

Lesson 3 Commandment 2

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- [0 : 0 0] As we talk about and start to get into the second commandment, I want to go back and review just a little bit of the first commandment. In the first commandment, it says, Have no other gods before me.
- There was a positive and a negative to that. Does anybody remember what the positive or the negative was of that commandment? Right. Any side of the negative commandment?
- Desire of positive yourself. Like, don't slam the door. So then what's the positive inside, Have no other gods before me?
- You don't do it. Worship the one true God, right? So the positive would be, Worship the one true God and him only. The negative is going to be, Don't have any other gods.
- And one of the things we talked about is we talked about the idols of the heart and how we can make anything a God if we desire it too much. Remember, it was Rachel who wanted a child and told her husband she was going to die if she didn't get it, right?
- [1 : 1 4] Because the desire for a child is not bad, but when it gets so high that it rules your heart, it becomes a functional God. Okay?
- It becomes a functional God. One of the reasons that the Ten Commandments or God's moral law is so important is we talked about that it's like a mirror and a map and a light.
- And as a mirror, it shows us our sin so that it should drive us to Christ, right? We see our sin.
- We see that we're in a very terrible state. And so we cry out for mercy. And that should drive us to Christ. One of the reasons for that has to do with helium balloons.
- Wow. Okay. Well, maybe not exactly helium balloons. But let me ask you something. What is it that makes helium balloons go up? Helium.
- [2 : 1 2] And why is helium, why does helium do that? It's lighter than air. So if these were air-filled balloons, what would happen to them?
- Fall. They would fall. And why is that? Because it's just going to hold down because it's not lighter than the air. In other words, the difference between a helium balloon and an air-filled balloon is what's inside.
- It's what's inside. So the reason that we struggle to obey God's law is because of what's... It's not the fault of God's law.
- It's what's inside of us. And so in order for us to obey the way we should, we have to have a heart change. We have to have a heart change.
- As someone who's lost without Christ, I'm like an air-filled balloon. I'm always going to be pulling down away from God's law. But as a Christian, because I have the Holy Spirit living within me, I won't be perfect because I still have a little bit of remaining sin that has a tendency to play tug-of-war with me.

[3 : 26] But because I have the Holy Spirit living in me, then I can obey God, and I'm a little bit more like a helium balloon. I want you to keep that in mind as we go through this because as we talk about each one of these commandments, kind of like last week, when you sort of see something you haven't seen before, you're going to be tempted to just think like an air-filled balloon and woe is me, but let that drive you to say, look at Christ, because really you're more of a helium-filled balloon than you are air-filled balloon because you're in Christ.

You're in Christ. So let's talk then about this second commandment. And let me just read it for us first.

You shall not make for yourself a carved image or 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 or serve them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Now, aren't you glad that what we memorize is have no graven images? That would be a lot to memorize, right? All right, so there's the commandment. And what I want us to do is just take a moment to think about the background of this commandment or another way of saying this is to think about an illustration of what this commandment is saying.

[5 : 10] And you'll remember this story. The story happens in Exodus chapter 32. And this is the story of the golden calf. How many of you are familiar with the story of the golden calf?

Everybody sort of familiar? Okay. Well, let's read through it together. It's just six verses. And then what I'm going to do is I'm going to read it and then I'm going to ask you some questions, okay?

When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered themselves to Aaron and said to him, Up, make us gods who shall go before us.

As for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him. So Aaron said to them, Well, take off the rings of gold that are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters and bring them to me.

So all the people took off the rings of gold that were in their ears and brought them to Aaron. And he received the gold from their hand and fashioned it with a graving tool and made a golden calf.

[6 : 19] And they said, These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it.

And Aaron made a proclamation and said, Tomorrow shall be a feast to the Lord. And they rose up earlier the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings.

And the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play. There's our six verses. So, just this whole story as a whole, what is it that the people did?

They made another god. They made another god. They made an idol, right? And where, who is it that came up with this idea first? Who is it that wanted to do this?

The people did. If you go back to verse 1, it's interesting that they tell Aaron, up, make us gods. Do you think they had any idea that Moses and Aaron were brothers?

[7 : 24] Oh yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And so their statement here just really shows. This guy? Yeah. They just go, this guy. I really think it shows kind of where their heart is.

So they make the golden calf, right? Aaron actually shapes it as a calf. And the question is, where do you think they got the idea of a calf?

Where is the image of a calf from? Baal? Well, Baal is going to be a god of the Philistines and the Canaanites.

So they've been in Egypt. So they probably got the idea from Egypt somewhere. Because there are some gods in Egypt that, you know, have the shape of a cow or something like that.

So they probably got that idea. Now, here's the thing. Were they trying to make a new god? Or were they trying to give shape to the one true god?

[8 : 28] Now, I think most people would say a new god. And I would disagree. Let me show you why. First of all, now, if you take verse one, it says, make us gods.

And so it sounds like they want a new god. Right? Then when you get, after he's fashioned it, they say, these are your gods, O Israel.

But then look what it says next. Who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. So now, what they're doing is, they're saying, all those plagues, all that crossing of the Red Sea, was done by this, these gods, this golden calf, these gods.

Now, here's the thing. It could be a translation problem, and here's why. Because the term gods here, is Elohim. And when you're talking about the one true god, you say, capital G-O-D.

But when you're not talking about the one true god, you talk about, little G-O-D-S, gods. So it's possible, that they're saying, this is your god, Oedro, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.

[9 : 38] Is there any significance, because it says gods, the S? Well, remember, in the beginning, God created, is plural in the same way.

So you could say, in the beginning, gods, except that there's a singular verb. Right? Anyway, I don't want to get too technical for everybody, but my point is, is that, I don't think that they're trying to make a new god.

I think they're trying to give shape to the one who led them out of Egypt, because then Aaron says this, tomorrow shall be a feast day to, this is Yahweh, to Jehovah.

So, so what they're doing is, they're trying to give shape and image and form to the one true god. Now, here's, here's the thing. The first commandment told us who we're supposed to worship.

The second commandment is telling us how to worship. Okay? What did, if you, if you know this story, do you know what Moses did, what, in the next part of the story?

[10 : 51] It's verses seven through verse 20. I don't plan to read it, but I just thought I'd see if you know what Moses did in the next part of the story. Anybody know? He came down the mountain and saw him, worshiping the calf, and threw down the ten commandments.

The calf was. Okay, breaks the ten commandments, right? He's gotten the ten commandments from God. Then, what does he do to the calf? He breaks it up, grinds it up, puts it in water, makes them drink it.

They have to consume their guilt. Okay? That's the idea. They're consuming their guilt, owning it. Okay, so, so there's this, this kind of picture then, or an illustration of what this commandment's talking about.

So, let's talk then about the meaning of the second commandment. The meaning of this second commandment, or let us just say verses four through six, we can divide it between the what and the why.

The what and the why. It's telling us what to do, and then it tells us why to do it. Okay? So, let's talk about the what for just a second. The what, you can find it in both verse four and five, and in verse four, you see it say, do not make.

[12 : 12] Do not make for yourself a carved image. So, it doesn't want you to create anything to represent the one true God.

It doesn't want you to do it from things that are in the heaven above, sun, moon, stars, right? on the earth beneath, any animal of any kind, bulls, lions, whatever, or that's under the earth, that would be in the sea, right?

So, whales, sharks, pontifuses, anything like that. He goes on to say that you're not to bow. So, so let's start, let's just start with this do not make.

So, you're not to craft anything, you're not to craft anything that would give image, or form to God. Now, there's a parallel passage I want us to read, and it's in the book of Numbers, no, it's in the book of Deuteronomy, and Deuteronomy, so just to give you a little thing, so you see the word Deuteronomy?

So, Deuteronomy, you got duet, duet is how many people singing? Two. Two. So, this is two, and onomy, onomy is law. law. So, this means second law.

[13 : 32] That's what Deuteronomy means. And the reason it does, is because, when they came out of Egypt, they go to the promised land, God says, go in, take it, I'm going to give it to you, and they get to the promised land, and they're afraid.

Why are they afraid? Because the people are giants in the land, and they feel like grasshoppers, and so they don't obey God. So, God says, everybody who's 20 years old, and older, you're going to wander in the wilderness, for 40 years, and you're all going to die.

And all the children, who are 20 years, and younger, they're going to live, and they're going to go, into the promised land. So, when that time comes, Moses, repeats the law, second law, in order for the new generation, to know what the law is.

They get taught the law. Okay? So, in this, in chapter four, he gives some specific instructions, related to this idea, about, not carving any, graven image.

He says in verse 15, therefore, watch yourselves, very carefully, since you saw, no form, on that day, that the Lord spoke to you, at Horeb, out of the midst of the fire.

[14 : 46] Beware, lest you act corruptly, by making a carved image, for yourselves, in the form of any figure, the likeness of male, or female, the likeness of any animal, that's on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird, that flies in the air, the likeness of anything, that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish, that's in the water, under the earth, and beware, lest you raise your eyes, to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, the stars, and all the hosts of heaven, you be drawn away, and bow down to them, and serve them, things that the Lord your God, has allotted, for all the peoples, under the whole of heaven, so don't make anything, that looks like a human, don't make anything, that looks like a bird, or an animal on the ground, or fish in the sea, or the sun, the moon, stars, or even angels, the hosts of heaven, right, don't make anything, that looks like that, in order to try, to represent God, you saw nothing, when God spoke to you, and that's exactly, what you're supposed to have, in front of you, is nothing, how does the symbol, of a cross play into this, okay, that's a question, at the end, we'll come to, we'll come, because there, there are some questions, that get, get raised, about this, and I think that, they're important questions, that we need to sort of deal with, and I'll just tell you up front,

I don't have some, in some of these questions, I don't have definitive answers, but I do think, it's important for us, to struggle, so, okay, so that's the first part, is don't make them, okay, just don't make them, now this does not mean, that you cannot, do art, like if you wanted, to paint a picture, of the deer, running across the road, you can do that, if you want to paint, a picture of angels, you can paint, a picture of angels, this means, don't make it, don't try to picture God, whom we cannot see, okay, he also then says, in verse five, that you shall not, bow down, to them, or serve them, it's interesting, that most of the words, in the old testament, that we would consider, words for, service, are also words, for worship, worship is service, and service is worship, when you worship God, you're serving him, when you serve God, you're worshiping him, okay, and so, this whole idea, this commandment, is about bowing down, and serving,

God, through this image, we've crafted, we have this image, of God, and so, we want to worship God, by this image, that's, that's the thing, he's trying to say, don't do this, don't create an image, and then that image, be what you worship God, by, it's like, when you take a picture, of Jesus, you know, it seems like, everybody has the same idea, of what Jesus, is supposed to look like, and, so, would this, fall into that category, worshiping, or, praying, to that image, that someone, created, of Jesus, does, I, yeah, I, I think it does, and I'll give you, the illustration, I was going to give, when I was a kid, my grandparents, would go to a local, nursing home, and they would go, sing, and then my grandfather, would preach, or he would try to get somebody, to come preach, and, and what not, and I would go with them, in order to sing with them, and there was a lady, and,

I, I, I'm not trying to, castigate her, or anything, I think that she was just, very untaught, of the truth, and there's a lot of people, who are not taught, these things, but she would come, to that time of worship, and she would have a picture, of Jesus with her, and as we would sing, she never sang, because, some reason she didn't sing, but as we would sing, she would just take that picture, and she would just rub, that picture, of Jesus, now that's the most, visually, sort of egregious thing, I can think of, to, to look at, but God wants us, to worship him, here, here, and here's the thing, we got to hold on to, he's trying, to help us understand, that he gets, to determine, how we worship, that's the whole, focus of this thing, I don't want you, to worship me, by these images, now that's, that's the, the big picture, but remember, it's case law, all, so he's saying, don't worship me, this way, therefore, worship me, the way that I tell you, to worship me, right, that's the positive side, of this,

I want you to worship me, the way I tell you, to worship me, don't you create, something on your own, to worship me by, you listen to what, I have to say, about how you're going, to worship me, does that make sense, well it's like, the statues, of the Virgin Mary, you know, that people pray to, it just, right, let's talk, just a little bit, about why God, says this, why should we not, do this, and you'll notice, a couple of things, in verse five, he tells us, that he's a jealous God, he's a jealous God, now jealousy, jealousy can be a good thing, or a bad thing, right, everybody with me, jealousy can be good, anybody, anybody want to take a stab, at why, or how, jealousy can be a good thing, well that's how God is, he wants to, have us solely, worship him, right, he does, he's jealous for us, to worship him, and him alone, so, if I see somebody, who's got something, that I want, or they've got, an ability, that I wish I had, or their life is such, covetousness, is where I want that, but that's also a jealousy, right, they're very closely, intertwined, and so, when I, when I am, and wishing, that I had, what you had,

[21 : 06] I'm jealous of you, if you get to do things, that I don't get to do, jealous of you, that would be a wrong, jealousy, jealousy, but if I see my wife, in the arms of another man, then, it would actually be, righteous of me, to be jealous, if, and primarily, I'm seeing that, as unrighteousness, because she's breaking, a commandment of God, and is violating her, God's law, then, that's unrighteousness, and to be jealous, to be jealous, that righteousness, be done, instead of unrighteousness, that's how jealousy, is good, we want, we should be jealous, for God, to be obeyed, we should be jealous, for God, to be honored, right, and yes, in that, there's a certain amount, of anger, and, I think perhaps, righteous anger, that I might have, if I saw my wife, in the arms of another man, and so there's, parts of that, that are definitely, good and right, now how far, does that go, how far can I take it, well I, you know, obviously there's some guys, they get so mad, that they like, kill their wife, and that lover, and it's like, well you just took it too far, you're not the avenger, right,

God is the, is the one who avenges, God is jealous, because, all through scripture, he describes himself, as a husband, he describes himself, as a husband, it's Christ, and the church, after which marriage, is designed, right, the husband, is like Christ, life is like the church, and so he's jealous, for his wife, to obey him, he's jealous, for his wife, to understand him, and know him, and follow him, and it's right, for God, to be jealous, in this way, has the word, jealous, changed over time, sometimes, you hear words, you kind of mean, what they were, and you wonder, maybe, I would not, I would not know, the answer to that, really, but that, that would be an interesting, thing to chase out, if there is a, some variation, in the meaning, that would help us, sort of grasp, the difference, between a righteous, and an unrighteous, sort of jealousy,

I would, I would just, I'm not going to, answer on that, because I'm just not sure, yeah, so here's the second thing, he's not just a jealous God, but the other reason, that he wants us, to obey this command, is that he's a punishing God, visiting the iniquity, of the fathers, on the children, to the third, and fourth generation, of those who, hate me, God is saying, that if you worship me, by an image, that you have crafted, you hate me, and I'm going to visit, that iniquity, of the fathers, on the children, to the third, and fourth generation, now, let's talk about, what that means, what that does not mean, is that your children, are punished, for your sin, okay, if it meant, your children, are punished, for your sin, then it wouldn't be, visiting the iniquity, it would be, visiting, discipline, or punishment, or wrath, right, this is about, if you choose, to go after, idols, or if you choose, to do some other thing, that's a violation, of God's law, then, he, has the right, to allow, that wrong behavior, that bent, of sin, those wrong affections, to be inherited, by your children, now, that is to say, that, generally speaking, my affections, for God, whether they're, good and right, and holy affections, for God, or they're bad, and self-serving, affections, for God, have a tendency, to pass on, to my children, not always, it's not perfect, but it has, a tendency to, and so, if I'm not, honoring God, here, then the chances, of my children, honoring God, are even less, right, now, could it be, that a child, actually, avoids, what their parents did, sure, yeah, that's the work of God, and that child alone, right, but he, he, he's got to punish, because it's, it's important to him, that we, not treat him, in a way, that he doesn't want, to be treated, think about it, this way, what if I told you, this, is the ocean, now, most of you, are kind of, immediately going like, yeah, sure, that's a picture, of an ocean, no, not a picture, this is, the ocean, ah, yeah, now everybody's, going like, ah, now you're, ridiculous, because you've, seen the ocean, you've been on the shoreline, maybe you've been, on a cruise, or maybe, you've been on the space station, you know, orbiting the earth, and you've seen the ocean, it's huge, it can't fit on the screen, this is too tiny, this, does not, represent the ocean, very well, does it, it's just too, too small, an image, cannot, properly, represent God, because he is, so much greater, so vast, so, so, so, immeasurable, so, limitless, that to put him, into anything, would be such an affront, to his glory, that's why, he's jealous, to make sure, that we do not, worship him, in this way, he wants us, to worship him, the way he has, commanded us to, all right, let's just pause there, for a second, let you catch your breath, that's trying to, explain the passage, and understand, what those three verses, mean, kind of pulling it apart,

I want to get into, making application, talking about, lighten a map, and, and some of the things, we need to do, but let me ask you this, do you understand, just what the passage says, do you have any questions, about what the passage says, not necessarily, about what it means, for us today, but just what the passage says, are you pretty clear, it's pretty simple, straightforward, isn't it, okay, so let's talk, some application then, let's talk about it, as a light, you'll remember, that what a light does, is that it helps, to expose, and it shows us something, okay, so these commandments, are like a light, in that it shows us, the character of God, now we've already seen, the character of God, as we looked at this, he told us the character, his jealousy, right, his jealousy, so let's think about, what his, jealousy means, about him, and about his character, it means, that God, is God, centered, it means, that God, is God, centered, it means, that God, loves himself, more than anything else, the best way, to see this, is to think about, there was a song, by a, a group of ladies, back in, 90's, 2000's,

I can't remember exactly, when it came out, beautiful song, they have such great voices, but, the song, goes like this, God loves people, more than anything, and in one way, that's a true statement, as you look at, all the cosmos, and you look at, you look at everything, that's on earth, you look at the whole universe, of all created things, God loves us most, because he sent his son, to die for us, but if you were to back out, from the universe, and say, from everything, God loves himself, more than anything, and the reason for that, is because of the first commandment, have no other gods, before me, what if God, loved us, more, than he loved himself, he would be breaking, the first commandment, and if he breaks, the first commandment, he has no righteousness, and if he has no righteousness, we have no hope, so he has to, he has to love himself, most of all, and that's our hope, because in doing so, he then shares with us, his second great love, he shares with us, an open arms, that says, come enjoy, who I am, right, so, so we see that God, is God centered, that's, that's the way we see that, now let's talk about, this commandment as a map, as Christians then, this tells us how to live, this is where we're going to get, some of these, off questions, that we were talking about, for a second, it tells us, how we are to worship, and that means, that we're supposed to worship, in ways that he has commanded, so let's, let's leave the idea, of the images as, as a whole, and just think about, the big picture, how has he commanded us, okay, what does he want, out of our worship, on an ongoing basis, now I think,

[31 : 06] I can make a case, that part of our worship, on a Sunday morning, ought to be, the preaching of the word, I think I can make, a biblical case for that, that that is something, he's positively, commanded us to do, now, if you don't believe me, then what I'm about to tell you, won't make much sense, but if you believe me, and you agree with me, then what, some of the things, I'm about to say, will make a lot of sense to you, okay, so, my job today, is not to prove to you, that that's true, I'm assuming it's true, so if you have a problem, with that, you'll have to just ask me later, and I'll have to, show you how you're wrong, okay, so, so in this, that God is commanding us, how we ought to worship, and there ought to be preaching, I have seen, many occasions, when there has been, a, pushing aside, the preaching of the word, in the worship of God, I've seen it, in a couple of cases, for example,

I have seen the news article, and then I went, and watched the service, of a pastor, who decided, that for the sermon, that day, he dressed up, as a clown, and he came out, and he didn't say a word, but as a clown, just pantomoned, all these different actions, and never said a word, now, that's so strange, that is just so strange, and weird, most of us, would probably look at that, and be like, honey, we're not coming back here, next week, you know what I'm saying, or let's get up and leave, because instinctually, we kind of know, that's wrong, but we got to know, why it's wrong, and the reason, that we know it's wrong, is because, he's never commanded, for anything like that, to take place, if you say to yourself, well, but he's never forbidden, that, that's not the right way, to think about it, how is that preaching the word, well it's not, but here's the thing, if I say, well we can do, in worship, anything that God, doesn't forbid, then, then we've got to, allow crazy man, to get up there, in his clown costume, because, he never forbids that, but that's not, the right way to think, the right way, to think is, what has God, positively, told us to do, because now,

I'm going to see, if I can meddle, just a little bit, he also, has never told us, that we should, replace the preaching, of the word, with a musical presentation, music is one thing, and the scriptures, talk about music, but the scriptures, never compare, or put in the same level, music with preaching, it doesn't, and I have been, in many churches, where, I worked with the choir, and we had a Christmas cantata, and the pastor, gave up his sermon, on a Sunday morning, and we just, did our Christmas cantata, and everybody, was all like, you know, that is just so great, and I'm just thinking to myself, it's not bad, to do a Christmas cantata, but where has God said, that it's okay, that music, can replace the preaching, and it doesn't even, have to say it, in my words, it doesn't have to say, Christmas cantatas, and it doesn't have to say, special music, it doesn't have to say, anything like that, but where does he give us, this idea, that we can just, dispense with, the preaching, and have something, in it's place, he doesn't tell us that, straight up,

I've seen another church, it was after hurricane Harvey, and, they got together, on a Sunday morning, and they dispensed, with the worship, of the church, now, the first Sunday, after the hurricane, I can understand, because most people, weren't there, and there was, there were some issues, in terms of, some dangers, and so I can understand, not having worship, when you're in danger, okay, but, once it was over, they went for two, or three weeks, without having worship, together as a church family, and they said, instead of us, having all this preaching, and all this worship together, we're going to get out, and we're going to serve, our community, and I was just kind of going, like, well that's a nice thing to do, but why have you put these two, as though they compete, with one another, can't you get together, do a, modified, smaller service, sing, one song, two songs, do a 20 minute sermon, and then go serve, why is it, that you have to, act as though, preaching is a bad thing, because what does,

God's word say, says, preach the word, 2 Timothy chapter 4, so, what we're doing, is we're saying, this commandment, the big idea, is God gets to tell us, how to worship, we don't get to just choose, and come up with it, on our own, but let's, let's move away from preaching, let's go back, and talk about, images, so, should we have images, in our worship, well we have to answer that, from two ways, number one, has God told us, not to use images, to represent him, yes, yes, so, what about Jesus, what about Jesus, what about the cross, well Jesus, is the image of God, okay, great thought, let's hold on to that, that's Hebrews chapter 1, he is the image, of the invisible God, Jesus said, if you've seen me, you've seen the father, right, no one has seen God, at any time, but the only God, the only begotten God, this is from John chapter 1, has, explained, the father to us, the word became flesh, and tabernacled, among us, so then, should we, use images, of Jesus, to worship by, should we put, an image of Jesus, on the screen, behind the lyrics, and sing, and use that image, by which to worship, what does the commandment, tell us, wait,

[37 : 42] I'm asking you, it tells us to go, no, no, I don't think we should, I think it would be, a violation of this command, okay, so let's press in a little bit, what if you're at home, by yourself, and you're watching, the chosen, is it okay, to watch the chosen, when you got a guy there, that's imaging Jesus, what's the difference, I'm not worshiping, the chosen, I'm not worshiping, okay, the actor, let me ask you this, I had somebody last night, say this, and this was really fascinating, to me, so I'm just, and listen, listen, in some of these things here, I don't have a definitive answer, but I'm trying to push, because we don't need, to live a life, that doesn't think through, what we're doing, we need to think about it, and if you're kind of going like, well no, I think this is right, then come up with a biblical reason why, right, and let's, and be satisfied with that, because if we fall, in different places on this, it's okay, it's not a big deal, but, but, but, somebody said last night, that sometimes, when they go to pray, that, when they were little, they were read, like Bible story books, that had pictures of Jesus, in it, and sometimes, those images of Jesus, pop into their head, and they start to pray, okay, now,

I can't relate to that, because I have nothing, that pops in my head, okay, I don't read fiction, because I can't imagine the scene, so, so when I pray, and I'm praying to God, Jesus, whatever, like, I don't have images of them, pop into my head, so I don't relate to that, but those of you that do, what do you think about that, there's been a commercial recently, on, I don't remember where I've seen it, but it's Mark Wahlberg, and Jonathan Rumi, and it's, it's saying, Mark Wahlberg says these, words, he says, hey, you want to pray to Jesus, he's right here, and he points to Jonathan Rumi, and of course, Jonathan says, I'm not the real Jesus, I just play Jesus, you know, whatever, but what about that, it's wrong, I personally don't like it myself, okay, okay, okay, okay, somebody else, give me some thoughts here, this is, this is good, good to think, and try to dig into a little bit,

I think, I'm sorry, go ahead, go ahead, a lot of people are visual, and retaining things, not to say that, what's his name, Wahlberg, for him, that I've chosen, is the replacement, or should be replaced, being Jesus, but seeing a visual, and hearing the words, sort of helps retain things, it does, so how, so then, let's put that into practice, and, and, I don't want to worship him, I don't want to worship him, so, so, so let's say, we're singing the old rugged cross, do we want to see, a face, that represents Jesus' face there, is that, is that helpful, I, when I'm singing the old rugged cross, I'm thinking of the old rugged cross, with, a drape of purple, stuff around it, you know, okay,

Easter, right, right, okay, okay, okay, it's tough, it's a, this is, so, so, let's, let's, let's talk about what's super clear, okay, let's talk about what's super, what's super clear, God the Father, nobody has seen God, at any time, we have no idea what he looks like, to put an image, to put anything, and I even think an image of Jesus, to try to represent God the Father, I think that would be, pretty wrong, I think we can all agree there, because, no one has seen God at any time, I think to have an image of something, in worship, where we're trying to have a time, of worship, I think, I think an image of anything, would be, wrong as well, I think that, you're watching a TV show, you're reading a, a Bible book to children, or you're teaching a Sunday school lesson, you got a flannel graph, and you're trying to give them, the spatial awareness, of how that story went, and so you've got a picture of, Jesus,

I think that's fine, I struggle with it personally, but I, I would be like, I'm not going to say anything to you, you know, if you're watching the chosen, I'm not going to tell you, not to watch the chosen, I might not watch the chosen, because of some of these things, but it's okay for you, that's fine, right, but I think the thing, we can say, is to try to represent, God, to try to represent, the triune God, by putting anything, in front of us, I think would be, definitely, wrong, but isn't it human, to try to put a face, to something, that you haven't seen, I mean, yes, as a child, the Lord, my shepherd, there was that little, pastoral picture, and I remember it to this day, and the feelings of love, and, I mean, that came to me, that came to me, because of that picture, and, to this day, I remember it, you know, as clearly as, if it were Israel, that was a visual, but if, to me, that's a human thing, to try,

[43 : 12] I don't think, it's an evil thing, to think, Israelite, maybe, so, I mean, I didn't do it, you know what I'm saying, well, I probably do, and, and, one of the reasons, that I'm going to say, what I'm going to say, it's going to sound like, I'm not saying anything, at all, is because, what I want to do, is I want to back up, to kind of a big picture, and I want to get this umbrella there, and then I want to say, that in some of these instances, there's going to have to be room, for, how I'm living out, this commandment, in my own life, and there has to be some room, for some freedom, and some grace, with one another, as we live out, this commandment, in different ways, but, I want to say, yeah, I think it is very much, very human, basic human idea, to want to have a visual to it, and I think that's why, God commands this, because nothing, that we can visualize, can ever compare to him, right, and I wouldn't even advocate, that that is him, right, at all, right, but as a child, yes, and, and, and, would God use, a visual to help somebody,

I think it's very possible, but it's kind of like saying, that's like depending upon, Balaam's donkey, to always say the thing, we don't, we don't want to go to the thing, that God might do, out of grace, even though it's a violation, of what we know in his word, we want to say, what does his word say, stick to that, get this big umbrella, that says, he's a jealous God, and is going to punish those, who worship him, with my image, and who try to make, an image of him, look what he did, to the Israelites, they just made a calf, and he made them drink it, and, you know, it's like, how, this doesn't seem, in our minds, to comport with something, is it really that important, is it really that, that necessary God, and he says, yes it is, now how far does that go, does it go to, the cross, that's plastered on the front, of the pulpit, and those are questions, that I think, when we push too deeply, into this, we're pushing into places, where it's like, there's not a lot of clarity, so let's, let's take the big idea, where he says, worship, how I tell you to worship, that's what I come back to, on this commandment, is that, the more that we, struggle through the images, it's difficult, because there's so many, nuances and things, that we can look at, but the big picture, of this commandment, is,

I'm the one, who gets to tell you, how to worship, not you, you don't get to decide, I decide, how you're going to, worship me, Linda? Well, there is a church, very close by, that I attended for, ever, and, and behind the pulpit, was a, huge portrait, of Jesus, on a velvet thing, with a gold, frame around it, and that hung, in that pulpit, my whole life, and nobody, ever, questioned it, until you get, a little older, and there were some boys, in the community, you know, in the 60s, and Jesus has long hair, why can I have long hair, that picture, became a point of reference, for, a lot of justification, of having long hair, they finally moved it, and, I don't know where it is now, but, nobody ever even, thought of this, nobody ever even, it was accepted, that was, yeah, so, so part of it, is that, much of our, upbringing, upbringing, and I'll go back, to even like, my grandfather, and the upbringing, the, the constant push, for, ecumenicalism, that, denominations, don't matter, and we just all, love Jesus, because of that, a lot of,

Catholicism, got, in, into, the Baptist, bloodstream, and, Baptists, before, about, 1920, would have been, like, take the, they'd be peeling the cross, off the front of our pulpit, okay, I mean, that's just the way they were, this, this has, watered down some, because, Catholics, they don't have any problem, at all, with images, everywhere, Michelle and I, we did a tour, through the painted churches, in the Schulenburg area, I think it's fine, to go look at that, to me, nothing there, represents God, it represents, a, a false religion, that's just my, my view, and, but the artwork is, is splendid, but you can see, all of these things, that they, you know, they've got this one thing, in one of the churches, it's the Sacred Heart Church, and it's got the little heart thing, and behind it is the triangle, and all the rays, and it represents the triune God, with the heart of Jesus, there in the middle of it, okay, that's blasphemy, that's just blasphemy, and, so, so, yeah, there's a whole bunch of people, way back, that started putting these pictures, of Jesus in places,

I was a pastor, the first church I ever pastored, I made everybody mad, because they had stained glass, in the sanctuary, and every stained glass, had an image of Jesus, doing something, from his life, there was him on the cross, there was the resurrection, there was him washing feet, there's all these things, I felt like, that for the worship, of God's people, that that's wrong, that we shouldn't have those there, now, we don't have them here, so we're good, you know, like, we don't have to fight, that battle, and maybe, maybe you would look at me, and say, well, I just think that's too harsh, that's okay, you can think that, because, again, big picture, how should we worship, second little thing, we don't want to image God, when we come to Jesus, wow, there's a lot of room, that we need to give some space, and grace, and freedom on, with one another, does that make sense, how do you feel about jewelry, jewelry, like a pendant of a cross, wearing a cross, I personally don't wear them, but I would never tell you, not to wear them,

[49 : 25] I would not tell you, that I think it's wrong, just because, the cross, the cross represents not God, and the cross does not necessarily, represent Jesus, the cross represents our salvation, at least that's the way I, the way I picture it, and so because of that, I don't have a problem, with a cross, you're not going to call us blasphemers, no, no, no, if you walk in, with a picture of Jesus, and as we sing, and you start rubbing it, then I'm going to call you blasphemers, okay, listen, listen, I really appreciate, having a dialogue about this, and I appreciate you thinking to yourself, that maybe you don't agree with me, and I think that's good, and healthy, and right, and a good thing, what my goal is, is not to turn you into people, that think exactly like I do, but to push you just a little bit, so that you kind of go like, oh, this could be wrong, well, I'm going to go back to the Bible, right, I'm going to go back to the Bible, and no, I think, I think because Jesus is the image of God, you know, watching the chosen is fine,

I think it's, I think it's fine, and I've thought it through biblically, I'm good with you, okay, I am good with you, does that make sense? Okay. Somewhere along the line, I went from, uh, the image of Jesus, and what I was taught, you know, in Sunday school, or vacation Bible school, to a point where, I don't think of God as, uh, in a man's sense, it's more of, a spiritual type thing, it's more, I don't know, I can't really articulate it, because it's so beautiful, but it's overpowering, over-encompassing, and it's something else, so when I pray to, to God, or talk to Him, or whatever, so, so there, so there, good, I have a problem with, and the older I get, the worse it gets, but, you know, yeah, uh, worship, not worship, but praying to saints, praying, to the Virgin, praying to, yeah,

I have a problem with that, well, and you should, and, and I think, how many people, in this world, are doing this, oh, and, and, and here's why it's wrong, right, one of the easiest ways, is when you look at this commandment, and you understand, that this means, God tells us how to worship, then you have to go and look, and say, does, is there anywhere in scripture, that says, pray to saints, in order to pray to God, no, so you can't do it, right, so, let me, let me close up, with a couple, a couple more thoughts, that, that, I think we're going to, because, it's easy for us, to pick out things, like somebody, rub in the face of Jesus, that's low hanging fruit, and easy to see, but, but I want to tell you, I think there are other ways, that we tend to violate, this command, that, oftentimes, come from our quarters, and our, our side of the, the, the argument here, and that's things like, imaging Jesus, how, our God, how I want to, in other words,

I'm going to say, one of the biggest, easiest ways, to think about this, is that, shh shh everybody dance that's alright so we know that God is holy and we know that God is love and there's a lot of people out there who are going to accentuate the God of love and so if you see something in like this commandment here that says God's a jealous God and he's going to visit the iniquity on the fathers and the sons of the third and fourth generations oh that seems so mean well the God that I worship he's a God of love that's a violation of this commandment because you have now shaped God to how you like him rather than how he has revealed himself he is a holy God he did command Saul to destroy all the Amalekites including the children that's a very difficult thing to deal with but he's a holy God he's a righteous God but he's a God of love and he's a God of grace if I try to say well I'm not going to worship a God that does that then I've just broken this commandment

I'm creating an image of him in my head that I like rather than as he has revealed himself or the person who says listen I don't have to come to church to worship him I'm going to be out in the lake every Sunday fishing I'm worshipping God out here it's like where does God say that you get to choose to be here or not be here and you can go to the lake to do that that's a violation of this commandment so then we get to the mirror part right that this commandment as it teaches us that God is a jealous God and maybe maybe let's just get a little little deeper with that jealousy and understand this is a story from Leviticus chapter 10 and Nadab and Abihu the sons of Aaron each took his censer was there a censer for the priests to use in the tabernacle yes and put fire in it was there fire related to the censer in the tabernacle yes and laid incense on it was there incense to burn yes there was incense to burn in a censer with fire for the tabernacle okay and offered unauthorized fire before the Lord which he had not commanded them unauthorized fire they were supposed to have fire incense the censer into the tabernacle and they were supposed to offer it there was something about the fire we don't know what maybe they got it from the wrong place maybe they maybe the fire had died and they didn't start the fire up the right way but whatever it was they did it as God had not commanded them in other words he didn't tell them not to do it so they did it and he says no you don't go with did I forbid it you go with did I command it

[55 : 33] I didn't command you to do that but you did it anyway and what does God do to them fire came out from before the Lord and consumed them and they died before the Lord one of the things we have to come back to is God is a holy righteous God and we don't understand this in our culture we think of God as just this loving father that loves us no matter how bad we are and there's that's a that's a that's a that's a that's a kernel of truth but it's not the whole truth he is a righteous God who is not to be trifled with the foundation of his throne is justice and righteousness he will by no means clear the guilty and so maybe in all of this discussion you're thinking to yourself man what if what if when I see this thing do this thing have this thought what if what if that is a violation of this command and he is this holy about this and so vengeful about this what am I going to do let's just say for instance okay just for grins let's just say that watching the chosen would be a violation of this command let's just say for grins that that using a Bible storybook with Jesus's picture in it would be a violation of this command let's just say for grins that having the cross on the front of the pulpit would be a violation of this command let's just assume and let's just pretend for a second that all of that's a violation of this command and that

God is a holy righteous vengeful God what do we do in light of that we run to the cross we run to the cross knowing that Jesus died for people like us and that his blood covers us and that we're covered in his righteousness and if it were true that we should avoid every single image always then he would empower us to live in such a way as to not need any of that now I'm not saying all those things are but let's just assume that they are that it runs us to Christ it runs us to Christ and maybe you've got somebody in your life that you know of that's still much like Benny was talking about praying to saints or to Mary or they worship by images and you're thinking to yourself man I need to tell them not to do that well let me let me encourage you with this don't start with commandment number two and say you're a blasphemer okay let's not do that but instead start back in

Genesis 1-1 that God is the creator of the universe and read all the way through Genesis to help them get the background of who God is before you ever come to the second commandment okay that's alright is this where the expression came from it's better to ask for forgiveness than it is for permission you know when people want to do something and they go ahead and do it and they said oh I can ask for I'm sorry you know people say that's on now well I'll just say this don't ever do that with God it's okay to do it with each other but don't ever do that with God listen we need to live in freedom and grace with one another as we some of these things that are less able for us to really kind of pinpoint and say oh no that is wrong you have to live this commandment out in your life and you need to make application of it and as long as you're doing your best to honor the Lord and you've got biblical reasons why you're doing then live in that freedom and be okay with it okay and just recognize that that

Christ has covered our sin in him don't presume upon his grace but relish in his grace and yeah let me pray for us