

The Second Commandment

Read: Exodus 20:4-6

Main idea: The second commandment elevates the sanctity of God's image to reject every wrong form whereby people desire to worship the one true God.

Key Verses: "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments." **(20:4-6 ESV)**

Key Principles:

- If the first commandment tells us that we should not worship false gods, then the second commands us not to worship the true God in a false way.
- An image of God is a misunderstanding of His freedom, His majesty and His covenant with His people.
- It is arrogant to believe that you can contain God in a manmade, material item.
- God's word teaches us that we must not tolerate false worship.
- False worship includes anything that we require to be part of worship that scripture does not specify or identify (i.e. images, icons, styles, translations, clothing etc.).
- True worship is not about highlighting our preferences or self-willed goals, but should be about honoring God, hearing from God and responding to God with love and obedience for His glory.

Discussion:

1. Read Exodus 32:4-5. Who were the Israelites trying to worship? Why do you think they wanted to make an image to represent God?
2. Can you think of examples of images that we create for God in our churches today? What would happen if you tried to remove them? Why?
3. What are some ways that we worship God in a false way by elevating our preferences in church? Why do you think this is forbidden?
4. How do we tolerate false worship in our churches today? Since this can be a very sensitive subject, what is the best way to address this issue?
5. What are some of the things that Scripture teaches us should be part of our worship towards God? Can you think of anything we should do that we don't do?

Prayer:

- Pray that we would worship the one true God in spirit and in truth.
- Pray:
 - That we would remember that worship is not about our preferences, but God's glory
 - That we would be aware of the temptation to tolerate false worship.
 - That we remember that God is who He is and not who we want Him to be.

II: The Sanctity of God's Image

Exodus 20:4-6

Exodus 20:4 - *You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.*

I. Why are images prohibited?

1. It is a misunderstanding of His freedom. 1 Sam 4
2. It is a misunderstanding of His majesty. Deut. 4:11-12, 28
3. It is a misunderstanding of His covenant. Deut 30:12-14

II. What sins are prohibited?

1. Do not worship God in a false way. John 3:14-15
2. Do not tolerate false worship. John 4:7-26
3. Do not make an image of God. Acts 17:29

III. What duties are required?

1. Read God's Word. 1 Timothy 4:13
2. Remember God's ordinances. Hebrews 9:1, 15
3. Fast and Pray regularly. Matthew 6:17-18

NEXT WEEK:

III: The Sanctity of God's Authority

Exodus 20:7