

Think, for example, of Jim Bakker, who accepted the sacrificial gifts of his television constituency; and then when he was asked about the propriety of owning a Rolls Royce, said, "I don't believe the Lord wants us to have junk!"

WHICH LORD WAS HE SPEAKING ABOUT?

Or think of Jessica Hahn, who sold her sordid story to Playboy Magazine, along with the right to publish photographs of her posing nude; and then when she was asked about the propriety of taking fair-sized sums of money for this, said, "I believe God wants me to be happy."

WHICH GOD WAS SHE TALKING ABOUT?

The desire to gratify our sinful appetites tends to draw us away from God and toward idolatry, away from the true and living God and toward gods of our own creation.

Do you ever experience this tendency? Do I?

Of course, the temptation is strong to give a quick answer, to say, "No, I have no tendencies to move away from vital faith in God and toward idolatry. I have no desire to displace God with an idol."

Curiously, Paul thought this potential problem was serious enough to write, "If you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!"