

05 - The Second Commandment Part 2 - Exodus 20:4-6 - 2014-02-23

Call to Worship: 1 Corinthians 8:4b-6

Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 1:3 - Dale, please decide how far you will read

Sermon: "The Second Commandment - Part 2" Exodus 20:4-6

Benediction: Ephesians 2:4-5

INTRODUCTION

The steadfast love of the Lord never changes. His mercies never come to an end. It is now more than 3,000 years since the Lord God spoke His Ten Commandments Himself, and wrote them into stone Himself. He did so more than 7,000 miles from where we are this morning. We are far removed in time and distance from the giving of these Ten Commandments, yet, as we read right in the second commandment, the lovingkindness of God, His sure mercy, his steadfast love, extends to thousands of generations. Not because we deserve it, but by His grace, He grants such a change of heart to sinners that we who previously raged against the Lord and His Christ now fall at His feet, worshiping in grateful love, delighting in the Law of God in our innermost parts. Because of the new birth worked in us by the Holy Spirit, we who are born again see God's commandments not as burdensome, but as delightful. We desire and strive to obey God's commandments, not merely as duty, but as love for the Lord Jesus Christ who loves us and has given Himself for us.

So, you who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as your law-keeper; you whose hearts are turned from sinned to serve the living God, who have been granted faith and repentance by the mercy of God, hear the commandment of God and rejoice! Here is God's law, which the Lord Jesus Christ has kept perfectly on your behalf! Here is instruction for you, so that what you read with your eyes and hear with your ears will confirm what the Holy Spirit has written in your new heart about how to live as pleasing to the Lord. You will learn what you should do in a life of putting to death the flesh and living by the Spirit.

By the wisdom God has taught us in the bible, we know the law of God is not there so we can earn our place in heaven by obeying it, but instead to teach us what rebels we are, how entirely undeserving we are of such a place in heaven. Jesus Christ, by His apostles, has taught us that these commandments condemn us all as lawbreakers, so as to drive us to the Lord Jesus, through whom we can be saved as we trust in Him for our righteousness.

So, every one of you who does not yet trust in the Lord Jesus Christ to save you; every one of you who still plans to face the all-seeing eye of God on the judgment day with nothing to wear but your own works, your own pitiful righteousness; every one of you who is still trying to hide your sin from God, cowering in the bushes, covered by nothing but a few fig leaves you have sewn together for your covering; every unbeliever here, as you hear the second commandment read and expounded to you here today, be afraid. Every sin deserves the anger and judgment of God. The day is coming when that anger, that wrath of God will be poured out on every person who

has remained in his sins, not trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ to save him. Sinner, hear the commandments of God and tremble and His voice. And consider this, the Lord Jesus Christ lived not in rebellion against God, as you have done, but in perfect obedience to God. He has loved God with all His heart, mind, soul, and strength, and has loved His neighbor as Himself. Then, as an innocent, as a righteous man, He became sin for sinners; He took the guilt of the guilty upon Himself. He suffered the cruel death of the cross as a substitute for lawbreakers. He died, was buried, and on the third day rose again. He now lives as a mediator, reconciling sinners to God. The sinner's sins having been punished in Christ on the cross, God is willing now that every sinner who believes in Jesus Christ will not be counted as a sinner any more, but as righteous through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Here the commandment; feel the weight of God's judgment looming over you; surrender yourself to the loving arms of Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

Last week, we studied the first half of the second commandment. Remember what we learned last time about God's commandment, from the sad case of King Jeroboam, 1 Kings chapter 12. We learned that in the second commandment, God requires you to worship how He has told you to worship,

- forbidding you to decide for yourself, within your own heart, how you will worship
- forbidding you to decide based on a consensus with other people, how you will worship
- forbidding you to say that what God has commanded for worship is too difficult
- forbidding you to use some man-made thing to represent God in worship
- forbidding you to worship just wherever you please rather than in God's temple
- forbidding you worship through a priest who is made a priest only by men, not by God
- forbidding you to substitute holy days devised in your own heart for the days He has made holy
- forbidding you to try doing for yourself what only Jesus Christ the one priest may do on your behalf

Recall how we observed from the bible that

- corrupt worship practices are not made acceptable to God by the fact that they are very ancient, that they have been done for hundreds of years
- corrupt worship practices are not made acceptable to God by the fact that they are taught and practiced by very well-known, important people
- corrupt worship practices are not made acceptable to God even by someone in authority over you imposing them on you, even such authorities such as a king or queen or a church pastor

Therefore, you are to obey the Lord's second commandment---worshiping the Lord God according to His Word, doing only what He has commanded you to do as worship, and doing it all through faith in Jesus Christ.

Today we consider the second half of that commandment, in which the Lord God graciously gives us help, teaching us things about Himself and about ourselves, to warn us sternly not to disobey, and encourage us strongly to obey.

TEXT

Read the text: Exodus 20:4-6

BODY

I. God teaches You of His Jealousy Regarding Worship (5b)

A. Think about what it means that God is jealous. He alone is worthy of all love and honor, all allegiance and loyalty, all devotion and service. He alone is worthy of all obedience. Thus He is rightly jealous for you to love Him with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. He would have your love, not your hatred. He would have you adore Him, not despise Him. God knows that when another master vies with Him for your obedience; when another lord contends with God for your loyalty, obedience to that other master is hatred toward God; for you to serve that other lord is to despise God. Listen to the words of the Lord Jesus as He explains this to us:

Matthew 6:24a "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other.

B. Think about how God's jealousy comes to bear on the issue of how you worship

1. When the imagination of men vies with God for your obedience (whether it is your own imagination, or the imagination of your pastors, or the imagination of the pope, or the imagination of Aaron or King Jeroboam) regarding what you do as worship, to worship according to the imagination of men is to act in hatred toward God.

2. When the suggestions of Satan contend with the commandments of God for your service regarding what you do as worship, to worship according to the suggestions of Satan is to love the devil who ruined us and hate God who created us.

3. God is jealous for you. He would have your love, not your hatred. He would have you adore Him, not despise Him.

C. Consider some specific examples of corruptions in worship that provoke the jealousy of God

1. God has commanded that, to worship Him, you pray to Him, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, by His will, with thanksgiving, by the help of His Holy Spirit.

What will happen when He looks at you in worship, having commanded you to make such prayers, and sees you, not praying, but with your hand over your heart, pledging allegiance to flags? Or lighting a candle, or burning incense, or hanging ornaments on a tree? Don't you know that YAHWEH your God is a jealous God? He is jealous for your love; and such corrupt worship is not love toward God, but hatred toward Him.

2. God has commanded that, to worship Him, you speak to one another with songs, hymns, and spiritual songs, making music in your heart to God. What will happen when He looks at you in worship, having commanded you to sing such songs, and sees you, not singing, but clapping your hands in applause for all the high school and college graduates; for all the mothers; for all the fathers; for all the veterans? Don't you know that YAHWEH your God is a jealous God? He is jealous for your love; and such corrupt worship is not love toward God, but hatred toward Him.

3. God has commanded that, to worship Him, you listen to His scriptures read and expounded, devoting yourself to the sound doctrine given through Christ's apostles. What will happen when He looks at you in worship, and sees you, not reading and preaching the Word or listening to it read and preached, but putting on a puppet show, a dramatic skit, or a musical play? Don't you know that YAHWEH your God is a jealous God? He is jealous for your love; and such corrupt worship is not love toward God, but hatred toward Him.

4. God has commanded that you set aside an offering on the first day of the week, according to your income, so that the needs of the pastor, the poor, the missionaries, and other necessary things may be paid for. What will happen when He looks at you in worship, having commanded you to set a side a portion of your income, and sees you, not giving an offering, but instead thinking, "What God has commanded is too hard for me, so I won't do it"? Don't you know that YAHWEH your God is a jealous God? He is jealous for your love; and such corrupt worship is not love toward God, but hatred toward Him.

5. God has commanded that, to worship Him, you immerse new believers in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. What will happen when He looks at you in worship, and sees you sprinkling water on the forehead of a baby? Don't you know that YAHWEH your God is a jealous God? He is jealous for your love; and such corrupt worship is not love toward God, but hatred toward Him.

6. God has commanded that, to worship Him, you eat the bread and drink from the cup, remembering the body of Christ given for you, and the blood of Christ shed for you, proclaiming His death until He comes. What will happen when He

looks at you in worship, and sees you kneeling before the bread and the cup, crossing yourself, and thinking that the Lord Jesus is again being sacrificed? Don't you know that YAHWEH your God is a jealous God? He is jealous for your love; and such corrupt worship is not love toward God, but hatred toward Him.

7. God has commanded that all this worship be done in spirit and in truth, and forbidding that any images be made, any likenesses of anything in nature used in worship. What will happen when He looks at you in worship, and sees you worshiping with images all around, made to represent Him? Over on the side a banner with a dove to represent the Holy Spirit; up on the ceiling a painting to represent God the Father; right up front a crucifix showing Jesus crucified, or maybe a cross with a crown of thorns and a red streamer hung on it, or maybe down here a manger scene with a little baby Jesus in it; in the fellowship hall a carving of the Lord Jesus at the last supper; in the panels of the windows, you perhaps have all three persons of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in stained glass. Don't you know that YAHWEH your God is a jealous God? He is jealous for your love; and such corrupt worship is not love toward God, but hatred toward Him.

8. God has commanded that the law of God be preached, declaring God's righteousness and men's sinfulness; also that the Gospel of forgiveness through Jesus Christ be preached. God's word commands preachers to preach faith in Christ and repentance from sin unto God. What will happen when He looks at you who lead God's church in worship, and you are saying, "If you want to have a relationship with God, come down here to the front and repeat this prayer that I tell you to say"? Don't you know that YAHWEH your God is a jealous God? He is jealous for your love; and such corrupt worship is not love toward God, but hatred toward Him.

So, God teaches You of His jealousy regarding worship, and

II. God Warns You with a Threat of What His Jealousy Will Bring Upon Those Who Worship Corruptly (5c)

A. Here is the threat: Because God considers corrupt worship hatred toward Him, He will visit the iniquity of this corrupt worship upon your children and grandchildren in future generations

B. How will He carry out that threat? Surely He does so in many ways. I will just mention one, since it is evident in the story of Jeroboam and Israel. see 2 Kings 17:14-18

1. He may let them go further and further into corrupt worship until they start killing themselves (17:16-17)

2. He may hand them over to violent death (18-20)

C. Does this seem unjust?

1. First off, God is not unjust. Perish the thought!

Romans 3:5-6 But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unjust who inflicts wrath? (I speak as a man.) (6) Certainly not! For then how will God judge the world?

2. Secondly, your children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren deserve God's wrath

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned--

Psalms 58:3-5 The wicked are estranged from the womb; They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies. (4) Their poison is like the poison of a serpent; They are like the deaf cobra that stops its ear, (5) Which will not heed the voice of charmers, Charming ever so skillfully.

D. APPLY THIS TO YOURSELF

1. think of your small son, he grows up and for some reason won't stay in a sound church; he goes off into whatever kind of corrupt situation, whether Roman Catholic, charismatic, or some other; this pains you, and you ask, "Why?" The answer may be---you would not restrain yourself to the worship God commanded, but insisted on doing what you imagined would be nice. You would not repent of your sins and trust in Jesus Christ; you would not worship according to God's commands, but insisted on doing your own thing regarding worship; God, true to promise, is visiting your iniquity on your children

2. think, then, of his child, your grand-daughter; she gets involved in an even more corrupt religious scene, becomes pregnant out of wedlock, and, on counsel from the corrupt worshipers around her, goes and has your unborn great-grandchild ripped limb from limb out of her womb for the sake of appearances and convenience

3. Is this unjust?

a. God has told you, right here in the bible, that He considers it hatred toward Him for you to worship in ways that He has not commanded.

b. He has warned you that He would visit your iniquity on your grandchildren.

c. He has even recorded that in the case of Jeroboam and Israel, what started out as just making up some different ways of worshiping God ended up eventually in people throwing their children in the fire

d. So, if you insist on doing whatever human minds invent as worship, what do you expect?

4. Repent now! Turn from your sins and obey God. Cry to the Lord for mercy!

He will hear you. There is forgiveness of sins for all who repent, for all who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has been crucified for sinners.

5. Take heart that there is a beautiful promise corresponding to that awful threatening.

-God teaches You of His jealousy regarding worship,

-God Warns You with a Threat of What His Jealousy Will Bring Upon Those Who Worship Corruptly, and

III. God Encourages You with a Promise of Mercy Toward Those Who Worship Obediently (6)

A. Because obedient worship amounts to love toward God, He will be merciful to many generations of those who worship Him obediently

B. Not because you have earned it! Your obedience does not oblige God to anything. He has mercy on whom He will have mercy.

C. Not as a guarantee for every individual. You cannot, by your love for God and obedience to His commands, secure eternal salvation for every person in your family. The Lord God is sovereign. In some families He is merciful to one twin son and hardens another.

D. But consider how merciful the Lord God is to the posterity of those who love Him and keep His commandments, and for how long!

1. John Wycliffe translated the New Testament into the language of the people, read it to them, and preached it to them. When was that? in the 1300s, nearly 700 years ago. Now, has the Lord been merciful to 700 years of English-speakers, by granting them continued access to the bible in our own language?

2. The Marian martyrs would not worship in Queen Mary's Roman Catholic worship, but preferred exile or martyrdom. Has there been any blessing on 500 years of English, Scottish, Welsh, Canadians, Australians, and Americans because of their faithfulness?

3. In 1699, William Screven, the first Baptist pastor in the South, said to his congregation, FBC Charleston, make sure you secure a new minister who holds to the 1689 confession, which confession sets down this very doctrine I have presented to you last week and today. Has there been, for 300 years in the south, evidence of God's great, long kindness?

4. Back in the 1960s, a handful of Baptist churches got together and said that they would not worship as the other churches were worshiping, but would go back to the old ways, worshiping and preaching according to God's commands. Now, 50 years later, aren't we seeing God's mercy upon us, their children, as well as our children?

God is merciful, showing lovingkindness to thousands of generations of those who love Him and keep His commandments.

CONCLUSION

The devil roams around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. He devises all kinds of alternate methods of worship, with which he tempts people. Your own flesh is all too ready to adopt any ideas he spreads around, thinking itself extra religious, thinking it has extra credit with God for being so innovative in worship.

Take heed: God commands us to worship Him in the ways He has ordained, and in no other.

To that end,

-God teaches You of His jealousy regarding worship,

-God Warns You with a Threat of What His Jealousy Will Bring Upon Those Who Worship Corruptly, and

-God Encourages You with a Promise of Mercy Toward Those Who Worship Obediently

So, then, worship the Lord your God according to His commands, through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Hopkins

Is it just for God to visit the fathers' sins on the children?

Exodus 34:7; Jeremiah 32:18; 1 Samuel 15:2

Matthew 23:35

Ezekiel 18:20

Jeremiah 31:29-30

You are to love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength! But not everything you might think of to do is acceptable to Him as worship. The acceptable way of worshipping the true God has been instituted by Him; it is limited to what He has revealed in the bible; He may not be worshipped according to what service men imagine He would like to have from us, but must be worshipped according to what service He has told us to render.

Deuteronomy 12:1-4 "These are the statutes and judgments which you shall be careful to observe in the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth. (2) You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. (3) And you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and burn their wooden images with fire; you shall cut down the carved images of their gods and destroy their names from that place. (4) You shall not worship the LORD your God with such things.

BODY

Read the text: Exodus 20:4-5a

There was a certain king who badly broke this second commandment. The history of how he broke the commandment is given briefly in the bible. It seems to me that a look at his sad story will help us greatly in understanding this second commandment. So let's look at the sins of Jeroboam in 1 Kings 12:26-33

(Explain about King Jeroboam's situation as people find their place in 1 Kings 12:26)

1 Kings 12:26-33 And Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom may return to the house of David: (27) If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king of Judah." (28) Therefore the king asked advice, made two calves of gold, and said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!" (29) And he set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. (30) Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. (31) He made shrines on the high places, and made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi. (32) Jeroboam ordained a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the feast that was in Judah, and offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. And at Bethel he installed the priests of the high places which he had made. (33) So he made offerings on the altar which he had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, in the month which he had devised in his own heart. And he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and offered sacrifices on the altar and burned incense.

So, see with me how this story of the sins of Jeroboam explain to us what God commands in the Second Commandment.

In the second commandment, God requires you to worship how He has told you to worship, forbidding you to worship Him in any ways of human invention

I. In the second commandment, God requires you to worship how He has told you to worship, forbidding you to decide for yourself, within your own heart, how you will worship (26-27)

- A. perhaps out of a desire to build your power rather than lose it
- B. perhaps out of a desire to be loved by people rather than despised

II. In the second commandment, God requires you to worship how He has told you to worship, forbidding you to decide based on a consensus with other people, how you will worship (28a)

A. here we don't mean, of course, matters of just the circumstances of worship; you would do well to consult with other people and reach a consensus regarding:

1. who will clean the bathrooms?
2. how will we serve the lunch?
3. when do we need to turn on the heat or the air conditioning?
4. do we need to replace the carpet?
5. what time should our meeting be?

we don't mean the circumstances of worship, we mean

B. the elements of worship; what are we going to do in worship?

1. are we going to show videos? Let's talk it over and decide for ourselves
2. are we going to have skits? Let's talk it over and decide for ourselves
3. are we going to have scripture reading?
4. are we going to have feats of strength---karate chopping boards and breaking cinder blocks? Let's talk it over and decide for ourselves
5. are we going to light candles as we sing?
6. are we going to have preaching every time, or sometimes put on a musical instead?
7. are we going to have puppet shows? Let's talk it over and decide for ourselves!

C. Of course it is wise to discuss such questions with other people, but only so as to arrive at the right understanding of what the bible tells us is God's command, and so to obey; not to build a consensus and then do whatever we agreed on

III. In the second commandment, God requires you to worship how He has told you to worship, forbidding you to say that what God has commanded for worship is too difficult (28c)

A. Indeed it was hard for the people up in the northern parts of Israel to make pilgrimage to Jerusalem to worship several times per year as God commanded. But the it was sin for Jeroboam to say that it was too difficult, therefore it shouldn't be done.

B. it is too hard to pray earnestly, fervently, according to God's will

1. let's just let someone else pray
2. let's just have real quick, easy prayers
3. let's just have liturgical prayers, in the prayer book, that we can just read
4. let's just talk about what's going on rather than praying
5. let's just pray listing whatever physical things we want God to do for our enjoyment

C. it is hard to devote yourself to the apostles' doctrine

1. listening to the scriptures read
2. listening to the scriptures expounded

D. it is hard to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with the profound truths of faith in Jesus Christ expressed in poetic language, and set to the best kinds of music

E. it is hard to speak to one another not whatever idle chatter comes to mind, but that which is helpful for building others up according to their needs

F. it is hard to give such a portion of our income in the offerings that all expenses of the meeting place, the preacher's family, and other necessary things can be met

but dare we say that these things God has commanded us for worship are too difficult, so that we don't do them? God requires us to do them, and forbids us saying they are too hard.

G. it is hard to preach to sinners, pray for them, and then wait for them to believe in Jesus Christ before baptizing them; sometimes the preaching, praying, and waiting takes years and years; but dare we say that it is too difficult, we shouldn't do it? Let's just spinkle them when they're babies and call it good; let's just get them to agree they're sinners and pray the required prayer, and then dunk them; that will be easier than all that preaching and praying and waiting

IV. In the second commandment, God requires you to worship how He has told you to worship, forbidding you to use some man-made thing to represent God in worship (28-29a)

NOTE: It is not an acceptable excuse to say that your images represent not false gods, but the true God. This is the very thing the commandment prohibits!

-since the dark ages, the corrupt Roman Catholic church has pretended that the second commandment is not there; the Pope teaches that the first and second commandments are one commandment, forbidding the worship of false gods, especially through worshipping idols. (To maintain ten commandments, that system divides the tenth commandment about coveting into two commandments.)

-but the right understanding of the second commandment, recovered, by God's grace, in the Reformation, is that it forbids the making and using of images in worship period. There is no exception if you are using images to worship the true God. That is the very thing the Lord God prohibits!

So, to say again,

In the second commandment, God requires you to worship how He has told you to worship, forbidding you to use some man-made thing to represent God in worship (28-29a)

- A. to put up a crucifix, a likeness of the Lord Jesus on the cross
- B. to put up a painting of God, as Michaelangelo's in the Sistine Chapel
- C. to install stained glass with likenesses of God
- D. to put up banners with symbols to represent God's attributes
- E. to set up a manger scene, with a plastic baby doll to represent the Lord Jesus

F. to show a drama, whether live or on video, with an actor portraying Jesus

NOTE: God's commandment is not made void by very ancient traditions in violating it, or by very important people violating it. (28b) Here Jeroboam cited a very ancient religious practice from five hundred years before, laid down by no less a personage than Aaron, the brother of Moses. -so it doesn't matter for how long some practice in the churches has violated this commandment; it is still sin
-it doesn't matter whether Augustine or Saint Francis or Martin Luther said it or did it; if it breaks the second commandment, it is still sin

V. In the second commandment, God requires you to worship how He has told you to worship, forbidding you to worship just wherever you please rather than in God's temple (29-31a)

A. the Lord Jesus has ordained that on the first day of the week, the day He rose from the dead, you assemble with His church to worship Him

B. you are forbidden, therefore, to decide for yourself that you will worship wherever you want to worship

C. of course I don't mean worship in the sense that the whole life of the Christian is to be lived as worship of the Lord; I mean those special times the Lord has set for us to gather with the saints and worship Him

D. of course I don't mean a church building; the Lord's churches meet in every kind of building, including people's houses, also in caves, in tunnels, and outdoors; I mean the assembly of the saints, God's church

E. "I don't want to worship God in His assembly; I want to worship on a mountain top this week; I want to worship in the boat out on the lake this time. I just want to stay home and worship this week."

VI. In the second commandment, God requires you to worship how He has told you to worship, forbidding you worship through a priest who is made a priest only by men, not by God (31b)

A. in the Old Covenant, God ordained that only the tribe of Levi would be the priests, and not even all of them; even within the tribe of Levi, only the family of Aaron would be the priests

1. they would kill the sacrificial animals, shedding their blood

2. the high priest would take the blood one day a year into the holiest place in the temple, into the very presence of God, and sprinkle it on the atonement cover of the ark of the covenant

3. this did not take away sin, but only showed that taking away sin was needed, and would come one day in the Christ

4. this was to be done in worship only by those God appointed to be priests; but Jeroboam appointed as priests whomever he pleased

B. in the New Covenant, God has ordained that the Lord Jesus Christ is our one and only priest

1. He is the altar

2. He is the sacrificial lamb
 3. His is the blood shed
 4. He is the way into the holy of holies, into the presence of God
 5. He Himself is the golden cover on the ark of the covenant
 6. He is the way a sinful person like you or like me can come into the presence of God and be reconciled to Him, be adopted as His Son, and worship acceptably
- C. yet consider the detestable practice of the Roman Catholics
1. they make men priests
 2. in the mass, the priests supposedly offer the body and blood of Christ as a sacrifice
- D. Oh, my dear ones, no Roman Catholic priest is really a priest; there is One and only One Mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ

 NOTE: It is sin for you to do all these kinds of things even when they are imposed on you by those in authority over you. (28a)

- if they are commanded by King Jeroboam, Queen Mary, or the Supreme Court
 - think how many faithful Christians, from common farmers to archbishops, preferred to burn at the stake rather than to take the profane eucharist offered by the Roman Catholic priests, even though Queen Mary commanded it; they understood it to be sin, even if it was commanded by the monarch
- if they are commanded by the Pope of Rome, whether Pope Leo X or Pope Francis
- if they are commanded by leaders in your denomination of churches
- if they are commanded by your local church pastors

To do such things in violation of God's second commandment is sin for you even if someone in authority over you commands you to do them.

VII. In the second commandment, God requires you to worship how He has told you to worship, forbidding you to substitute holy days devised in your own heart for the days He has made holy (32a, 33b)

- (the real feast of tabernacles was on the fifteenth day of the *seventh* month)
- A. this is why your church's pastors lead the church to observe the first day of the week as the Lord's day, and do not lead the church to any other holy day observance
 - B. we don't try to turn the Lord's Day into Mother's Day, Father's Day, Veterans' Day, so-and-so's birthday, or anybody else's day
 - C. we don't add to the church's calendar of holy days any man-made holidays

VIII. In the second commandment, God requires you to worship how He has told you to worship, forbidding you to do for yourself what only the priest may do on your behalf (33b)

I talked earlier about how Jeroboam ordained just anyone to be a priest; here we see how he went even beyond that, and burned incense and offered sacrifices Himself! But God forbids you to try doing for yourself in worship what only the Lord Jesus Christ the only high priest can do for

you

A. pray to God

1. many times we have heard someone trying to convince himself or us that he is good with God because he prays, even prays every day or all the time
2. but no one's prayers are acceptable to God without the mediating priesthood of Jesus Christ; He is the necessary mediator between us and God in our praying; our prayers are acceptable to God because offered in Jesus Christ

B. offer an acceptable sacrifice

1. you decide you will offer something to God, and that offering will make things right between you and God
 - a. I'll go to church
 - b. I'll give money
 - c. I'll be a good person
2. nothing you can sacrifice will be acceptable, because you are not a priest; you cannot make a sacrifice to God without it being presented by a proper priest, and there is no proper priest but the Lord Jesus Himself
3. therefore, do not trust to any sacrifice or offering you yourself can make, but to the sacrifice offered on your behalf by the Lord Jesus Christ
 - a. He is the true priest
 - b. His own blood is the acceptable sacrifice to atone for your sins

CONCLUSION

In the second commandment, God requires you to worship how He has told you to worship,

forbidding you to decide for yourself, within your own heart, how you will worship
forbidding you to decide based on a consensus with other people, how you will worship
forbidding you to say that what God has commanded for worship is too difficult
forbidding you to use some man-made thing to represent God in worship
forbidding you to worship just wherever you please rather than in God's temple
forbidding you worship through a priest who is made a priest only by men, not by God
forbidding you to substitute holy days devised in your own heart for the days He has made holy
forbidding you to try doing for yourself what only Jesus Christ the one priest may do on your behalf

Therefore, obey the Lord's second commandment---worship the Lord God according to His Word, doing only what He has commanded you to do as worship, and doing it all through faith in Jesus Christ.

God Pronounced Judgment Against the Sins of Jeroboam

1 Kings 14:7-10 Go, tell Jeroboam, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel: "Because I exalted you from among the people, and made you ruler over My people Israel, (8) and tore the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it to you; and yet you have not been as My servant David, who kept My commandments and who followed Me with all his heart, to do only what was right in My eyes; (9) but you have done more evil than all who were before you, for you have gone and made for yourself other gods and molded images to provoke Me to anger, and have cast Me behind your back-- (10) therefore behold! I will bring disaster on the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every male in Israel, bond and free; I will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as one takes away refuse until it is all gone.

Ahab Added to the Sins of Jeroboam Worship of Baal

1 Kings 16:25-33 Omri did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all who were before him. (26) For he walked in all the ways of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin by which he had made Israel sin, provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their idols. (27) Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and the might that he showed, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? (28) So Omri rested with his fathers and was buried in Samaria. Then Ahab his son reigned in his place. (29) In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel; and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. (30) Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who were before him. (31) And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. (32) Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. (33) And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.

Jehoram Put Away Baal Worship But Persisted in the Sins of Jeroboam

2 Kings 3:1-3 Now Jehoram the son of Ahab became king over Israel at Samaria in the

eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. (2) And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, but not like his father and mother; for he put away the sacred pillar of Baal that his father had made. (3) Nevertheless he persisted in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin; he did not depart from them.

Jehu Destroyed the Worship of Baal but Did Not Depart from the Sins of Jeroboam

2 Kings 10:23-31 Then Jehu and Jehonadab the son of Rechab went into the temple of Baal, and said to the worshipers of Baal, "Search and see that no servants of the LORD are here with you, but only the worshipers of Baal." (24) So they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. Now Jehu had appointed for himself eighty men on the outside, and had said, "If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escapes, whoever lets him escape, it shall be his life for the life of the other." (25) Now it happened, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, "Go in and kill them; let no one come out!" And they killed them with the edge of the sword; then the guards and the officers threw them out, and went into the inner room of the temple of Baal. (26) And they brought the sacred pillars out of the temple of Baal and burned them. (27) Then they broke down the sacred pillar of Baal, and tore down the temple of Baal and made it a refuse dump to this day. (28) Thus Jehu destroyed Baal from Israel. (29) However Jehu did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin, that is, from the golden calves that were at Bethel and Dan. (30) And the LORD said to Jehu, "Because you have done well in doing what is right in My sight, and have done to the house of Ahab all that was in My heart, your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation." (31) But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart; for he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, who had made Israel sin.

The Anger of the Lord was Aroused Because of the Sins of Jeroboam

2 Kings 13:1-3 In the twenty-third year of Joash the son of Ahaziah, king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu became king over Israel in Samaria, and reigned seventeen years. (2) And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. He did not depart from them. (3) Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-Hadad the son of Hazael, all their days.

The Lord Destroyed Israel Because of All the Evil Resulting from the Sins of Jeroboam

2 Kings 17:5-23 Now the king of Assyria went throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years. (6) In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria, and placed them in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. (7) For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and they had feared other gods, (8) and had walked in the statutes of the nations whom the LORD had cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made. (9) Also the children of Israel secretly did against the LORD their God things that were not right, and they built for themselves high places in all their

cities, from watchtower to fortified city. (10) They set up for themselves sacred pillars and wooden images on every high hill and under every green tree. (11) There they burned incense on all the high places, like the nations whom the LORD had carried away before them; and they did wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger, (12) for they served idols, of which the LORD had said to them, "You shall not do this thing." (13) Yet the LORD testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His prophets, every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets." (14) Nevertheless they would not hear, but stiffened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who did not believe in the LORD their God. (15) And they rejected His statutes and His covenant that He had made with their fathers, and His testimonies which He had testified against them; they followed idols, became idolaters, and went after the nations who were all around them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them that they should not do like them. (16) So they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, made for themselves a molded image and two calves, made a wooden image and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. (17) And they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and soothsaying, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. (18) Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone. (19) Also Judah did not keep the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. (20) And the LORD rejected all the descendants of Israel, afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of plunderers, until He had cast them from His sight. (21) For He tore Israel from the house of David, and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. Then Jeroboam drove Israel from following the LORD, and made them commit a great sin. (22) For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, (23) until the LORD removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, as it is to this day.

Henry:

He intended, no doubt, by these to represent, or rather make present, not any false god, as Moloch or Chemosh, but the true God only, the God of Israel, the God that brought them up out of the land of Egypt, as he declares, 1Ki_12:28. So that it was no violation of the first commandment, but the second.

Savastio (working from Packer):

The essence of idolatry is having false notions of God and interacting with God as if those notions were true.

False notions of God are the very essence of idolatry.

In the second commandment, God is dealing with worship of the true God by false

means.

The commandment in its most narrow focus . . . we must not worship God with the use of visual aids. We do not need to have anything before our eyes to help us in the worship of our God.

Having in my mind the Sistine Chapel image of God is idolatry.

or to have a crucifix (which has "Jesus" on it)

Why is it wrong? What harm is there?

We are used to dealing with matters of worship by questions of personal taste, temperament, preference, etc.

But God says, "You shall not"! It is an absolute prohibition.

The second commandment forbids the usage of any image of the tri-une God in our worship.

We ought not use pictures of Jesus in worship or instruction.

This is not a matter of indifference to God.

-Images dishonor God because they obscure His glory.

-They convey false ideas about God

-Thinking of God in extra-biblical terms

-Maybe you don't worship the God of the bible, but a god of your own making.

Packer:

we are not to make use of visual or pictorial representations of the Triune God, or of any person of the Trinity, for the purposes of Christian worship. The commandment thus deals, not with the object of our worship, but with the manner of it

It (the commandment's text "any thing") also rules out the use of pictures and statues of Jesus Christ as a man, although Jesus Himself was and remains Man

These lines of thought relate, not to the real or supposed helpfulness of images, but to the truth of them.

it is certain that if you habitually focus your thoughts on an image or picture of the One to whom you are going to pray, you will come to think of Him, and prayer to Him, as the image represents Him. Thus you will in this sense bow down and worship your image; and to the extent to which the image fails to tell the truth about God, to that extent you will

fail to worship God in truth.

[the commandment] is a summons to

JRY:

Any image of Jesus is necessarily false.

-That's not what He looked like even then.

-That's definitely not what He looks like now.

Silversides:

They don't help anyone worship. They just feed the imagination.

Hopkins:

Two parts: the precept itself, and the sanction of the precept, each twofold

Precept

-one part forbidding images to be made

-the other forbidding them to be worshipped

Sanction

-a severe commination or threatening against those that shall presume to violate

-a gracious promise for the encouragement of obedience

The meaning is, thou shalt not make any thing with an intention of worship; and thou shalt not worship any thing which thou or others have made

in this second command, where he forbids the worshipping of images, by consequence he requires us to worship him according to the rules he hath prescribed us

As to the sins forbidden by it, they are two:

-contempt of the worship of God, and

-superstition in performing it (a needless and erroneous fear in matters of religion)

-negative: when men fearfully abstain from and abhor those things as wicked and abominable which God hath not forbidden

-positive: when men do fearfully observe and perform those things which either are forbidden or at least nowhere commanded by God; a restless fear of the mind, putting men upon acts of religion which are not due or not convenient

-idolatry (the blackest kind of superstition)

-will-worship

who may be justly condemned of idolatry

1. he that prays to any saint or angel

2. entering into league with the devil

3. whosoever bows down his body in religious adoration of any image

-here is but a vain refuge, to which the Papists betake themselves . . . although they worship images, yet they worship the true God by them. For, in fact, they worship the images of very many creatures . . . they pretend to worship the true God by an image, we reply, that it is most impious to attempt to represent God by any visible resemblance
-To worship the true and only God by an image, is gross idolatry.

Will-worship is nothing else but the inventing and ascribing any other worship to God besides what he hath been pleased to command and institute. God will not be worshipped according to our fancies, but according to his own appointment

This jealousy is not to be ascribed to God, as if there were properly any such weak and disturbing passion in him; but only by way of accommodation and similitude, speaking after the manner of men. So is it to be understood, when God is said to be angry, to be grieved, to repent, etc. that is, his actions towards us are like the actions of one that is angry, or grieved, or repents: although the infinite serenity of the Divine essence is not liable to be discomposed or ruffled by the tempests of any such like passions as are incident to us mutable creatures.

God is pleased to style himself a jealous God to express the heat of his wrath and indignation against sinners.

Watson:

Superstition is bringing any ceremony, fancy, or innovation into God's worship, which he never appointed. It is provoking God, because it reflects much upon his honour, as if he were not wise enough to appoint the manner of his own worship. He hates all strange fire to be offered in his temple. Lev_10:1.

SEE DEUT 4 !!!

1 Kings 12:26-33 And Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom may return to the house of David: (27) If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king of Judah." (28) Therefore the king asked advice, made two calves of gold, and said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!" (29) And he set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. (30) Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. (31) He made shrines on the high places, and made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi. (32) Jeroboam ordained a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the feast that was in Judah, and offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. And at Bethel he installed the priests of the high places which he had made. (33) So he made offerings on the altar which he had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, in the month

which he had devised in his own heart. And he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and offered sacrifices on the altar and burned incense.

Deuteronomy 4:15-19 Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: (16) Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, (17) The likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, (18) The likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth: (19) And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.

Hodgins:

There is a distinction to be made between the first and second not so much about worshiping false gods, but worshiping the true God in false ways the worst-case scenario would be an actual image carved out of wood or stone

see how many times the sin of Jeroboam is referenced in 1 & 2 Kings

Forbids:

1. material representations of deity
2. superstitions or imaginations about God
3. inventions of men in public worship "In vain do they worship me . . . "
Wouldn't it be nice if we had a candle-lighting ceremony?
4. contextualization of public worship "just like the Egyptians"
5. addition to or subtractions from God-ordained worship

Rick Warren:

"I've seen most of the films about Jesus produced in the past 50 years, and Son of God is the best," Warren said in a statement. "We're excited Jesus is back on the big screen, and we're going to fill the theaters. I want every other faith leader in America to do the same. Whether you can buy out a whole theater, or just one screen, now is the time to show up. This is a rare opportunity to bring the story of Christ into our mainstream culture. We want to see Jesus in movie theaters where sight and sound can open up our senses and let grace come in. The message of the Gospel deserves to be on the big screen – and this is our chance to see it there."

INTRODUCTION

Comfort for believers

Accusation for unbelievers

BODY

I. What does the commandment prohibit verbatim---twofold

A. making any image to represent God; not making an image to represent a false god

1. which would not make sense in light of the first commandment already having been given

2. which is shown in the Old Testament stories

a. Aaron and the golden calf

b. Jeroboam and the two golden calves

i. 1 Kings 12:26-33

ii. 1 Kings 14:7-10

iii. 1 Kings 7:26

iv. 1 Kings 16:31

B. bowing down to or serving an image

II. What other things does the commandment prohibit

A. If this is the worst sin against God in a certain category, what is the category?
worship of God by false means

What duties does the commandment require

The sinner's inability to hide

Salvation in Jesus Christ

CONCLUSION