

“How to Worship”
Exodus 20:4-6
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I. Introduction

- A. We are studying The Ten Commandments together. Why?
 - 1. God spoke them
 - a) They are divine words
 - 2. God spoke His commands; they are not suggestions
 - a) Universal words
 - 3. God wrote them in stone
 - a) They are immutable words
- B. There are two divisions
 - 1. (vv. 1-4) Loving God
 - 2. (vv. 5-10) Loving your neighbor
- C. Today, we come to commandment number two
 - 1. “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image” (v. 4)
 - 2. The seventeenth-century puritan preacher, Thomas Watson, said, “In the first commandment, worshipping a false God is forbidden. In the second commandment, however, worshipping the true God in a false manner is forbidden”
 - a) The object of worship
 - b) The manner of our worship
 - 3. Who we worship is important, and how we worship is important
 - a) The first commandment forbids polytheism
 - b) The second commandment forbids idolatry
 - 1) A.W. Tozer, in his book “The Knowledge of the Holy,” said, “A right conception of God is basic not only to systematic theology but to practical Christian living as well. It is to worship what the foundation is to the temple; where it is inadequate or out of plumb, the whole structure must sooner or later collapse. I believe there is scarcely an error in doctrine or a failure in applying Christian ethics that cannot be traced finally to imperfect or ignoble thoughts about God”

II. The Prohibition (Exodus 20:4-5a)

- A. In this commandment, God forbids the making of figures or objects representative of God as objects or aids to worship
 - 1. What about religious art or sculptures?
 - a) Don’t make any graven image (v. 4)
 - 1) (Romans 1)
 - b) Don’t bow down (v. 5)
 - c) Don’t serve them (v. 5)
 - 2. What is the big deal? What is the danger?
 - a) It limits God

- 1) Your God is too small
 - 2) God is eternal, transcendent, infinite
 - 3) We chain and warp our thoughts of God when we shut them up in marble or wood
 - 4) It limits God's greatness
 - a. Illustration- (Acts 17)
 - b) It obscures God's glory
 - 1) Idols always obscure God's glory
 - a. Illustration- Abraham and the golden calf
 - 2) It also often leads to immorality
 - c) It localizes God
 - 1) God is omnipresent
 - a. Illustration- When Solomon dedicated the temple
 - b. (John 4)
 - d) It materializes God
 - 1) Illustration- Jesus and the woman of Samaria (John 4)
 - e) It places man's sinful imagination above God's divine revelation
 - 1) Man makes God in his image
 - 2) God can only be known by revelation. How?
 - a. Creation (Psalm 19)
 - b. Scripture (Psalm 19)
 - c. Jesus (Hebrews 1)
3. The prohibition against idolatry is deeper than making material images of God. It also forbids dreaming up mental images of God that are false
 - a) A cosmic "Santa Clause"
 - b) An angry judge
 - c) A loving grandfather who would never judge sin
 - 1) Remember, God is love, but He is also holy
 4. We must never make up our own ideas about God
 - a) Illustration- Story of the little girl drawing a picture in her fourth-grade Sunday school class
 - b) I think of the Word-Faith teachers or prosperity preachers
 - c) Idolatry dishonors God
 - 1) It also deceives the worshipper and destroys their relationship with the true and living God
 - 2) It leads to an empty life
 - 3) (Colossians 2)

III. The Protection (Exodus 20:5b)

- A. "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God" (v. 5)
 1. God's jealousy over us and for our worship is not sinful
 2. God's jealousy is a virtue, not a vice. It is holy and righteous
 3. Remember, God is our creator and redeemer
 4. He deserves our love and devotion
 - a) God's jealousy for us requires us to be zealous for God
 - b) Are you zealous for God?

IV. The Punishment (Exodus 20:5c)

- A. God's zeal will carry Him to great extremes to keep us faithful
 - 1. God lets us reap what we sow
 - 2. It will affect our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren
 - 3. But it is God's grace that brings us back

V. The Promised Provision (Exodus 20:6)

- A. God's lovingkindness
 - 1. Showing mercy
- B. To thousands of them
 - 1. Or generations
- C. Them that love me
- D. And keep my commandments

VI. Conclusion

- A. Oh, the blessed life of obedience!
 - 1. Let us love God preeminently
 - 2. Let us worship Him in spirit and in truth
 - 3. The truth of who He is is revealed in both the written Word and the ultimate living Word, Jesus Christ