

**(2) Second, he sets up his idols in his heart. All idolatry begins in the heart.**

**(3) And third, he sets up physical images of his idols before his face. So now what is in his heart takes physical form, substantial form.**

**Idolatry begins with turning away from the Lord, proceeds with replacing the Lord with false gods, and expresses itself in worshipping and serving tangible images of those gods. By this progression the god or gods are made tangible and substantial, something we can get hold of, something physically real.**

**The history of idolatry in many primitive cultures can be seen to include five distinct stages.**

**In the first stage, the god is in some kind of heavenly or transcendent realm. The image represents the god, and the worshipper uses the image as a reminder of the god, as an aid in focusing his worship on the god. So that's the first stage. God is in some sort of a higher, transcendent realm.**

**In the second stage, the god is in the heavenly realm, and the image is now a channel to the god. The worshipper worships the god through, or by means of the image. So here the image is important, much more important than in the first stage. In the first stage the image is just a reminder of the god, but in the second stage one worships the god through the image. So it's a channel.**

**In the third stage, the god resides in the heavenly realm, some sort of higher realm or dimension, but occasionally or frequently manifests himself or herself or itself in the image, and the worshipper worships the god whenever he or she or it**