

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

Commandment # 2 - No Idols

Exodus 20:4-6

¹ As you learned from studying Commandment # 1, the Ten Commandments were the foundation for the Law of Moses. This Law was the Old Covenant (the Old Testament) regulating the relationship God had with His chosen people, Israel.

When Lord Jesus, the promised Jewish Messiah, died on the cross, the New Covenant (the New Testament) replaced the Old Covenant. Instead of a relationship with God based on obedience to regulations, ceremonies and rituals reserved for Jews only, salvation was provided to all of the human race through access to a personal relationship with God.

When you surrender to Jesus as Lord of your life you will want to please Him out of gratitude for experiencing His grace. ¹ Then, studying His commandments gives you the understanding of God's basic values He wants to establish in your life. ²

¹ Please see my message "What Keeping the Ten Commandments Does for You" – <https://biblelifemessages.org/contents/06%20-%20Romans/Rom%207.7-25/rom7.7-25.html>

Exodus, chapter 20, verses 4 through 6, tells us what this second commandment is, **You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.**

We title this message, then, **No Idols!** ³

I. What Did This Mean to Them?

What did this mean to them? Let's look at the questions that will help us understand what this command meant. ⁴

What is idolatry? ⁵

It includes **animism**. That is the worship of inanimate objects such as stones, trees and rivers. It includes the worship of animals. It also includes the worship of

the higher powers of nature; the sun, the moon, the stars, air and fire. ⁶

Idolatry includes **the worship of people**. This can be the hero syndrome. Also the worship of dead ancestors comes to mind. ⁷

The worship of ideas such as justice and freedom. Yep, even if the focus on good stuff takes more of your time, resources and effort than the Lord does, they are idolatry! ⁸

What is an idol?

In ancient times it was a statue, an image, or even a pole or a tree. ⁹

So, what did worshippers believe when they worshipped idols? They had at least three understandings of what they did. ¹⁰ They worshipped the idol itself as if it were a god. ¹¹ The most popular understanding was to worship a god represented by an image. ¹² They may have worshipped the true God but represented Him with an image. ¹³

What were other things, found in the New Testament, considered to be like idolatry?

Greed was a main one. Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 5, **For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person — such a man is an idolater — has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.** ¹⁴
Again, in Colossians, chapter 3, verse 5, **Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.** ¹⁵

Gluttony was another one. From Philippians, chapter 3, verses 18 and 19, we read, **For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things.** ¹⁶

So what does God think of idolatry? ¹⁷

Let's go back to our scripture in Exodus, chapter 20.

Verse 5 says God considers those who are idolaters to hate Him and He will punish them. ² ¹⁸ Verse 6 says God considers those who reframe from idols to love Him and He will love them back! ³ ¹⁹

II. What Should This Mean to You?

What should this mean to you? ²⁰

What is a modern definition of idolatry? ²¹ Whatever takes the place of God in your life! ²²

Whatever you have as the primary focus of your life! ²³

Whatever you long for more than a relationship with God! ²⁴

Whatever it is you bow down to and worship! ²⁵

² Exodus 20: 5 - You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me . . .

³ Exodus 20:6 - . . . but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

What might your idol be? ²⁶

In the Old Testament it was inanimate objects. In your life it might be your house or your car. ²⁷

In the Old Testament there were great people, their ancestry. ⁴ In your life it might be your family, your spouse or your children. ²⁸

In the Old Testament it was higher powers like the sun, moon and stars. In your life it might be overwhelming habits like drinking, drugs or pornography. ²⁹

In the Old Testament it was ideals like justice and freedom. In your life it might be your life goals like retirement, investments or your employment. ³⁰

⁴ The hero syndrome.

<p style="text-align: center;">Old Testament</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Idols</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Modern Day</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Idols</p>
1. Inanimate objects.	1. Your house or car.
2. Great people (hero syndrome): ancestors.	2. Family, spouse, children.
3. Higher powers: sun, moon, stars.	3. Overwhelming habits: drinking, drugs, pornography.
4. Ideals: justice & freedom.	4. Goals: retirement, investments, employment.

What do you do when you discover idols in your life?

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Turn away! Get rid of the idols. Get rid of the temptations. 32

Return to God! ³³ Worship Him with your Christian brothers and sisters every week. ³⁴ Establish a personal daily quiet time for prayer and scriptural meditation. ³⁵ Share your faith, what you learn, with others. ³⁶ Get involved with serving God either through the church or in other ways. ³⁷

The goal; make God the central focus of your life! He deserves to be obeyed and to be adored!

He deserves your companionship through your prayers and your study of His Bible!

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