

## “The Jealous God”

Exodus 20:1-6

### **2<sup>nd</sup> COMMANDMENT EXPLAINED**

#### **1. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment forbids idolatry. v.4-5a**

- NT Gk. εἰδωλολατρία Lit. “to worship what is seen”
- OT Heb. = ‘to carve or sculpt into shape something as an object of worship’
- Idolatry includes making a carved image of anything as an object of worship. **v.4** Ref. Rom 1:25
- Idolatry includes worshiping or serving anything besides God alone. **v.5a**  
-Idolatry can include things that are visible and things that are invisible. Ref. Col. 3:5; Acts 17:16

→ Having a ‘mental’ idol is the first step to making a ‘metal’ idol.

#### **2. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment is prompted by God’s jealousy. v.5b**

- God is jealous. It is not sinful jealousy arising from insecurity, fear, or lack of control. E.g., Acts 7:9; 17:5
- God’s jealousy is like a man’s godly jealousy for his wife. Heb. *qanna*’ often in context of marriage.  
-Metaphorically, God stands as a husband to His people. Ref. 2 Cor 11:2

-1<sup>st</sup> Command: God says: *Do not share Me with anyone.* 2<sup>nd</sup> Command: He says: *I will not share you with anyone.*

#### **3. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment teaches the consequential nature of sin. v.5b** Ref. Deut. 24:16; Ezek. 18:20

- There are relational consequences for our sin—and there are generational consequences for our sin. **v.5b**
- ‘third & fourth generation’ = all of extended family in same house

→ Sin has the greatest effect on those nearest to us: our family, those with whom we live, our closest relationships

-This seems unfair because we do not understand *community* and *relationship* (esp. today). Gen 4:9; Nu 32:23

#### **4. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment demonstrates the lovingkindness of God as more powerful than our sin. v.6**

- Sin affects to the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> generations, but God’s lovingkindness extends to thousands.  
-Heb. literal: “to the thousandth generation”

### **2<sup>nd</sup> COMMANDMENT FULFILLED IN JESUS CHRIST**

#### **1. Jesus perfectly obeyed the 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment.**

- Satan ‘promised’ Jesus all the kingdoms of the world & their glory—if He would worship him. Mt. 4:8-10
- NOTE: All the kingdoms of the world and their glory *already belonged* to Jesus!

#### **2. Jesus Christ is God in the flesh. “Incarnate” = God Himself**

- The image of God is revealed in two Biblical contexts:
- The image of God in man: ‘the first Adam’. Gen 1:26-27; 5:1-3
- The image of God is revealed perfectly & fully in Jesus Christ: ‘the second Adam.’ Jesus is God Himself!  
-Hebrews 1:3a: He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature  
-Col 1:15: He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.  
-Col 1:19: For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell  
-Col 2:9-10a: For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him...

→ The 2<sup>nd</sup> commandment ‘leads’ us to Jesus: God, in His own time, provided Jesus Christ—revealed in the Scriptures—for us to see and worship. → Jesus is the key to keeping the 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment practically.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> COMMANDMENT PRACTICALLY APPLIED**

- 1 Thessalonians 1:9: ...how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God.
- Galatians 5:16: But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.
- Psalm 16:1-2: Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge. I say to the Lord, “You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.”

**THE WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM**  
**Questions 50-52**

**Q50:** *What is required in the second commandment?*

**A50:** *The second commandment requires the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God has appointed in His Word.*

**Q51:** *What is forbidden in the second commandment?*

**A51:** *The second commandment forbids the worshiping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in his Word.*

**Q52:** *What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment?*

**A52:** *The reasons annexed to the second commandment are God's sovereignty over us, His propriety in us, and the zeal He has for His own worship.*

When Israelites worshiped God under the form of a golden bull-calf, they were using their imagination to conceive him in terms of power without purity; this was their basic sin. And if imagination leads our thoughts about God, we too shall go astray. No statement starting, "This is how I like to think of God" should ever be trusted. An imagined God will always be quite imaginary and unreal.      J.I. Packer, *Keeping the Ten Commandments*

Next Sunday... Pillar of the Faith: *solus Christus*

& prepare your hearts for Communion