

“O How Love I Thy Law!”
The Second Commandment
“Worshiping Rightly”
Exodus 20:4-6

Introduction:

1. Please Turn In Your Bibles With Me Tonight:
 - To Exodus 20 - Where We Will Begin:
 - Exploring The Second Commandment!
2. But - Before We Do:
 - I Want You To Realize:
 - That - Even Though The “Ten Commandments” Are:
 - Pretty Much Universally Recognized:
 - By Those Who Believe In The Old Testament As The Word Of God:
 - Both Christians & Jews!
 - Depending On The Tradition You Follow:
 - The Numbering & Even The Order:
 - Of The Ten Commandments:
 - May Be A Little Different!
3. For Example:
 - The Jewish Tradition:
 - Of The Ten Commandments:
 - Includes 20:4-6 - With The First Commandment In 20:3!
 - And - They Make The Prologue, 20:1-2 - As The First Commandment!
 - According To The Roman Catholic Tradition:
 - Which Followed The View Of The Pastor-Theologian Augustine Of Hippo:
 - Back In The Fourth Century:
 - Also Includes 20:4-6 - With The First Commandment Of 20:3!
 - However - To Make Up The Ten:
 - They Divide 20:17 - Into Two Commands:
 - That Deal With Covetousness:
 - First - Thou Shalt Not Covet:
 - Thy Neighbor’s Wife! And:
 - Second - Thou Shalt Not Covet:
 - Thy Neighbor’s Goods!
 - Interestingly - When The Roman Catholic Lists Their Version Of The Ten Commandments:
 - They Omit The Wording Of 20:4:
 - Which Says:
 - “Thou Shalt Not Make Unto Thee Any Graven Image!”
 - Many Protestants & Puritans:
 - Picked Up On This As An Attempt By The Roman Church:
 - To Allow The Use & Veneration Of Images & Icons In Their Churches, Their Services, And Their Prayers!
 - However - According To The Tradition Of Martin Luther:
 - He Follows The Numbering Of:
 - Augustine & The Roman Catholic Church:
 - But - In His Larger Catechism:
 - Includes All Of The Words Of 20:3-6 As The First Commandment!
 - But - He Still Divides The Commandment:
 - Against Covetousness:
 - Into Two!
 - 4. The Numbering Of The Ten Commandments:
 - That Most Non-Lutheran Protestants Use Today:
 - Including Presbyterians, Methodists, And Baptists:
 - Is Based On How John Calvin:
 - Divided Them Up In His Famous Theological Work:
 - The Institutes Of The Christian Religion!
 - However - He Based His Numbering System:
 - On The Old Greek Translation Of The Old Testament:

- Known As The Septuagint!
- So - The Way We Are Looking At The Ten Commandments:
 - Is Based On A Pretty Ancient Tradition As Well!
- 5. Now - Even Though The Numbering:
 - Of The Ten Commandments Isn't Vital:
 - To Understand Them:
 - It Is Interesting - Because It Has Caused Biblical Scholars To Think About:
 - What Were The Actual Words God Inscribed On The Stone Tablets He Gave To Moses On Mt. Sinai!
 - So - Based On The Reformed Tradition Of Numbering The Ten Commandments - Beginning Tonight:
 - We Will Be Looking At The Second Commandment:
 - Of God's Moral Law:
 - Through The Lens Of:
 - 2 Timothy 3:16!
 - Which Reminds Us That:
 - "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness!"
 - So - Tonight:
 - We Will Be Looking At:
 - Some Of The Doctrine We Find:
 - In The Second Commandment - 20:4-6:
 - That Is - What It Tells Us & Teaches Us About God!
 - 6. Lets Read The Second Commandment Together:
 - 20:4-6 - "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: / Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; / And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments!"
 - This Commandment Is All About:
 - The Right Way To Worship God!
 - The True God - That We Learned About:
 - In The First Commandment!
 - Now - It Is Clear That There Are:
 - Two Parts To This Commandment!
 - The First Part - 20:4 - Deals With:
 - The Making Of Images:
 - In The Worship Of God!
 - This Is Talking About:
 - The "Form" Of Our Worship!
 - "Thou Shalt Not Make Unto Thee Any Graven Image!
 - And The Second Part:
 - 20:5 - Deals With:
 - The Use Of Images:
 - In The Worship Of God!
 - This Is Talking About:
 - The "Function" Of Our Worship!
 - "Thou Shalt Not Bow Down Thyself To Them, Nor Serve Them!"
 - And Even Though These Two Parts:
 - Are The Condensed Version:
 - Of This Commandment:
 - There Is Further Development And Explanation - That Tells Us Even More:
 - About The Way We Are To Worship God!
 - 7. But For Tonight:
 - I Want Us To Look At Just Two Of The Truths / Doctrines:
 - That We Can Learn About God:
 - From The First Part Of This Important Commandment - 20:4!

* The First Truth Is:

1. *The Spiritual Nature Of God!*

- Which We Find In:
 - These Words:
 - “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image!”
 - A “Graven Image” Is Any Object:
 - Designed & Fashioned:
 - To Be Used In A Person’s Worship Of God!
 - Not Only Did The Lord Repeat This Command:
 - In The Re-Telling Of His Law:
 - In The Book Of Deuteronomy:
 - He Also Reminded Them Of It In Leviticus 26:1 With These Words - “Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God!”
 - So - To The Lord:
- Images Are An Abomination:
 - In His Worship!
 - In Deuteronomy 27:15 - The Levites Pronounced: “Cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image, an abomination unto the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and putteth it in a secret place. And all the people shall answer and say, Amen!”
 - But - Why Would God Be So Dogmatic:
 - About This Command?
 - Because - He Knew The True Nature:
 - Of Those Graven Images!
 - Which Means That:
- Images Are Also Absurd:
 - In His Worship! Listen To The Words Of Habakkuk:
 - Habakkuk 2:18-20 - “What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols? / Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it. / But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him!”
 - **IE:** If You Had The Opportunity To Visit The Queen Of England - The Traditional Greeting Would Be With A Bow! But How Absurd Would It Be To Bow To A Picture Of The Queen If You Were In The Presence Of The Queen!
 - So It Is With Our Worship Of God! God Is A Spirit! And As A Spirit - He Is Omnipresent! He Is Every-Where Present! There Is No Need To Worship Something That Represents The Lord, Or Even Something That Tries To Resemble The Lord - Because The Lord Himself Is Present! Even Here, With Us Tonight!
- You See - God Cannot Be Worshiped:
 - Either By Or Through Images:
 - Because - According To John 4:24 - In His Essential Nature:
 - “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth!”
 - This Is Also What Moses Told The Children Of Israel:
 - Back In Deuteronomy 4:15-20 - “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: / Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female!”
 - You See - To Worship God:
 - In A Carnal Way:
 - Using Images - However Sincere A Person Might Be:
 - Is A Corrupt Form Of Worship:
 - And Will Corrupt The Ones Worshiping As Well!
 - Which Is Exactly What Happened:
 - At The Foot Of Mt. Sinai:
 - When - Aaron - Made The Golden Calf And Said To The Children Of Israel - “These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt!” (Exodus 32:4)
 - And What Happened Next?
 - Exodus 32:5-6 - “And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the LORD. / And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down

to eat and to drink, and rose up to play!” (Gross Immorality) (1 Cor. 10:7)

- God Is A Spiritual God:
 - And Must Not Be Worshiped:
 - In Carnal & Corrupt Ways!
 - But - For Us Today:
 - This Spiritual God Came To Us:
 - In The Form Of Man - In The Person Of The Lord Jesus Christ!
 - In His Letter To The Colossians - Paul Tells Us That:
 - **Jesus** Is - “The image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature!” (1:15)
 - And - That - “In [**Jesus**] Dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily!” (2:9)
 - So - Now - We Can Think Of & Worship God:
 - As He Is In Christ!
 - Because - This Is The Image He Took Upon Himself! Not An Image Made By Us!
 - Because - This Is The Second Commandment:
 - “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth!”

* Another Truth We Find In This Commandment Is:

2. The Sovereign Nature Of God!

- Which We Find In:
 - The Next Part Of 20:4:
 - “Or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth!”
 - Now An Idol:
 - Can Be Either:
 - An Invention:
 - Of The Mind:
 - Or - It Can Be:
 - In Imitation:
 - Of The Creation!
 - And This Is What:
 - God Prohibits With This Command As Well!
 - Because - God Is The Sovereign Creator:
 - Over Everything!
- Over Everything Above Us!
 - Everything “That Is In Heaven Above!”
 - The “Heavens” Have Often Been Divided:
 - Into Three Regions!
 - The Airy Heaven:
 - Which Is The First Heaven:
 - Where The Birds Fly!
 - The Starry Heaven:
 - Which Is The Second Heaven:
 - Where The Sun, Moon & Stars Reside!
 - And - The Supreme Heaven:
 - Which Is The Third Heaven:
 - Where The Angels Minister In The Presence Of God!
 - Yet - Everything In The Heavens:
 - Have Been Created By God:
 - And Yet - They Have All - At One Time Or Another & In One Way Or Another - Been Used In Worship!
 - But God Alone Is To Be Worshiped:
 - As The Creator - And Apart From His Creation!
 - He Is Sovereign! Also:
- Over Everything Around Us!
 - Everything “That Is In The Earth Beneath!”
 - Not Just Talking About The Earth:
 - Beneath Our Feet - But The Earth:

- Beneath The Heavens Above!
- These Are The Objects That We See:
 - Every Day - And Are Familiar With!
 - But No Matter What They Are:
 - They Too Have Been Created By God!
- And God Alone Is To Be Worshiped:
 - As The Creator - And Apart From His Creation!
 - He Is Sovereign! Also:
- Over Everything Under Us!
 - Everything “That Is In The Water Under The Earth!”
- The Children Of Israel:
 - Needed To Be Reminded Of God’s Sovereign Nature:
 - Because - Having Just Escaped Egypt:
 - They Were Very Familiar With The God’s Of Egypt - Which Took The Very Forms That God Condemns In This Command!
 - The Egyptians Had Gods:
 - Made Up Of **Heavenly** Objects!
 - They Saw & Felt The Power Of Sun:
 - So They Made The Sun Into A God - By The Name Of Ra!
 - They Saw The Rays Of The Sun:
 - So They Created A God Out Of Its Rays As Well - By The Name Of Aten!
 - Well - Since The Sun Didn’t Always Shine, There Must Be Another God That Would Swallow Up Sun Each Night:
 - And That God’s Name Was Appropriately Named - Nut!
 - The Egyptians Also Had Gods:
 - Made Up Of **Earthly** Objects!
 - The Illustrations Of Their Gods Often Had The Body Of A Person - But With The Head Of An Animal - Like The Head Of A Jackal, A Cat, A Hawk, A Scarab-Beetle, A Crocodile!
 - The Egyptians Even Had A God:
 - For The **Water** - Which They Believed Was The Life-Spring Of The Universe & Of All The Other God’s As Well!
 - The One Thing The Egyptians’ Gods Had In Common:
 - Was That They Were All Created Objects!
 - Even Their Gods Were Created - With The Exception Of One!
- But - When God Delivered His People From Egypt:
 - He Decisively & Convincingly Proved:
 - His Sovereignty Over Any & All:
 - Of The God’s The Egyptians Had!
 - The Water God Of The Egyptians:
 - Was No Match For The True God:
 - Because He Created The Water:
 - And Could Divide Them At His Pleasure!
 - The Human-Animal Gods Of The Egyptians:
 - Were No Match For The True God:
 - Because He Created Everyone:
 - On This Earth - And Could:
 - Give & Take Away Their Lives According To His Will! And Did With The Tenth Plague!
 - Even The Life Of Pharaoh Was In His Hand!
 - The Heavenly Gods Of The Egyptians:
 - Were No Match For The True God:
 - Because He Was The One Who Created The Sun, The Moon, And The Stars In Just One Day:
 - And By Just The Sound Of His Voice!
 - And He Could Snuff Out Their Light In A Moment! And Did With The Ninth Plague!
- So - In Effect:
 - God Is Telling His People:

- You Have Absolutely No Reason:
 - To Go Back To Egypt!
 - Not With Your Feet!
 - And - Not With Your Hearts!
- In Part - It Was The Egyptians:
 - Paul Was Talking About When He Wrote:
 - Romans 1:25 - “Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen!”
- Isn't This Also What The Lord Was Referring To:
 - Back In Deuteronomy 4:16-20 - When He Warned Them About Corrupting Themselves - By Making Any: “Graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, / The likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, / The likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth: / 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. / But the LORD hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day!”
- God Is A Sovereign God:
 - And Must Not Be Worshiped:
 - Along With That Which He Created!
 - This Is The Second Commandment:
 - “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth!”

Conclusion:

1. Next Sunday - We Will Look At:
 - Three More Truths About God:
 - From The Next Part Of This Commandment:
 - From 20:5-6!
2. But For Tonight:
 - Remember These Two Truths:
 - God Is A Spiritual God! And:
 - God Is A Sovereign God!
 - And Worship Him:
 - Accordingly!
3. I'd Like To Close:
 - With These Words:
 - From The Old Puritan Pastor - Thomas Watson:
 - “What Greater Disparagement To The Infinite God Than To Represent Him By That Which Is Finite; The Living God By That Which Is Without Life; And The Maker Of All By A Thing Which Is Made!”

- * Do You Believe That God Is A Spiritual & A Sovereign God?
- * Do You Believe That God Is Present Everywhere & At All Times?
- * Do You Worship The Lord In Your Spirit & From Your Heart?

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