

The Ten: Right God Right Worship

Dr. John Carmichael

[Exo 20:1-2, 4-6 NASB95] 1 Then God spoke all these words, saying, 2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ... 4 "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. 5 "You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6 but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

- Worship the right God the right way. How we worship is as important as whom we worship.
- Westminster Short Catechism – The second commandment prohibits worship God by image, or any other way not approved in His Word.
- King Jehu - [2Ki 10:28-29 NASB95] 28 Thus Jehu eradicated Baal out of Israel. 29 However, [as for] the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel sin, from these Jehu did not depart, [even] the golden calves that [were] at Bethel and that [were] at Dan.
 - He used golden calves to represent God. Worshipped God with an idol.
- Apostle Paul – Acts 17:22-34 – used idols as a platform to draw their attention away from the idols and toward Jesus Christ. Telling them that God is able to be contained in something made by man.
- Dr. Philip Ryken, Written In Stone, lists four truths: Rule, Reason, Warning, and Promise.

What does the 2nd Commandment teach us about how to worship God?

There are four truths that God gives us in the 2nd Commandment about true worship.

I. The Rule: Worship God Alone (Exodus 20:4-5a)

- a. "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; . . ."
- b. God commands exclusive worship. He is not to be worshiped through idols or images. He desires a relationship, not rituals centered around created things.
- c. God gave them a method to tap into the healing. [Num 21:4-9 NASB] 4 Then they set out from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the people became impatient because of the journey. 5 The people spoke against God and Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this miserable food." 6 The LORD sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. 7 So the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, because we have spoken against the LORD and you; intercede with the LORD, that He may remove the serpents from us." And Moses interceded for the people. 8 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery [serpent,] and set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, he will live." 9 And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the standard; and it came about, that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked to the bronze serpent, he lived.
- d. They worshipped the method instead of the Master. [2Ki 18:4 NASB] 4 He removed the high places and broke down the [sacred] pillars and cut down the Asherah. He also broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the sons of Israel burned incense to it; and it was called Nehushtan.
- e. Am I worshipping God in the way He has commanded, or have I created my own version of worship?

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- f. God never wanted us to worship His methods rather than Him.

II. The Reason: God Is a Jealous God (Exodus 20:5b)

- a. “. . . for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God . . .”
- b. God’s jealousy is not like human envy. It is a holy and righteous jealousy that demands our complete devotion.
- c. A God without jealousy would be as contemptable as a husband who did not care that his wife was in the arms of another.
- d. He will not be caged in the “images” of humanistic organization or flesh-glorifying worship. We do not worship building, orders of service, altar benches, lights, sounds, songs, personalities, methodologies, or even the Bible.
- e. [Isa 42:8 NASB95] 8 "I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images.
- f. [Mat 10:37 NASB95] 37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.
- g. Is there anything in my life that is taking priority over my devotion to God? (Matthew 6:33)
- h. God desires an intimate, personal relationship with us. Just as a loving spouse expects faithfulness in marriage, God expects our full devotion in worship.

III. The Warning: Consequences for Disobedience (Exodus 20:5c)

- a. “. . . visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, . . .”
- b. Sin has generational consequences. When we turn away from God, it affects not just us but those who come after us.
- c. Fair? Just?
 - i. It was upon the generations who hated God. Read the verse.
 - ii. God only punishes those who sin. [Eze 18:20 NASB95] 20 "The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself.
- d. There are consequences. [Gal 6:7-8 NASB95] 7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.
- e. [Rom 1:21-23 NASB95] 21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.
- f. Am I setting a spiritual example that will bless or burden the next generation?
- g. If we allow idolatry and sin to take root in our lives, it can negatively influence our families and future generations.

IV. The Promise: Blessings for Obedience (Exodus 20:6)

- a. “. . . but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.”
- b. God’s love is abundant for those who remain faithful. His mercy extends beyond generations to those who honor Him.
- c. The blessing is stronger than the curse.

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- d. [Psa 103:17 NASB95] 17 But the lovingkindness of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children,
 - e. [Mat 6:33 NASB95] 33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
 - f. Do I truly love and obey God in a way that brings His favor and blessings upon my life?
 - g. When we honor God above all else, we not only experience His blessings but also leave a spiritual legacy of faithfulness for future generations.
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- **God declares in the second commandment that He must be worshipped in the right way so we can avoid the iniquity affecting my life and my family and obtain the blessing in my life and family.**
 - **Heavenly Father, thank You for revealing to us the importance of worshiping You in the right way. Remove anything in our lives that takes Your rightful place. Help us to love and obey You with all our hearts. May our worship be pleasing to You, and may our faithfulness bring blessings to those around us. In Jesus' name, Amen.**