

## Second Commandment: Yielding God's Place to God and Coming only through Christ

click [bit.ly/3PiITXX](http://bit.ly/3PiITXX) to hear this lesson as taught (or scan QR code→)



***What's the big deal with worshiping in our own way?*** Pastor leads his family in today's "Hopewell @Home" passage. Exodus 20:4–6 looks forward to the evening sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these three verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that 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.

### Friday, May 13, 2022 ▫ Read Exodus 20:4–6

Questions from the Scripture text: What must a man not make (v4)? What else from what three places? For which two purposes is the making or use of such things prohibited (v5)? Why—what does God say about Himself? What will He visit upon whom? To how many generations? What does He call such people? But to whom will He do what (v6)? What two things does He call those who keep this commandment?

God won't share His worship with the image of any creation of ours (v4a) or any creation of His (v4b). He has chosen for us a "how" of worship that preserves for us the "Whom" of worship. If we worship in our own way, then in reality we worship ourselves. If we worship in a way that imitates anything in all creation, then we worship the creature rather than the Creator.

Of course, our remaining sinfulness willfully resists the truth that adding anything of our own to God's worship fundamentally changes not just the nature of our worship but the actual object of Whom it is that we are worshiping. Our remaining fleshliness wants to think that it's no big deal and that worship should be in a way that pleases us.

So God puts the infinite evil of creaturely worship in no uncertain terms. He calls those who worship their way instead of His way "those who hate Me." If we say that's overstating it, we just show how different our judgment is from His and that we need this commandment even more than we think we did. For the ultimate way of knowing and worshiping God is in the Lord Jesus Himself. The way that God gave them to worship before the coming of Christ was all by ways that showed forth Christ. The way that God has given us to worship after His coming, is by ways that are led by Christ Himself from heaven. To come to worship God in any other way, is to come in a way other than Christ.

O the glory that belongs to us, whom God has called to Himself, and whom God has given His true worship! We have God Himself! And we have Him in Christ! And if we set that aside for something else—something inevitably and infinitesimally less—we hate Him Whom we have and choose the version of Him that we would prefer.

To this strong description, God adds a strong consequence: visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth. A father is without God to the very extent that he worships falsely. And a father without God will have the grief of watching his children grow up to be without God too. Their will-worship will blossom into worse worship or even full apostasy. They come to know less and less of the true God and get caught up in superstition (atheism with religiosity), sentimentalism (atheism with religious emotions), or just plain atheism. Remember—this warning against idolatry was to believers!

And yet, the opposite is true to an even greater extent. If the negative consequences of sin in purity of worship are by a factor of three or four, then the positive consequences of faithfulness in purity of worship are by a factor of a thousand! Right worship—which the Lord here describes as loving Him and keeping His commandments—is a means by which (and in response to which) the Lord shows covenanted love even unto a thousand generations.

How awful for so much of the "Christian" world to be fighting over one sort of manmade worship v.s. the other, when all worship complications—old or new—put us on the wrong side of this commandment. The Lord grant His church to return to the purity and simplicity of worship that seeks God alone in His way alone!

What are some ways that man has added to God's worship over the centuries? What are some ways that man is adding to God's worship now? Why is it such a big deal? What does this commandment tell us that we can expect to keep happening, if they keep doing this? What can we expect, if we stop?

Sample prayer: Lord, You are truly merciful to have created us to know You and worship You! Forgive us for when we are so foolish as to invent our own ways of knowing or worshiping—for then it is not You that we know or worship. So grant us the help of Your Spirit that we would know You truly in Christ, through Whom we ask it, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP16A "Keep Me, O God" or TPH174 "The Ten Commandments"

For more Hopewell @Home devotionals, please visit [bit.ly/harpCHAH](https://bit.ly/harpCHAH)

**(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)**

Exodus chapter 20 verses 4 through 6. These are God's words. You should not make for yourself a carved image and he 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 for all Yahoo your God, a majalis God visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third, and fourth generation of those who hate me But showing mercy to thousands.

To those who love me and keep my commandments.

So for the reading of God's inspired and and there it worked, I've already heard in the first commandment that we are to have no other gods that we're not to depend upon anyone or anything. The way we're supposed to depend on God as our ultimate help that we are not to live for anyone or anything.

The way we are to live for God as our ultimate purpose and so forth. So we are to worship God. But the question then is, how do we worship him? And the Lord here. Forbids. The use of carved images are likenesses of anything that is having above or that as an the earth beneath or that is in the water, under the earth, Not bad down to them, nor serve them.

And he says for I you always your God, I'm a jealous God and he talks about visiting the iniquities of fathers upon the children and verse 5 and he talks about showing mercy to thousands in verse 6. He's a covenant. God, he calls himself hours. He gathers us to himself by sacrifice in God's good.

Providence to us, we have in the call to worship. Lord's Day morning, or the first passage Lord's day morning, Psalm 50 gather them together to me who are in covenant with me or who have made covenant with me by sacrifice and this covenant relationship. Where God says, I am your God and you are my people.

That's the covenant relationship which has been made by sacrifice the great thing that the government people do is we worship Him. So he says for all Yahweh, your God, a majala Scott and he's got to us and to our children. Now, what he does here in these three verses is, he shows us that he is the one who gets to decide how to be worshiped.

He is the one who decides how we will interact with him, how he will declare and display himself to us and how we are to offer ourselves to Him. In this worship that takes place when he gathers us to himself. And if we make a carved image or any likeness of anything etc, In fact, if we decide how to worship at all, then we are taking for ourselves.

Something that belongs to whom and whom alone. God. God is God. He decides what worship is, we don't decide what he should like, say we came up with this and we like it so we think you should do. No, God is God. He decides how to be worshiped. And so in man, decides how to worship then man is putting himself in the place of God and when men decides how to worship, what can he do?

Can he offer God himself, can he create the presence of God or the communication of the knowledge of God? No. Because we don't have access to God. We have access to the creation. And so this carved image and this likeness, which is not necessarily carved immigrants, any likeness of anything, Even the worship that men make up today, Not a lot of churches.

Actually, I take that back because there's all kinds of weird banner things and flags. And even some churches have sculpture and paintings. And God have mercy, he's gonna say, not a lot of churches. Have carved images, and images and so forth. Oh and a lot of them have purported images of Christ and they'll put symbols of fish and lowercase T's that they say are the cross and all manner of junk.

All right? So it is like churches. Today, used carved images and so forth, But a more subtle way that men create their own worship as they create that, which appeals to, then they create worship in their own image. Instead of the way that God gave himself to us. And when God is going to repeat the Ten Commandments, and Deuteronomy chapter 5, right before he does that right before he does that he reminds them and Deuteronomy chapter 4, that he is the one who decided how to communicate himself to them at Sinai and that they saw no form.

And only heard a voice. God has decided to communicate himself to us by His Word and that's a good hint. Now, he's gonna give them some things to do in worship. He's going to give them some sacrifices and so forth. And we know that those things look forward to Christ, But the fact that he communicates to us, by his word, looks forward also, to the fact that Jesus Christ, who is the Word who was in the beginning and was with God.

And who was God and is still God, of course that he is the ultimate way that both that God communicates himself to us and that we can come to him. So that coming to him by hearing his word and coming to him through those sacrifices and other parts of the ceremonial law.

That looked forward to Jesus is really to come to God through Jesus. Isn't it? Now, we don't have those forms to look forward to Jesus because Jesus has come and Jesus has died, and Jesus has risen again, and Jesus sits on the throne and Jesus leads the worship of heaven and we find out if we look and Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3, Hebrews 2 and Hebrews 12, really, the whole book of Hebrews that Jesus is actually personally leading those worship actions that God has now commanded in the much more simple, much more portable New Testament worship that in God's wonderful.

Wisdom is you're able to do it anywhere and everywhere in the whole world and every culture, all you need is a Bible, some water, some bread and some wine. And you don't even need the water unless you have a baptism and God help us. Our baptisms are so rare.

In our churches, but it's very portable and the the actions that Jesus leads or the actions that we do on earth, Jesus leads from heaven. So if we add to the worship, or if we make it in our own likeness, not only then do we put ourselves in the place of God, but now we're coming to God and some other way than what he's provided.

And the way that he's provided is Jesus, So it's pretty serious, isn't it? If we start to make up our own way of worshiping. God. We are both saying I am God and I can come in a different way than Jesus, those are horrible. Horrible things and of course it deserves hell but we're not very good at seeing the seriousness of worshiping in the right way.

So God tells us how serious it is. In verse 5, when he says visiting the iniquity of the fathers, upon the children, to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me. And this is something that happens when the parents go to a church with their children and they worship God not the way that God says.

But the way that man says, whether old ways that man says and so, you know, with a lot of superstitious junk, What is superstition superstition is being godless,

but still wanting to feel like you have religious stuff. And so you have a lot of kind of mysterious ancient actions that you do.

It's just a bunch of garbage, it's superstition, it's worship without the living God, it's worship. That isn't being led by Christ. And so you have to add the religious meaningfulness to it. If you worship the way that God says in, Jesus is leading it from heaven, you don't have to add any religious meaning.

Do you because God himself and Christ himself leading? It already has an infinite amount of religious, meaning that none of the old traditional, you know, episcopalian, Anglican papist eastern orthodox. Yeah. Any any of that garbage? Well, what about new worship? It's so awful Men are mostly arguing. Should we have old man-made stuff and worship?

Or should we have new man-made stuff in worship and all the mathematicians and the good theologians say no, You shouldn't have either one, What is new, man-made stuff and worship. Most of the time It's godlessness but wanting to have religious feelings. So you have the boyfriend songs and the and the manipulative lighting in the smoke machines and you know, the feminine guy that's supposed to talk on your emotions and, and give you a nice pep talk, or make you feel bad for people or whatever it is that they do.

And the whole thing is somewhere between nauseating and utterly row repulsive either, makes you vomit or want to take up arms because they want to have the experiential affectional, emotional circumstances, without the God, who about whom and towards whom we are supposed to interact with all our heart, which interaction.

By the way is very different. If it's the true and holy and mighty God, I'm sure you have the sentimentalism of recent man-made worship which is godlessness that still tries to have some emotional stuff. There you have the superstition of older man-made worship, which is godlessness but still trying to have religious stuff and God comes.

And he says, People who want to worship to be like what they want, whether it's old or whether it's new, they just hate me. I'm not religious enough for them. I'm not emotional enough for them and what happens when you take your children to a church like that? While they're growing up as they realize that they don't actually need God.

They just want the spooky superstitious. Yeah, well they realize that. What? Mom and dad think they need is spooky superstitious stuff. If it's old and yeah, mushy empty, emotional stuff. If it's new but that you just, you just need those things, you don't need God Himself. In fact, they come to suspect it.

God doesn't actually exist. He's an idea that we talk about in order to stir up those impressions upon ourselves. No wonder then it is righteous. And just of God to visit upon the sins of the fathers, upon the children, to the third and fourth generation of those who hate him.

And that's a dreadful thing. And the children keep growing up and not care for God at all. When they realize that the religiousness or the emotions are a hoax. They chuck that too. And good for them. It's even worse. If they stay in it because now you got another three or four generations of those who hate him by covenant worship that is according to the ideas of man.

But what happens, how has God designed His worship when you come in the ways that he has said and he is God, and we are not and he is the one who decides out to and therefore, we know the reality of God together and the children can see that, God isn't just a game that mom and dad play.

Here's our creator. And he's our Savior and come through Jesus. And we're so thankful to come through Jesus and we trust that he's working. And then he actually does work by the means that he has appointed which of course he will because he's faithful. Well then, God bless us to a thousand generations of those who come that way and their children come that way, and God brings them to faith.

And he calls them, those who love me and keep my commandments. Why? This one of the 10. Why single out this one? For those who love me and keep my commandments. I think maybe because this is the hardest one Lord's Day is up there too. And we'll talk about that in a couple a couple weeks.

Lord willing. But of all the commandments, if we are willing to let God determine God, alone to determine how to be worshiped. There's a, could you get that out of her mouth? There is a submissiveness there.

There is a submissiveness there, an obedience there, that displays a heart that is willing to have God rule us in all things.

So, I wonder my dear children. How are we worshiping not just are we having the right actions in worship, but when we come through those actions, as it conscientiously in agreement and rejoicing, that this is how we're worshiping because God is the one who's decided it. So that even the way that we worship reminds us that he is real and that he's gathered us to himself and that he's given Christ as the means by which we may come, because he's the one who's picked, how to be worshiped?

Just like, when you come to the table, It reminds you that the betrayal of Christ Israel. The death of Christ is real because he started that meal on the night that he was betrayed and then he died for our sins. The next afternoon and the genuine reality of his having died for our sins and risen again, comes home at the table.

Even just from how the meals started, all something similar when we come and to worship him reading the Bible, praying from the Bible. Singing the Bible hearing the Bible. Preached celebrating the Lord's, Supper. Why do we come these with? Because God is the one who picked these ways. And so, even the fact that he's the one who selected, those things reminds us that he is real.

And that he's really receiving us that our worship is accepted in Jesus. And that God is making Himself known to us and that he's receiving our offering our hearts to him in it. What a wonderful thing it is and may the Lord make it to continue for a thousand generations and our family.

Lord bless it to you and see to it. That you would worship God in the way that he is appointed and bring your children, and then train them to do the same thousand generations happens. One generation at a time. Oh man, let's pray. Lord, forgive us for how easily and lightly and quickly.

We just go through the motions and worship. We confess that we're even able to turn into superstition and just external religious actions, those good things that you've given us. Help us instead to come with a heart that rejoices over you and submits to you, that delights to have you.

Communicate yourself to us. That is eager to offer ourselves to you for. We ask it in Jesus name. Amen.