

# Westminster Larger Catechism

## *Question 109-b*

Halifax, 11 April 2010

### **Introduction:**

Today we continue our study of the second commandment.

- We spent the first three weeks looking at what is required in this commandment (Q. 108),
- Last week, we began to look at what is forbidden in the second commandment as outlined for us in Q. 109.
  - Here is the question and the answer:

### **Q. 109 What are the sins forbidden in the second commandment?**

- A. The sins forbidden in the second commandment are, all devising, counseling, commanding, using, and anywise approving, any religious worship not instituted by God Himself; tolerating a false religion; the making any representation of God, of all or of any of the three persons, either inwardly in our mind, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever; all worshiping of it, or God in it or by it; the making of any representation of feigned deities, and all worship of them, or service belonging to them; all superstitious devices, corrupting the worship of God, adding to it, or taking from it, whether invented and taken up of ourselves, or received by tradition from others, though under the title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent, or any other pretence whatsoever; simony; sacrilege; all neglect, contempt, hindering, and opposing the worship and ordinances which God has appointed.**

Last week, we looked at the first part of this answer where it says:

**The sins forbidden in the second commandment are, all devising, counseling, commanding, using, and anywise approving, any religious worship not instituted by God Himself...**

- We saw that essentially, the second commandment forbids us to follow our own ideas in the way we worship God.
  - We went to Genesis 4 and looked at the story of Cain and Abel.
    - Here we saw how Cain tried to approach God without offering a blood sacrifice such as God required.
    - He thought God should accept him and his offering even though he did not offer the sacrifice that God had appointed.

- And when God did not accept Cain or his offering, Cain became angry at his brother Abel because Abel was accepted—and so Cain rose up against him to kill him!
- I showed you that the sin of Cain is still going on today in the worship of God.
  - There are many who try to approach Him in their own way instead of in the way that He has appointed.
    - And they become very angry if those who preach the gospel tell them that they and their worship is not accepted because they did not come in the way God has appointed.
    - That way, of course, is Jesus Christ.
      - No one can come to the Father but by Him!
      - If we come without faith in His offering to take away our sins, we will be rejected, no matter how sincere and sacrificial our worship may be.
- We learn here the principle that as sinners,
  - we are in no position to decide what is appropriate for us to bring to God.
  - We must get our instructions from God in His word.
    - Even if we were not fallen, it would be very presumptuous for us to come to God without finding out what He wants.
    - He is the One who is worshipped.
      - It is for Him to decide.
      - It is for Him to direct us in our worship—right down to the details.
        - That is what we concentrated on last week.

And now this week, we are going to look at what is *expressly* forbidden in the second commandment—according to the letter of the commandment...

- Ever since we began to speak about the Ten Commandments, I have emphasised that the proper way to approach them is not as those who only look at the letter... as those who are trying to make them as narrow in their scope as possible.
  - We are not to be like the child who is told to keep his hands off an antique table who claims that he is innocent because he only touched it with his foot...
    - He knows what his mother meant—and so do we!
    - The legalist is always trying to make narrow definitions so that he can avoid the law,
      - but when we have been redeemed by the grace of God, God's law is written in our hearts so that we delight in it!
      - It no longer condemns us because we are forgiven,
        - so we delight in it because it tells us what is right and what is pleasing to our loving Father in heaven.

- We want it to fill our lives in every part, even as it filled Jesus' life in every part of Him.
  - That is why it is important to look at the principles that are taught in the Ten Commandments and not just at the letter.
  - That is why Jesus teaches that we violate the command about adultery even when we only have lust in our heart...
  - And that is why it is right for us to see that the second commandment is not limited to images of wood and stone,
    - but involves the worship of God in any way that He has not appointed.

But it is also important for us to look at what is expressly commanded as well...

- It would be very foolish for someone to commit adultery and say he didn't because in his heart he was still thinking about his wife when he took another woman.
  - That sounds ridiculous, but this is exactly the kind of arguments that some churches use when it comes to the second commandment...
    - They will take a picture of Jesus or set up an image of Him, and then they will claim that they are not worshipping the image that they bow before, but that they are only thinking of God who is represented by the image.
      - The Roman Catholic Church has all sorts of elaborate argumentation to justify such actions, but when you get down to it, they are bowing before images of Jesus, of Mary, and of the Saints.
        - The making and bowing to the image is the very thing that is expressly forbidden in the second commandment.
    - Turn to Exodus 20, verse 4, and see for yourself. It says:
      - Exodus 20:4-5: 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; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them.
      - And note that it is not just a carved image, but *any likeness*—it doesn't just apply to carved images, but to paintings or moulded images...
        - A person cannot say, "Well this image was not carved, it was cast," or "This is not a carved image, it is just a painting."
        - You know, the Eastern Orthodox churches claim that they do not transgress because they use pictures to aid their worship instead of three-D images.
        - This is ridiculous because the commandment expressly states that we are not to make any likeness of God at all.
          - In fact, we are not even to make mental images of Him.

- When He is described as a lion, we may think of a lion, but we do not worship a lion...
- We worship our great God who is like a lion, yet much greater than a lion.

I have stated a couple of principles here. Now I want to turn to some specific scriptures to consider these principles.

- First, I want to show you that the second commandment expressly forbids the making of images to be used in worship.
- Second, I want to show you clearly that the second commandment also forbids making images of things that are associated with God for use in worship.

In looking at these, we will cover the second part of the answer to Question 109:

- **the making any representation of God, of all or of any of the three persons, either inwardly in our mind, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever; all worshipping of it, or God in it or by it;**
- This is what is expressly forbidden in the second commandment.
  - so let's begin with the first principle:

### **I. The second commandment expressly forbids the making of images to be used in the worship of God.**

A. The official interpretation of the Roman Catholic Church is that the second commandment only forbids the worshipping of other gods by images.

1. As most of you probably know, they have images of Jesus Christ that they erect in their places of worship—on crucifixes and in stained glass windows and at the stations of the cross.
  - And the worshippers bow down before these images and cross themselves when they see them.
  - They feel that God is pleased to make Himself known to them in this way.
    - But the question of whether this is right is not to be answered by the subjective feelings of the worshippers about whether it makes them feel close to God.
      - We must rather ask if God has authorised us to worship Him in this way and if this is a way that He wishes to make Himself known to us.

TRANS> The second commandment seems clear—it expressly forbids us to bow before images of any kind...

2. But what do the Romanists do with the second commandment?

- Ahh! They have a very subtle way of taking it right out of the Decalogue.
  - They blend it with the first commandment so as to make the prohibition about the use of images to apply only to the making of images of false gods!
- Look again at Exodus 20 and I will show you what they do.
  - You see the first commandment in Exodus 20:3:
    - “You shall have no other gods before me”
    - That is clear enough...
  - The second commandment begins in verse 4. You can see that it is another commandment by the way it is worded...
    - It begins with the words. “you shall not”
      - Exo 20:4: 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; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them...
      - But they say that all of this is the first commandment and that the second commandment does not begin until verse 7...
        - Exo 20:7: You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
- Of course this creates a bit of a problem for them because now they only have *nine commandments* and God’s word clearly teaches that there are *ten commandments*.
  - So look over the commandments and see if you can find a way they might try to get out of this!
    - Look especially at the tenth commandment which is found in verse 17.
      - It says,
        - Exo 20:17: You shall not covet your neighbour’s house; you shall not covet your neighbour’s wife, nor his male servant... etc.
    - They claim that here we have two commandments—the ninth and tenth!
      - The ninth is: You shall not covet your neighbour’s house.
      - The tenth is: You shall not covet your neighbour’s wife.
      - That is how they get around their unnatural mingling together of the first and second commandment,
        - all so they can have their images to worship!

B. But there is an account given to us in the OT that is fatal to this notion that it is permissible to worship the true God by images.

- It is a passage that we have looked at before, but I want to look at it a little more closely today.
  - Exodus 32. The account of the worship of the golden calf.
    - Here, I will read the first ten verses.
      - READ Exodus 32:1-10

1. You see here that the LORD was very angry with Israel for what they did here.

- He was so angry that He threatened to wipe them out and start another nation.
- He did not consider what they had done to be a little offence...
  - Of course God had purposed all along that Moses should intercede for them and obtain the mercy God had promised concerning them, but what they did was very displeasing to the LORD!
    - It was something they fully deserved to be cut off for.
- Even after Moses interceded, many of the people who would not repent were executed at God's command.
  - In fact, 3000 men were executed for holding onto this transgression!
  - So you see that it was highly displeasing to the LORD.

2. But look carefully at what they did.

a. When they made this golden calf and bowed down to it,

- it was not, at least for most of them, an image of another god.
  - It was an image of the LORD—the God who had brought them out of the land of Egypt.
  - They were not worshipping another god here,
    - They were worshipping the LORD who had brought them out of the land of Egypt.

b. Let me show you the proof of this from the text...

1) First, look at verse 4.

- Look at how the people refer to the calf as:
  - “the God who brought you out of the land of Egypt.”
  - Grammatically it could be translated, “these be the gods who brought you out o the land of Egypt.”

- The word God or gods is Eloheem, and it is always plural whether it refers to the true God, to one false god, or to several false gods.
- That it here refers not to “gods” but to “God” is evident from the fact that there is only one calf that was made.
  - If they were worshipping several gods here, they would have made several images.
- Furthermore, as Israel had only recently been delivered from Egypt, they all said that they wanted to worship the God who had brought them out...
  - And they all knew who that was!
    - It was Jehovah.
    - They were not looking for another god, just a way to worship the God who had brought them out of Egypt.
  - This calf, therefore, was meant to be an image of Jehovah.
    - People are not so stupid as to think that they were actually making a god per se when they make an image...
      - they were making an image to gather around in order that there they might meet with the God who had brought them out of Egypt.
      - The image was a vehicle by which they supposed they could meet with the God who brought them out of Egypt.

TRANS> So the first reason we see that this was an image of the true God is that He is referred to as the God who brought them out of Egypt.

- 2) The second reason is that in verse 5, Aaron calls the one that they are getting ready to worship in this calf the LORD.
- In verse 5, it says,
    - Ex 32:5: “So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD."
  - As most of you know, when LORD is written in our English Bibles with all capital letters as it is here,
    - it refers to God’s unique covenant name—Yahweh or Jehovah.
    - This is the name that means “I am that I am,” and so refers to Him as the self-existing one.
  - This was the name that was used to distinguish the true God from all other gods or so-called gods.

- The other nations never called their gods by the name “Yahweh” and whenever they wanted to speak of Israel’s God,
  - they often spoke of Him as “Yahweh” or as “the LORD” in our English Bibles.
- And it was also the name that He used to refer to Himself in particular as the one who made a covenant with His people.
  - When Aaron refers to the calf by this name, he is definitely referring to the true and living God...

TRANS> So you see clearly that Israel was not breaking the first commandment here so much as the second commandment.

- And what they did was very wrong!
- That means there are no grounds for saying that it is okay to make an image of God to worship as long as it is an image of the true God!
  - The Israelites made an image of the true God in Exodus 32 and God was ready to blot them out because of it!

3) But someone might object that in verse 1,

- the people say:
  - “Come, make us gods that shall go before us,”
  - That is, at least, how it is translated in the New King James.
- But remember what we already learned about the word Eloheem translated gods here...
  - It is always plural.
  - Therefore, this verse could just as well be translated,
    - “Come, make us God to go before us.”
    - This translation has difficulties because who could ever say that they could make God...
- But if you think about what they mean, it makes sense that this is what they would have said...
  - We saw in verse 4 that the God they wanted to make was the one who had brought them out of Egypt.
    - He already was, so they do not mean that they are actually making a god—no one could do that!
    - They mean that they are making an image with which they can connect with God.

TRANS> So you see that the scriptures clearly speak against making images (or any thing else) that are not commanded by God as a way to try to connect with Him.



- He tells us what we are to do to connect with Him when we worship.
- The Roman Catholic church errs to suppose that worshippers can connect with God through images or pictures of Jesus or of God.

C. But I should point out that the Roman Catholics are not the only ones who do this.

1. Some of you may remember the description I gave you of an emergent church called Westwinds in one of our Isaiah sermons:

- Jim Wilson, a leader at this church, says proudly:
  - “At Westwinds, worship services are organic, earthy and multi-layered. They don’t use a painting or a poem to illustrate a point, or a drama as an element of a progressive presentation; instead, they weave several layers into a multi-sensory experience. The music, the art, the lighting effects, the powerful monologues and visual props form a tapestry that prepares the congregation to meet God at the communion table.”
  - "Worship experiences are 'moment collections' that we design to increase the incidences of bumping into the presence of God,"
  - Martoia says. "We hope we are creating moments where people can't help but experience God." At a service a few months before, Westwinds served communion to break a week of fasting. Instead of highlighting Jesus' suffering on the cross, as they did at the Good Friday service, they focused on one of the Beatitudes, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled" (Matthew 5:6 NIV). That day's "moment collection" incorporated the smell of baking bread, the worshipers' own hunger pains, poetry readings, fast food commercials playing on television sets throughout the auditorium, art on the big screen, and music. The music included "Breathe," a song with lyrics acknowledging that Jesus is a Christian's daily bread and affirming that believers are desperate for Him. These elements didn't give a context for the pastor to preach his sermon; rather, they and the pastor's words created a "moment collection"—a context for Jesus to speak to His people.”

2. You can see how people would like this.

- And you can see how it would help them feel like they had connected with God.
- Israel did not gather around the golden calf with regrets that it did not seem to work to meet with God like this!
  - They were very enthusiastic about this worship! It was great!
  - The one who wasn't pleased was the One they were supposed to be worshipping!
    - He was infuriated!
    - And so He is today with a church like Westwinds, however sincere, however enthusiastic, the worshippers may be!

- It is false religion and it is wrong to approve of it or to tolerate it my brothers and sisters.

TRANS> Now moving along, I want to show you next that:

**II. The second commandment not only forbids making of images of God, but also the making of images of things *associated* with God.**

- In other words, when we make something that is not actually an image of God per se, but something that is somehow associated with Him, this too is a violation of the second commandment.
  - In a way, this is what the worship at Westwinds that I just described was all about.
    - It was the use of things associated with God so that worshippers might “bump into God,” as Jim Wilson put it.

A. This is what Jeroboam did.

1. Perhaps you know the story of Jeroboam.
  - David was king over all twelve tribes of Israel, and after him was his son Solomon.
    - But because of Solomon’s disobedience (and that of the people), the Lord purposed that He would send division to Israel.
    - So it was that when Solomon’s son Rehoboam came to the throne, he oppressed the people and ten of the tribes of Israel broke away from Rehoboam who was from the tribe of Judah.
    - The Ten Tribes were to the North and for that reason, they are sometimes referred to as the Northern Kingdom.
      - They are also called Israel in distinction from the Southern kingdom which is called Judah.
      - And they are sometimes called Ephraim, because Ephraim was the principle tribe among them.
  - Anyway, Jeroboam was their king.
    - God Himself appointed him to be their king, but Jeroboam did not follow what God appointed in the matter of worship.
    - He became one of the most notorious violators of the Second Commandment in the history of God’s people.
      - His primary violation involved the establishment of two places of worship for the Ten Tribes.
      - God expressly commanded that the northern kingdom was to continue to go up to Jerusalem to worship,

- but Jeroboam would not do this because he was afraid of losing the loyalty of his subjects if they worshipped at Jerusalem.
2. The account it given in 1 Kings 12:25 – 13:5.
- READ> 1 Kings 12:25 – 13:5.
  - You see what Jeroboam’s real reason for instituting this new way of worship was entirely pragmatic and self-serving...
    - Verse 26-27 show that it was his concern that the people might return to Rehoboam.
  - By going to Jerusalem, they would be exposed to the southern kingdom and might decide to unite again.
    - Sadly, many worship wars throughout the ages have more to do with competition for loyalty than they do with seeking God’s will in the scriptures.
      - On the one hand, we must not avoid worship wars because of the bad motives of some,
        - on the other hand, we must make sure that we are not just making a fuss because we want people to be loyal to our church.

TRANS> This was Rehoboam’s real motive for his new worship...but...

3. There are a number of ways that Jeroboam might have tried to justify what he had done.
- Those who devise their own way of worship seem to always have lots of ways to justify what they are doing.
    - a. First he gives a very pragmatic reason for it in verse 28:
      - He is offering them worship that is much more convenient for them
        - verse 28 says: “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem.”
      - You often have to travel to worship God in the way He has appointed, sometimes you may have to relocate,
        - but so be it!
        - We are called to make sacrifices for the kingdom of God with cheerfulness.
    - b. A second justification Jeroboam used to justify his innovative worship was the fact that it is still the worship of the same God.
      - He says the same thing that Aaron said when he set up the golden calf in the wilderness...

- v. 28: “Here are your gods [or better, “here is your God (Eloheem is always plural)] which brought you up from the land of Egypt.”
- He is not asking them to change gods, just to worship Jehovah in another place.
  - Those who deviate from God’s appointed worship will always point out that “we are worshipping the same God,”
    - and that “we are all one in Christ.”
  - Those statements are true enough, but they have nothing at all to do with whether your worship is what God has commanded.
    - That is the issue we are concerned about here!

TRANS> And thirdly,

- c. We can see that he chose places for this new worship that could be justified from history.
  - Both Bethel and Dan were places that were used for the worship of Jehovah.
- 1) The very name, Bethel, means “house of God” and was so named by the illustrious Jacob.
  - Bethel is the place where he had the dream about the ladder going up to heaven and where he received the promise that God would be with Him, and where he made his vow that God would be his God.
  - It was also the place where he built an altar to God and worshipped after God had brought him safely back from Haran.
    - This place had a great history as a place where the LORD had met with His people, so it could be expected that He would meet with them again.
    - And the folks in the Northern Kingdom must have thought that He did, for they continued to worship there over the years.
- 2) Dan was also a place that had history as an ancient worship sight.
  - In Judges, the Danites worshipped Jehovah in a paganised way there.
    - You will remember how they stole the Levite and the idols from Micah and used them for the worship of Jehovah in Dan.

TRANS> So Jeroboam had carefully chosen places where Jehovah had been worshipped in the past.

- There was a great history and tradition of worship in these places.

- d. The fourth justification he might have used for his worship is not expressly stated, but may be observed by what Jeroboam did...
  - He set up calves.
  - Calves, in his day, were used as thrones for the gods of the pagans.
    - They would set up a calf and then make an image of their god to stand on the back of the calf.
  - But Jeroboam knew the second commandment!!
    - Therefore, he did not make an image to stand on the back of the calf.
    - He did not technically violate the second commandment!
  - But you see that he did violate it because he made something that was meant to be associated with God and bowed before that!
    - He tried to make a way and a place of connecting with God that God did not appoint to be a way or a place of connecting with Him.
    - We are not, therefore, to make images of those things that are *associated* with God and expect Him to meet with us there.
      - He can appoint things that are associated with Him, like water in baptism and bread and wine at the Lord's Supper.
        - We are to use these because *He* has commanded them.
        - But it is not for us to make images or likenesses of things that *we* associate with Him.

B. I want you to consider some of the ways this is done today?

1. First, consider how a cross is often erected in a church as an aide to worship.
  - a. I remember being in a church where they set up a cross at the front and the people spoke about how helpful it was to have it there to remember Christ.
    - It gave them something to focus on where they worshipped.
  - b. What could be wrong with that?
    - It was not an image of God, but an image of something associated with God.
      - It was a way of connecting with Him and remembering what Jesus did.
      - There was no image of Jesus on it.
    - But so was the calf that Jeroboam made.
      - It was not an image of God, it was just a throne for Him.
      - The problem was that God did not authorise it and we have no authority to introduce it.

- c. If a church wants to use a cross on a sign or on their literature to identify themselves as Christian church, that is fine,
    - but once it is set up as an object to focus our worship, it becomes a violation of the second commandment.
      - This is true in the home as well—it is not something we are to bow before or use as a way to ward off evil spirits or something like that.
2. Second, consider how altars are set up in churches.
- And altar is clearly something that is associated with God—it has a long history!
- a. Church architecture says something.
    - Whenever you see the pulpit off to the side, it is almost always because the altar (or sometimes the stage) has been set up at the centre.
    - But God did not appoint altars for New Testament worship.
      - He has appointed the preaching of the word.
  - b. God instituted that altars were to be set up in the Old Testament and He appointed where they were to be and what was to be offered on them.
    - But in the New Testament, He has appointed a table rather than an altar...
      - This is because we do not offer up sacrifices any more.
      - We rather remember Christ at the table and the offering that He made 2000 years ago.
        - And that message is proclaimed to us through the ministry of the Word, not at the altar by a man with priestly garb burning incense and offering up a sacrifice!
3. There are many other images that are brought into worship that are associated with God—
- and they are all violations of the second commandment if God has not commanded us to use them.
- a. Sometimes pictures of beautiful things that God has created are projected above the worshippers as an aid to worship...
    - All sorts of images that are associated with God are displayed in various ways to help the worshippers to connect with God.
  - b. The question is not if these things seem to be effective to us.
    - We could argue all day about whether they help or hinder the worshippers...
      - The calves may well have helped Israel to focus their attention of God.
      - But the issue is always,

- *Has God authorised us to make images of things that are associated with Him in our worship...*
- And the answer is “no”

TRANS> But now, having seen that we are neither to worship images of God or images of things associated with God,

- I want to take a few more minutes to address...

### **III. Some questions about these matters.**

A. First, is it right for us to make images of things that are associated with God outside of the worship of God?

- I believe the answer to that must be yes.
  - Everything is associated with God,
    - and an artist is one who helps us see the beauty of what God has made and even the beauty of God Himself in creative ways.
    - Even artists who do not confess the true God can do this because they live in the world that God has made.
  - But the art that the artist creates is not to be turned into a shrine—nor it is to be brought into the church as an aid to our worship.
    - We are to worship God in the simplicity that He has appointed.

TRANS> And now for an even tougher question...

B. Is it permissible for an artist to make an image of Jesus that is not made to be used in either public or private worship?

1. Either an abstract image (such as light that is meant to portray Him);
  - or a figure, such as a lamb that represents Him (could he, for example, paint a picture of a priest offering up a lamb on an altar in the OT—the lamb of course representing our Saviour);
    - or an actual portrait, attempting to show the love in his eyes or His holiness?
2. Brethren, the one thing that is absolutely certain is that according to the second commandment, none of these things are to be used in the worship of God.
  - That is what it means when it say we are not to bow down or worship before these images.
3. But when it comes to making images of Jesus outside of the context worship,
  - I think there ought to be great carefulness about this and I think there is an important distinction between abstract or symbolic images and portraits.

- The difference lies in the fact that if we were to see Jesus in the flesh, it would be our place to bow before Him and to worship Him.
  - whereas, in the OT, the people did not bow down and worship the Lamb or the bull that was offered up to God on the altar.
- Therefore, for an artist to make a portrait of Jesus seems to be a violation of the commandment.
  - If he wants to show love, let him show it in the face of a man or a woman, but let him not try to paint the face of Jesus.
  - To do so is to take too much upon Himself.
    - It is presumptuous to try to depict our Saviour who is to be worshipped.
    - Many distorted ideas about Jesus have been formed by those who have attempted to do this,
      - and many think of Jesus as He is depicted in paintings and in movies rather than as He is revealed in scripture.

TRANS> And this brings us to our third question—

### C. What do we do about mental images when we come to worship God?

- In other words, is it wrong for us to think about Christ as a lion or a lamb or as light or as a man on a cross when we worship?
  - And how can we avoid thinking of these things without having an image in our mind?
- In Acts 17:28, Paul says this to the Idol worshippers at Athens:
  - Acts 17:29: “Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man’s devising.”
- Here he shows us that it is wrong to think of God, in our worship, as less than fully divine...
  - We must think of Him as the God who is transcendent and who cannot be reduced to a lion or a lamb or even a man.
  - Yes, He is revealed to us in the man Christ Jesus,
    - but we must always remember what we know even without special revelation—that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit is transcendent to and high above anything that is created.
  - We are not to limit God to an image of Him.
    - We can learn of different characteristics of Him through creation, but we must ever come before Him as the one who is far greater than anything we can touch or see as to His essence.



## Conclusion

As with all the commandments, when you can get down to the finer points, it is difficult to know just how to apply everything.

- We do not need to become stressed out about all the details.
  - In fact, it can be rather hypocritical of us to become stressed out about all the details because it suggests that we suppose we have mastered that bigger points.
  - Jesus pointed out how the Pharisees were so focused on tithing the herbs in their garden, but then neglected to assist their parents in their old age.
    - Tithing herbs made a display of extreme righteousness drew a lot of attention.
      - Why not just give generously so as to ensure that the herbs are covered and live the kind of godly life that would not think of neglecting your parents?
  - In the same way, you can see a person who obviously has a bitter, distorted view of God and who twists His revelation of Himself to us,
    - but who is very fussy because someone drew a diagram and illustrate God with an x or a circle.
    - We need to see in the first place that our heart is right.
      - We do not see our LORD Jesus being fussy about details.
      - Of course there is another attitude that claims to not care about details meaning that they really don't care what God says at all and just want to do things their own way...
        - Cain might have said that about his sacrifice—what did it matter if it was things from his garden or an animal that was offered?
        - We must avoid both errors and look to serve God with sincerity, not complaining that the details are not always clear to us,
          - but rather rejoicing that we have been forgiven of our many transgression in the areas where we know that we have transgressed.