

# 2022.05.15 Evening Sermon in Exodus 20:4–6

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**Exodus 20:4–6** “You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; <sup>5</sup> you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, <sup>6</sup> but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.”

## ***God Alone Must Define Worship, Receive Worship, and Enable Worship: in Christ Alone!***

**Main idea:** God alone can give God to us or enable us to give ourselves truly to Him, and the way that He has given us to come to Him is through Christ.

**Introduction:** “Make for yourself”—the demonic way of worship comes by following man’s way of worship.

1. **God Alone Makes Worship, because in worship God gives Himself, first and foremost**
  - a. We are not the makers of worship
  - b. If we are the makers of worship, then we only offer creature-things
  - c. If we are the makers of worship, then we only worship created things
2. **God Alone Makes Worship, because in worship, we are to give ourselves to God**
  - a. Worship includes bowing and serving
  - b. Worship includes either hating or loving: if we give ourselves to a different idea of God, we hate Him Himself; if we give ourselves to God as He is we love Him Himself
3. **God Alone Makes Worship, because the way of His giving Himself has always been Christ, and the way of His bringing us to Himself has always been Christ**
  - a. If we come as He says, then we get Him in Christ
  - b. If we come as He says, then we get *to Him* via Christ

**Conclusion:** Just worshipping in a way that no man has invented reminds us that there is a true God. And worshipping in His way reminds us that He has actually given Himself to us, and made a way for us to come to Him: and both of those is Christ!

**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)**

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Exodus chapter 20 verses 4 through 6. These are the words of God. You shall not make for yourself. A carved image, any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath there. That is in the water. Under the earth. You shall not bow down to them nor serve.

Then for I He all pay your God and my jealous. God visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me.

But showing mercy to thousands to those who love me and keep my commands.

So far the reading of God's inspired and inherent word.

You shall not make for yourself. God's theology of worship is pretty clear. He is the one who makes it both for himself. And for us, God is the maker of worship. So one of the great things about coming to him in the way that he has made, it The fact that no man invented the way of worshiping by which, we worship even now, but the hearing of his word preached encourages us, that there is a God, The one, true, and living God, because he is the one who is invented.

This just like not too many minutes ago. We came to a table and we heard the Lord Jesus on the night that he was betrayed and that that meal was delivered to us by men who received it from our God, who had become man, who was betrayed on a particular night and died for our sins On the next day.

The reality of God is demonstrated at the table and the reality of God is demonstrated in what we call now the regulative principle. But what is here? Just a second commandment. You shall not make for yourself. Of course we can't actually make it. There were people in the Corinthian church who said sure we can go to the the temples and Corinth and weekend.

Participate in the worship there and we can even buy the meat right there in the temple before. The discount stuff, goes to market and we can do that because an idol isn't anything. Those those things that they're worshipping to, those aren't gods. They don't actually exist. Look how great our theology is.

We can do what we want and the apostle in the middle of his letter says that's right. And idle isn't anything? But you're not edifying. Others. And then a few chapters later, he says an idol isn't anything but a demon is something and what they offer, they don't offer to idols.

They offer to demons idolatry deciding for ourselves. How to worship Always degenerates toward the demonic. We even saw that in Steven's sermon this morning. Well Stephen's defense at his trial which sounded a whole lot like a sermon this morning that by worshipping according to the works of their hands which had a tradition all the way back to the mountain, this mountain that they're sitting at the base of.

And they'd forget very quickly, the glory of God and how God chose how God would communicate himself to them only through a voice which when Moses comes to remind them in the second giving of the law in Deuteronomy chapter 5, He spends a great deal of time. In Deuteronomy chapter 4 saying you saw no form.

You only heard a voice, This is how God has decided to give himself to us, but they don't stop with a golden calf by which they have a feast to yalt way who brought them out of the land of Egypt. They also have the Tabernacle of mullah. You know what they do at the Tabernacle of Moa, the heat up a metal idle.

So hot that when you place the Israelite baby or whoever else it is upon the arms of the heated, idle it bursts into flame and you get a miracle that the God has received. This sacrifice Israel knew that the council to which Steven was preaching knew that, and they were supposed to hear, we can't do everything in 68 verses and in one sermon.

They were supposed to hear an echo of the wicked Pharaoh, who oppressed God's people by making them expose their babies. So that they would not live. And is it any surprise that in a church? That is several generations into the wide acceptance of deciding how we will worship. God, the loss of the reality of the living God, the loss of the image of God, and man, the loss of the fact that when we come to Him in worship, and we come in His way, we are to come with.

Reverence has degenerated again, into the demonic, the demonic of self-indulgence in worship. First and foremost, people arguing over man-made worship old versus man-made worship new, creating a likeness of that, which is in heaven with their great arches, and they're stained glass windows and candles and incense and hearts or making a likeness of that, which is on earth with all of the emotionalism that would actually belong to be engaged by the Living God.

But without the living, God, just emotions, Emotions that can be had, in the midst, of silliness, emotions that can be had in the midst of casualness. And so a church with old godless worship and new godless worship and arguing with one another contemporary or traditional or blended, right? The the I'm of Apollos and I am a Peter in the blended people we were of Christ.

No, you're just a man from all ages. And now, as we experience to our horror in the past few weeks, the worship of Mullah and the religion of Mullah and the destruction of babies justified even in what are called evangelical pullments. Truly worshipping our way is to hate God And it's very easy to poke to point the finger of those pulpits where they justified abortion or at least letting others do it.

But the finger of Exodus 20 verses 4 through 6 points at us, every time we want the worship to be how we like it. You know, that you can actually hold to the regulative principle and be one of the greatest violators of the second commandment because you judge the songs because they were how you liked them and you judged the preaching because that passage was opened the way you would have wanted.

It opened not by faithfulness to the text. Those are two different things, but you and I both know how easily are flesh will take faithfulness to the text and mean, it, whatever I would have enjoyed more, especially if what was in the text that touched the nerve on us horse faithfully proclaimed, and touched the nerve, God alone makes worship.

Because in worship God gives himself The people are going to say after they hear the Ten Commandments, we've had enough. Moses You grow up, you get the words from God and you bring them back to us and it takes a while. Moses is gone for forty days and 40 nights and right at the end, they decide to have the feast.

And they say, as of this moment we don't know what belonged to him, he was gonna get us, God's words, but we don't want to wait for words of God. We are gonna worship the way though. We want to They are at the mountain with the living. God himself communicating himself by the servant through whom he had decided to do so and had actually just some six weeks earlier convinced them that that was the best way and then they decide to give up the genuine revelation of God himself in order to have God as they would have preferred him.

Of course, if you're making up your own worship, you can't make up the presence of God. You can't bring God down. There's a scripture says you will ascend into heaven, as if we could, bring God down to us. The only thing that you can set before yourself, is that which comes from you and that would come from the creation.

And if we are the merc makers of worship, not only can we only engage that which we have made and not God himself. But then when we do engage, and we offer ourselves, We've presented something other than God to us. And then we present ourselves to something. Other than God, You shall not make for yourself.

A carved image, 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. You shall not down to them nor serve them. Now, the first way that this is always disobeyed is when we're telling us that they are helping us worship.

God. They are, they are helps. They are assistances People do this. Even with images of our Lord Jesus Christ. Don't. They is all this will really help the children. The paper settle, this will really help the illiterate. Oh yes, Your pictures are really going to overcome the fullness of the children or the falleness of the illiterate.

Of course not. It's utter nonsense and Heidelberg Catechism, Westminster standards, of course, agree with the scripture on this point because God alone makes worship and therefore in the worship in which God presents himself to us and we offer ourselves to Him. It can only be in the way that God has said, and if we come the way, we have said, we don't just come the wrong way.

We always come to the wrong. God the papers sort of got something close to right when they conflated the first and second commandments, not because they are the same commandment, but because if you break the second, you broke the first, You can call it the Lord that you are worshipping in those churches, but it is not the Lord whom you are worshipping, and you can call it the Lord who you are worshipping.

When you come next door, even in the actions that he has demanded. But if we make our decisions, based on what we feel is most worshipful, rather than by how God says to to worship and then applying wisdom from obedience. Then it is not God. Whom we are worshipping but ourselves The Apostle actually invents a word.

He takes the word for the human will and the word for worship and he smashes them together and he talks about something called Will Worship. Worship is of God, alone is in, which God presents himself to us and in worship in which it is to God to whom we are to give himself and he designs it this way.

We know. Now, as we even heard in God's, wonderful. Mercy to us and Acts chapter 7 today because Jesus is the great display of God to us, isn't he? And so in all of those forms and shadows that God had given them, But especially by the word preached, which have always been the heart of his worship.

But in coming through the sacrifice of bulls and goats. Why? Because the blood ability to do anything, no, but because God himself would buy the church would purchase the church with his own blood, when he became a man in Jesus Christ. And the worship was consecrated by Jesus Christ and His blood.

No man has seen God at any time, but the only begotten of God who is in the bosom of the Father. He has fully revealed Him. And so if we come in our way, we come to behold God in some other form than in Jesus, whether it's the shadows that pointed forward, or the preaching in which Jesus addresses His church and the singing in which Jesus sings his father's, praise in the midst of the congregation and the praying that is offered through Jesus, the great High Priest on the basis of the sacrifice of Jesus and the sacramental meal that is the Lord's supper in which the Lord's body and the Lord's, blood are used to show forth, the the So you proclaim, the Lord's death until the Lord comes.

And so worship in the Old Covenant, who worship and the New Covenant that God commanded was always to make both display of himself in Jesus. And to give us to be able to come to Him through faith. In Jesus, We looked at the, the old testament, divergences lead, leaving away, going astray and worship.

Like what Jeroboam son of Nebat has been doing in first Kings last couple of chapters? And we say, don't say no that those things that God had chosen by which to worship and that way that place that God had chosen inward to worship and those priests that God had chosen to lead the worship that all of those things pointed forward to Jesus, they're coming to God without Jesus.

But when you and I want to come to God with anything other than what Jesus leads from heaven. The second commandment says the same thing about New Testament worship. As it said to the old, You're coming without Jesus, without the new and living way. That is his flesh without heart sprinkled clean.

That is his blood without the resurrected enthroned person who always lives to intercede and is able to save us to the uttermost. But dear. Christian. Don't you see the glory of the positive counterpart to this commandment because it says you shall not make for yourself and then it talks about how to workshop and then it comes.

And he says, if we take the contrapositive, just true, if you come and worship God in the way that He has said, you come through Jesus, you're received in heaven, God displays himself to you in Christ. God brings you to himself through Christ now, hopefully, you and I have gotten over this.

Why do people make such a big deal of how to worship God, and why, especially to those reformed people make such a big deal of how to worship God. And that's not surprising that we would have a response like that from our flesh. Everyone of the commandments disobedience to every one of them is a hating of God, isn't it?

But it's this one and the breakers of this one that God says, those who worship me in the way that they want, the hate me, They don't want the real me in the real way that I have given them to have to have me in Christ. And to come to me through Christ, they want an idea of me or a feeling about me instead of me myself.

Can you imagine husbands if your wife had an idea of you that she preferred to the way you are and she had feelings for that idea of you instead of feelings for you. Yourself, Would you be pleased with the intensity of the froth into which you worked herself up emotionally, about that false idea of you, would you say?

Oh I'm so glad you feel so strongly about that lie that you tell yourself, you're married to. And You don't actually have feelings for me. I just don't do it for you.

It's what we do to God. If we come in the way, we want to the idea of Him that we prefer only get ourselves all worked up about that matter. How worshipful you thought it felt for justices, worshiping in a way that no man has invented reminds us that it is the true God who has given us to worship this way.

So also worshiping in this way in his way reminds us that he has given himself to redeem sinners. Not just Holy angels but even more to redeem sinners The angels who fell? He consigned to help, but the children of Abraham by faith, He has brought us all the way home.

He has united us to God the Son and you not only displays himself to us but he glorifies himself in us and brings us through. Jesus. That's what I am the way and the truth and the life is actually all about and the context it isn't just about how to be saved.

It is fact, but it's about how to come all the way to God. Who has displayed himself so much in Jesus. That Jesus would say, if you've seen me, you've seen the Father, the Lord grant us not only to worship in the actions that he's given, but to have hearts that desire.

Not what we want but what he wants. So that will come to Him in Jesus through Jesus. Remember let's pray. Lord, how we thank you for this glorious commandment. We thank you for the Reformation for there have been times when the New Testament church strayed so far, that the horse of the worship of Israel and the idolatry, and the demonicness of Israel have been reproduced in, superstitions and fabrications and oh, God have mercy on us because even among even jellical offspring of the Reformation.

The horrors are being reproduced, forgive us O God. Because even in our remaining fleshliness, we are able to reproduce that attitude and we know that we do have mercy how we thank you that you have not only presented yourself to us in Christ but that He has atoned for us And so we pray that you would enable us not only to come through Him by those actions but by your spirit applying Him to us by faith, that has blood would consecrate us.

That his righteousness would be the worthiness and that your spirit would even produce in us his mind and His heart. So that it would be you yourself, whom we love and whom we worship.

Oh Lord. We hear the warning that if we worship in the wrong way, that our children will be able to perceive that. It's really self. That is in control and that they will have already been lost in our homes. By the time, they turn away from the rituals that they learned in our churches, make us to love you.

As you've given yourself to us, make us to yield to you as the giver of all of your good commandments and bring them to us. That covenant, blessing of children who have engaged, you genuinely with mom and dad in the home and in the public worship and become another generation of those who know you in Jesus and come to you through Jesus.

Which we asked in his name, Amen.