

Subject: *The Second Commandment*

Scripture: *Exodus 20:1-6*

The first and second commandments have to do with the nature of God and the worship of God. Nothing could be more important than that...knowing the one true God and worshiping Him in the right way. The first and second commandments have to do with God's attributes.

1. The Truth about God

- A. God is the only true God. All other gods are false gods; they are non-existent.
- B. God is eternal. All other false gods have a beginning.
- C. God is self-existent. False gods are created by someone.
- D. God is self-sufficient. False gods are needy ("black holes of neediness").
- E. God is living and life-giving. False gods are lifeless; they have no life at all.
- F. God is infinite, unlimited by time or space. False gods are finite and limited.
- G. God is all-knowing and wise. False gods are dumb.
- H. God is all-powerful. False gods are powerless.
- I. God is glorious. False gods are worthless.
- J. God is spirit. False gods are made into a physical form or object.

The first and second commandments forbid the worship of all other gods. We must worship the one true God and Him alone, and we must worship the one true God in the right way.

2. The Perversion of Idols

- A. Having an idol in the form of a physical object (wood, stone, etc.). This kind of idolatry has been around since the days of Abraham and is still popular in the world. Why is there so much idol worship like this? There are several reasons: 1) people want a physical god they can see and touch; 2) people want a god they can use; and 3) people want a god they feel comfortable with.
- B. Having an idol of anyone or anything that takes the rightful place of God. This is something you love, serve, or honor in the place of God.
- C. Having a physical image to misrepresent the one true God. This is what Israel did while Moses was on Mt. Sinai receiving the Ten Commandments. The people came to Aaron the high priest and he made a golden calf. It was a false representation of the one God. See *Exodus 32:1-5*.
- D. Having a mental image to misrepresent the one true God. Whenever we think of God in a way that doesn't represent His true character, we have created an idol in our mind.

Someone said that in the beginning God made man in His image and ever since then man has tried to return the favor. A little girl was drawing a picture and her mother asked, "What are you drawing, sweetie?" She answered, "I'm drawing a picture of God." Her mother said, "But nobody knows what God looks like." The girl said, "They will when I get through." All of us have a picture in our mind of what God is like. We must have a correct picture, a biblical picture. Don't think you can make God like you want Him to be, like a person in a cafeteria line picking and choosing what he wants.

3. The Jealousy of God

God reveals that He is a jealous God. At first that may sound strange because we usually think of jealousy as something negative and not positive. Later on God reminded the people of His jealousy. See **Exodus 34:4-14**. God is jealous in a good sense. His jealousy is a protective love for what is rightfully His. He will not tolerate any rivals. He deserves and demands the total love and loyalty of His people. He is also jealous of His own nature. He will not allow anyone to reduce Him to a physical image. He is protective of His glory and holiness.

Isaiah 42:8 I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

Someone may ask, what right does God have to be jealous? One athlete has no right to be jealous of another athlete because he is not the only athlete in the world. He doesn't own sports all by himself. One musician has no right to be jealous of another because he is not the only musician in the world. He doesn't own all the music. One artist has no right to be jealous of another because he is not the only artist in the world. He doesn't own art. There is more than one athlete, more than one musician, more than one artist in the world, but there's only one God.

Imagine how God must feel. Imagine how you would feel after you had created all things if people choose to worship the sun or the image of a fish or the image of a man instead of you the Creator? Wouldn't you have a right to be angry? God is saying He has the right to our love and devotion and He will not share it with another god. He deserves to be worshiped in a manner that brings Him glory.

Whenever people worship other gods or worship the true God in a wrong way, He will judge them ("visiting the iniquity" means bringing punishment on them). And the consequences will fall upon their children and future generations (Ex. 20:5-6).

Notice how God states this. There are two categories: those who hate Him and those who love Him and keep His commandments. Those who have other gods actually hate the one true God. Those who make God into an image that misrepresents Him actually hate Him. Those who love Him know Him as He is revealed in Scripture and they obey what He says.

We must know, love, and obey the one true God, and we must train our children and grandkids to know, love, and obey the one true God.

The Valley of Vision: "Let me never forget that I have an eternal duty to love, honor, and obey thee, that thou art infinitely worthy of such; that if I fail to glorify thee I am guilty of infinite evil that merits infinite punishment, for sin is the violation of an infinite obligation."

Do you know that is true...the sin of failing to glorify God is an infinite evil?