring our hearts as an “idol-making factory.”

👥 SHARE & RECONNECT

- Looking back on 2024, share a couple of highlights and lowlights.
- Which of the following suggestions in the Dec 29th sermon might you embrace in 2025—Dig deeper into Scripture; Read good books—that break, integrate and motivate us?

📖 READING

- Read Mark 12:29-30.
 - How might Jesus’ original audience have understood, responded, reacted to His pronouncement?
 - Thinking of the many other things Jesus taught and did, what might He have included in a 7 part amplification of the command to love God with all our hearts?
 - Which one might be most relevant to your life right now?

REFLECT

- Read Deut 13:1-3. If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you... and if he says, 'Let us go after **other gods**'...you shall not listen to the words of that prophet...For the LORD your God is testing you, to know **whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart...**" As a group, brainstorm and come up with:
 - A short definition of "idolatry 2025" based on this divine exhortation?
 - Expand your definition of modern day idolatry further in the light of how the devil tempted Eve in Genesis 3:1-6.
- The famous and foundational 10 commandments in Exodus 20:3-17 begins with You shall have **no other gods** before me (v3) .
 - The sermon noted that breaking any of the other 9 commandments flows out of breaking the 1st one. Think through how this might play out in #2-9.
- If jealousy among humans is sinful (think damaging, hurtful etc), why is it OK for God to be jealous of our worship of other gods (Exodus 20:5)? Expand your responses from passages like: Psalms 115:1-11, Romans 1:21-25, 2 Cor. 11:2-3.
- Idols cant be removed; they must only be displaced. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?

PRAY

- **Confess** false gods. Any idols that have been knocking on, or sneaking into, your heart. Be specific and remember they are deceptive and resourceful.
- **Worship** Jesus (the only one who imaged the living God perfectly).
 - Fuel your praise with the magnificent portrayal of Jesus in Col. 1:15-20.
- **Pray** for yourself and each another in the group. Shape your prayers with your response to these questions:
 - How might we change/grow as a CG/church if each of us reflected the kind of jealousy that gripped the apostle Paul in 2 Cor. 11:2-3?
 - What attitudes need *changing*,
 - What habits need *incorporating*
 - What knowledge needs *expanding*