

Some Thing Horses Cannot Do For Us

I would never take one of my barrel racing horses to the mountains of New Mexico where I grew up and ask him to be a great mountain cow horse. I would never enter him in a cutting either.

In much the same way, spiritually, people violate important rules. Spiritually they ask their horse to do for them what no horse can do. They lie to themselves as to the spiritual and emotional needs that their horse can fill. Perhaps the greatest tragedy in the horse industry is the horseman who ask their horse to do for them what only God can do.

Let us clearly understand some things that God never wants us to ask of our horse.

1. God never wants us to ask of our horse to take the place of God.

Now of course no one has ever said to his horse. " Please take place of God in my life." "If you will just win a championship for me, then I will worship you." No one says that, it is just that we live that way. You see we are all spiritual beings. God made us to love, know and worship him.

To worship God is to respect, honor, and be in awe of him. It means that we so honor him that we are willing to be devoted to him, to serve him. In Matthew 4 we have the account of Satan tempting Jesus. In it Satan offered Jesus all the world and it's splendor if he would just bow down and worship him. Jesus said to him, "Away from me Satan for it is written, worship the Lord your God and serve him only." Jesus taught that one of the ways that we know we are worshipping God is that we are devoted to him by serving him. We are created to worship God. It is a part of

our being. In fact every person every where is worshipping something. Man can not live without being devoted to something.

The tragedy is that mankind has turned his back on God and now worships other gods. The Bible talks about this in Isaiah 53:6 "We all like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way."

The phrase "gone astray" always relates to going after false gods. Isaiah tells us that each of us has turned to his own way. This means each of us selfishly has turned from God and picked false gods to fill the place of the true and living God. God calls this idolatry.

Idolatry is worshipping someone or something in place of worshipping the true and living God. In Romans 1:25 we find the description of mankind who has turned his back on God. "They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator who is forever praised."

There are many ways that mankind can practice idolatry or the worship of false gods. Anything in our lives that is more important than God is idolatry. Take the time to think about some of the things people worship more than they worship God.

God teaches in his word that it is easy to turn to horses as a false God. In Psalm 33:17 it says, "A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save."

Horses are big and powerful. Mankind finds it easy to trust anything that is strong. Even if it is just an animal. God wants us to use the strength of a horse, since it is his gift, to bring glory to him. But if we trust the strength God has given the horse rather than God, we make the horse out to be a god.

A "vain hope" means an untruth, a lie, a sham. It is something that appears to be something but is not. Anyone who puts their hope in a horse, or in the strength of a horse to bring them happiness is trusting a lie.

In the old testament we see that God was particularly upset with the children of Israel who were putting their trust and hope in all the wrong things.

He said to them in Isaiah 31:1&3a , "Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, who rely on horses, who trust in the multitude of their chariots and in the great strength of their horsemen, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek help from the Lord. 3a But the Egyptians are men and not God; their horses are flesh and not spirit."

The Bible is clear, when man practices idolatry, he places himself in deep spiritual darkness. Not only is he in the dark, but he also stirs up God's Holy anger. God said in Exodus 34:14, "Do not worship any other god, for the Lord whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.

If you are wondering what the Bible means when it says, God is a jealous God, God is not capable of being envious like sinful humans. He is however full of zeal and determination to protect who he is. God alone is worthy of our worship. Therefore God does not tolerate any other gods. His jealousy is more like the jealous husband who's wife has committed adultery. He is attempting to protect his holiness and the love relationship he has with mankind. Because he is God and loves with a perfect love, he has the right to demand exclusive devotion to himself. This gives him the right to pass judgment to all who oppose him.

God loves us and has given us horses to enjoy and to bring glory to his name. He is not against our shows, competitions, ribbons or

buckles. But he wants us to know that our horses must not compete with our love and devotion to him. God alone is worthy of our worship. His creation will always make lousy gods. Therefore we should never ask our horse, or let our horses take first place in our lives. Only God can be God.

Psalm 147 10-11 puts it like this: "The strength of a horse does not impress him, how puny in his sight is the strength of a man. Rather, the Lord's delight is in those who honor him, those who put their hope in his unfailing love."

2. God never wants us to ask our horse to give us meaning to life.

Everyone is looking to find meaning to life. That is to say we are looking for the answer to the question which is, Is there enough in my life to make it worth living?

There are those who are dooped into thinking that the world of horses is enough to give them meaning to life. In the old testament there was a man named King Solomon. King Solomon was the richest and wisest man in the old testament. He wanted to know if one could find real life apart from God. In his grand experiment to find life apart from God he turned to many things. One of the things he turned to find life apart from God was horses. There was no one in old testament times who ever had more horses than Solomon. 1 Kings 10:23-26 "So King Solomon became richer and wiser than any other king in all the earth. People from every nation came to visit him and to hear the wisdom God had given him. Year after year, everyone who came to visit brought him gifts of silver and gold, clothing, weapons, spices, horses and mules. Solomon built up a huge force of chariots and horses. He had fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses. He stationed many of them in chariot cities, and some near him in Jerusalem.

Solomon was searching to find all the meaning and pleasure of life he possibly could. His horses and chariots brought him fame, fortune and power. He was able to enjoy the beauty of them and had many trainers, riders and stalls to take care of them. There was not a greater horseman in his day than King Solomon.

In spite of all the horses that the king had, he still could not find the meaning to life for which he was looking. Only God can give us meaning. Only living for him can make life really complete. Riding for Christ gives life the significance that we so crave. Riding for ourselves or for others will only make life meaningless. You may not realize it until the end of your life, but you will one day realize it. Ultimately there is only one thing that is worth living for and that is Jesus.

3. God doesn't want you to ask your horse to love you.

Emotionally, Spiritually we all long for love. The Bible says that what man longs for is unfailing love. Perhaps you have heard horsemen say in their darkest hour, "the only one that loved me at the time was my horse." Such a statement is in error. As wonderful as horses are, they cannot love. They will respond to training, will do certain things because of conditioning, but they cannot love. In order to love you must have a spirit or something that is eternal. The Bible tells us that horses do not have a spirit. Isaiah 31:3a

In Psalm 32:9 God talks about the lack of capacity of horses to respond to reasoning. "Do not be like the horse or mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle." No understanding means to lack the ability to reason or to mentally distinguish between two things. Horses react or respond by instinct or conditioning. Unless a horse is trained or has a bit in it's mouth, it will not respond to you.

Real love must come from a person who chooses to love. God is a person who has chosen to love us in spite of who we are and what we have done against him. 1 John 4 9-10 says, " God showed how much he loved us by sending his only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him." This is real love. It is not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.

God loves you and wants to give you wonderful gifts to enjoy. Horses are one of many gifts that God has given his children. But a horse is not God. If we put too much trust in horses, they will let us down. That is why we should never ask our horse to be our God or to give our lives meaning and love. God is the only one who can meet our needs. He meets our needs for worship, love and meaning.

I have seen so much devastation in the horse competition world because so much hope and trust was misplaced on a horse.

That is why the psalmist said in Psalms 20:7 "Some trust in chariots and some in horses but we will trust in the name of the Lord our God."