

## MEET THE HOLY SPIRIT, PART 6

*Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. (Colossians 3:5, NIV)*

SOMETIMES GOLF IS THE IDOL. You know what I mean. When responsible attention would be better paid to work and family and church, we can find ourselves heading to the club to hang out with our buddies, play a few holes, and otherwise let the key things in life pass.

Of course, we can also argue that our golf game isn't all that good because we *are* attending to those greater obligations.

We likely aren't worshipping the priorities in our lives, but each can become a distraction for another and trying to juggle them all just might land us on the existential version of "America's Funniest Home Videos."

When it comes to lifting up pursuits and possessions against the necessary preeminence of God, however, we are always at risk of creating idols. And the danger is not only distraction from tasks and achievements but real damage to our relationship with the Lord of all.

How is this true? Chiefly, we must be reminded that excellence in any relationship comes from open lines of communication, as well as mutual honor. God has done his part! In terms of honor, he remembered that we, his creation, are dust and that our sin set us on a course for death, and so out of his love for us he sent his Son to conquer our death with his own. And with regard to communication, he has given us both his Word (the God-breathed Scriptures) and the channel of prayer, through which we can praise him, confess to him, thank him, and ask of him.

A series of grand questions thus comes our way, because God has not changed and he remains desirous of exchanging love in relationship with each man and woman. If God honored us as his creation in laying down his life for us, are we honoring him as the Creator—giving him our worship and obedience? If God has communicated with us by his Word, are we reading that Word, attending to God's voice within its pages? And if God has given us opportunity to speak to him in prayer, are we silent long enough to hear his replies?

If these practices are not true of us, we must search our lives for idols, those things that keep us from hearing the Spirit and acting upon what we have heard.

**Opening questions** What are you most tempted to set aside in order to spend time on the golf course? • Which priorities in life do you find warring against each other for your time and commitment?

**READING** Colossians 3:1-5; Isaiah 44:13-20; Matthew 19:16-30

**Setting our minds (Colossians 3)**  
Where should our minds be set? Why, according to verses 3 & 4? What specific things make this hard for you in your own life?

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**Religious inanity (Isaiah 44)**  
What is silly about the way the carpenter behaves in this prophecy? And yet, how is this seriously wrong?

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**God's priorities (Matthew 19)**  
What most captivated the young man's heart? How did it keep him from Jesus? According to the conversation Jesus had with his disciples, what is the order of God's economy?

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Written by Jeff Hopper ©2016 Links Players International. A 5-minute video accompanies today's study at <https://youtu.be/m7QOgycXBlo>