

TRUE WORSHIP
July 19, 2020
Exodus 32:1-14

“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.” Exodus 20:4

This second commandment of the Ten Commandments forbids making an image for use in worship. Prohibition of making an image for use in worship was for these reasons:

1. No one knows what God looks like, thus no true representation can be made.

“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” (John 1:18).

2. Because God is a spirit, true worship is spiritual in nature, not physical or object-focused.

“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23, 24).

3. Inevitably, reliance upon physical “crutches” distracts from true worship.

“And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, **Tomorrow 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. **And the LORD said unto Moses, go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves:** They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt” (Exodus 32:5-8).

4. Scripture instructs that our affections be set upon that which is unseen.

“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed” (John 20:9).

“We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” (II Corinthians 4:18).

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible” (Hebrews 11:1, 27).

“If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” (I John 4:20).
honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

“Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory” (I Peter 1:8).

5. The New Testament presents six elements of true worship:

- a. Prayer: “What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also” (I Corinthians 14:15, 16).
- b. Reading Scripture: “Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine” (I Timothy 4:13).
- c. Singing: “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5:19, 20).
- d. Giving: “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come” (I Corinthians 16:1, 2).
- e. Preaching: “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight” (Acts 20:7).
- f. Communion: “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come” (I Corinthians 11:26).

6. We endeavor to worship with joyful sobriety, reverent enthusiasm, humble boldness and dignified simplicity.

Psalm 100

“Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. 2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. 3 Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. 4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. 5 For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.”