



THE ART OF IDOLATRY

How does God feel when we fail to acknowledge Him?

BRIAN CHEYNE

Young people already understand a lot about worship from their popular culture. Even the use of the term “Idols” suggests a context in which some sort of adoration is understood. I remember being shocked when Heinz Winckler happily accepted the term Idol when he won the inaugural 2002 competition. The same is true of all of his successors.

Young people are quite willing to do the following in proclaiming their allegiance to their “Idol”

- Openly identify with her/him/them
- Buy CDs and download their music
- Learn all the words of the songs
- Attend concerts
- Wear appropriate insignia or copy the fashion statements of their “Idol”
- Vote and proclaim who they voted for unashamedly
- Tell their friends to vote for their choice
- Use social networking sites such as MixIt and Facebook to spread the message
- Take real offence when their “Idol” is mistreated (as the Atlantis community did after the Sasha Lee Davids/ Jason Hartman voting debacle in season V)

Sports fans also know about worship. We only need to look back on the recent IPL Cricket league (and its Bollywood and beauty queen associations) to see evidence of hero worship. The recent British and Irish Lions rugby tour and even the Football Confederations Cup also had examples. In 2008 I attended the Emirates Cup festival of football at the home ground of the Arsenal Football

Club in London. My son Tim and I were amazed at the affect of a chant which rang out among the 60 000 strong crowd. “Theeeeeooo, Theeeeeooo” they sang. At last their idol left the substitute bench. Theo Walcott was on the park! Imagine how he felt, with the adulation being poured out upon him by his adoring fans. (He was only nineteen years old at the time and is the youngest player ever to have played for England). This leads me to ask the question: How does God feel when we fail to acknowledge Him? (This is the opposite of worship). We cannot claim to be ignorant, as the many role models, Biblical examples such as Moses, David and Peter, which have gone before; all had a comment to make about this!

No! Our true allegiance must come under question when we fail to attend worship services, fail to tithe, fail to acknowledge Jesus in front of our friends, fail to “cast our vote” when a moral issue or the honour of His Name is at stake, or fail to make any sacrifice for the One we profess to love and follow.