

# Exodus 20:1-6; 32:1-6, 15-24

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 11 September 2022

Preacher: Benjie Slaton

- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     The following sermon is from Grace and Peace Church in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Grace and Peace is a new church that exists for the glory of God and the good of the northeast suburbs of Hamilton Place, Collegedale, and Ottawa.
- You can find help more by visiting [gracepeacechurch.org](http://gracepeacechurch.org). Okay, we're going to turn our attention to God's Word.
- So would you stand with me as we read God's Word together? And I'm going to invite Angela to come up and read for us. Good morning, everyone. We're so glad that you're here.
- Today's scripture reading is two different passages in Exodus. We're going to start in chapter 20 and then move into chapter 32. And God spoke all these words, saying, I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.
- You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image for 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.
- [ 1 : 1 5 ]     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 the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.
- Moving to chapter 32. When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered themselves together 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 did not know what has become of him. So Aaron said to them, 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.
- 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 of the Lord, to the Lord.
- [ 2 : 2 6 ]     And they rose up early 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. Then Moses turned and went down from the mountain with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand, tablets that were written on both sides, on the front and on the back they were written.
- The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God engraved on the tablets. When Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp.

But he said, It is not the sound of shouting for victory or the sound of the cry of defeat, but the sound of singing that I hear. And as soon as he came near the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, Moses' anger burned hot, and he threw the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain.

He took the calf that they had made and burned it with fire and ground it to powder and scattered it on the water and made the people of Israel drink it. And Moses said to Aaron, What did this people do to you that you have brought such a great sin upon them?

And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my Lord burn hot. You know the people that they are set on evil. For they said to me, 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.

[ 3 : 49 ] So I said to them, Let any of you, let any who have gold, take it off. So they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf. You may be seated.

Thanks, Angela. Boy, that story from Exodus 32 is really something. So Moses goes up on Mount Sinai to meet God, but the people, instead of being encouraged, the people were terrified of God's presence.

I mean, it must have looked like an erupting volcano. We didn't read the description there, but in other places, what it looks like is there's fire and smoke on the top of the mountain.

There's thunder, and there's earthquakes. There is, it is, Moses has gone up there, and he's been up there for more than 40 days, we're told.

And so understandably, the people got scared. You know, you can imagine them asking the question for themselves, you know, is Moses, is this Moses guy coming back? Is God really good?

[ 5 : 02 ] Like, is he really for us? Did he really just rescue us from Egypt to come out here and like destroy us in a volcano? You know, is, is this God that we talk about really someone who is worthy of worship?

What is happening? I feel alone. I'm scared. It, it actually feels really relatable when you imagine yourself being one of the people of Israel sitting at the bottom of the mountain.

Those are relatable feelings. I read a, a story about Mother Teresa recently, and I don't, didn't know much about her, but I, I learned that despite her, you know, amazing and faithful work that she did for, you know, decades in the slums in Calcutta, she was actually somebody that struggled spiritually.

She even battled a couple of seasons of pretty deep depression. Listen to this excerpt from a letter that she wrote to a friend during one of those times. She writes this, darkness is such that I really do not see, neither with my mind nor with my reason.

The place of God in my soul is blank. When the pain of longing is so great, I just long and long for God, and then it is that I feel he does not want me, maybe.

[ 6 : 25 ] That maybe he's not there at all. My very life seems so contradictory. Sometimes I hear my own heart cry out, my God, and then nothing else comes.

Doesn't that sound like what you imagine the people of Israel might have been thinking during 40 days of an erupting volcano and their leader up in the midst of it and them just sitting down at the bottom waiting.

You know, she wanted, Mother Teresa wanted to see God's plans and his purposes. She wanted to understand how she fit into the story. She felt alone and scared. It's not just Mother Teresa.

It's not just the people of Israel. Every Sunday, we have people who show up at church who feel the exact same way. Who wonder, is there really something to all of this?

You know, do I really believe that this is the real thing? You know, is God really there? And if he is there, is he really good? Do I want to worship this God?

[ 7 : 33 ] Now, you may not believe this, but the second commandment is all about what people do when they want to see God's truth clearly, but they just can't see it for themselves.

The second commandment is all about a well-meaning search for God. The first commandment is about us seeing God clearly, right?

We talked about that last week, that we are to worship Him alone. We're to have no other pretenders, no other rivals to God, no one who can be a false God, no other pretenders.

But when we struggle to see God, when we struggle to see Him clearly, one of the primary things that we do is we invent a God-like image so that we can make the invisible God more manageable, more palatable to us, more understandable to us.

We try to remove the mystery of the unseen God to make Him seen again so that we can hold on to something. So God commanded them to not make a carved image.

[ 8 : 49 ] Well, look at this. Let's read this. God commanded them to, you shall not make for yourself a carved image or any likeness of anything that's in the heaven above or the earth beneath or that's in the water underneath.

So it sounds like what God is saying is, hey, you're not supposed to make any sculptures. Sculpturing, really bad. Michelangelo, he's the worst. Got to get rid of him.

That it seems like what he's saying is not to make any sort of carved image of anything created. But that can't be right because when God directed the people of Israel to build the temple, they had carved things.

The menorah had little tulips on it. On their curtains, they had pictures of angels and of plants and other things like that.

So it can't seem to be artwork. So what does it mean? Keep reading. Verse 5, you shall not bow down to them or serve them.

[ 9 : 51 ] You shall not bow down to them or serve them. So once we read further, what we see is that he's clarifying that we're not, he's talking about images of created things that we use as a stand in for the creator of those things.

See, what God is saying is, when you make an image of God, it diminishes who God is. It takes the infinite mystery of the eternal and it confines it to something that is finite and not eternal and temporal and not mysterious, but is graspable and by us finite creatures.

It diminishes who God really is. And God has already given us a way for us to know him even in the midst of our doubts. See, here's the fundamental point of the second commandment.

It's this, that God wants you to listen to him even when you cannot see him. He wants you to listen to him even when you can't see him. And when you refuse to do that, breaking the second commandment means that we diminish God.

Well, we do destruction to, well, to three different things is what we do. There are three things that I want you to see that we do when we don't do this right. We diminish who God is, we distract ourselves from God's word and we destroy God's image.

[ 11 : 24 ] So we're just going to walk through that. It's not as depressing as it sounds, diminishing, destroying, distracting, but, you know, I think it'll actually be encouraging. So the first thing is we diminish God.

So go back to the story in Exodus 32. So the people didn't know what was happening with Moses. They're scared, and so they go to Aaron for help. Aaron did what Aaron knew how to do.

He made a golden calf. Now, one question is, why in the world a golden calf? What's going on with that? Well, in ancient cultures, bull gods were a pretty familiar sign.

There was, you know, something about virility and strength and that kind of thing. So most of the ancient cultures had some sort of bull god. Egypt had one called Abbas.

Apis. Apis. Not a B, a P. Apis. But what's interesting is instead of some sort of raging bull god, what did Aaron make?

[ 12 : 26 ] A little calf. Something that is kind of like nice and cute. Something that was nice to look at. I think what Aaron was doing is Aaron was attempting to help focus the attention of all the people of Israel on what was happening up at the top of the mountain.

But he wanted to do it in a way that was just a little bit more palatable. Just a little bit easier to understand. Not quite so scary. He used the familiar image for, a familiar image for people who had been slaves in Egypt in order to point them to God.

I think in some ways Aaron is, he's well-meaning. He's just wrong. And I think that's what all people who fashion idols are doing.

They're well-meaning. They want this thing to represent the fullness of the deity but just in a more manageable form. They want something tangible that they can get their hands around.

They want to cut through the clutter of mystery, of the unseen God and make it something that can actually impact their lives in the way that they're living. That's the case with, you know, every Hindu that has a little statue of Vishnu in their, you know, home shrine.

[ 13 : 47 ] That's the case with the icons of Eastern Orthodoxy, of the veneration of icons that we have. That's the same thing even when you look at Roman Catholic.

Some of the high water marks of the crucifix and some of those things. It's taking this supreme and mysterious thing and making it into something that we can see and get our hands around and touch and feel.

The problem is, is that it diminishes God in some way. Think about this. Where did the people, where did Aaron get the gold to make this?

Well, he got it from the people, right? People, he asked people where, to bring their earrings and rings and such. Where did a bunch of former slaves get their gold? Ah, from the Egyptians.

You remember when the people of Israel got kicked out, God said, go to them and ask them for, for gold and for precious things and for clothing and by asking them for it, you're going to plunder the Egyptians.

[ 15 : 00 ] So they plundered the Egyptians and so, they're wearing all of this expensive stuff in the desert. They took the provision of God, the gift of God, and turned it into this golden calf to distract themselves, to make themselves feel better.

Even though, this is the amazing thing, God was right there at the top of the mountain, but they needed something tangible. Now, look, when you start looking at the ways that we do this, where we diminish God to make Him more palatable, you begin to see this everywhere.

everywhere, you know, from the prosperity gospel preachers, you know, the Joel Osteens of the world, that who distort the grand message of the gospel of Jesus, and they take just one aspect of who God is, His generosity and His care for our physical needs, and they take something like Psalm 37 that we read earlier, God will give you the desires of your heart, and they distort that message and turn it into something functional, if you just, if you are sincere enough, if you have enough belief and enough faith, then God's going to give you what you want.

It's taking one aspect of God's promises and making it the whole totality. It diminishes who God is. We do this in our, you know, Reformed and Presbyterian culture where we like to talk about our theology.

One of the things we talk about is if you can understand theology and be able to articulate the depths of theology that is going to remove the mystery of who God is. You're going to be able to understand it all.

[ 16 : 43 ] It's a false promise. It's idolatry is what it is. We see this in the kinds of deals we make with God that are, you know, this is the kind of culture we live in.

We make deals with God. We think, well, you know what, if I obey God and I'm a good enough person as a, in college or in my early 20s, God's going to bring me a spouse.

Or if I go to church and I show up and I do the right things, God's going to give me happiness with my children. Whatever it may be, the deals that we do. A scholar named Ellsworth Kalis, he says this, God becomes our delivery agent.

When we diminish God, He becomes our delivery agent. Essential to our comfort, but not intended to make any outside claims on us. See, what the second commandment is doing is it's saying that God refuses to be diminished in any way.

He will not be. He cannot be. So we diminish God when we do this. But it also, we distract from God's word.

[ 17 : 56 ] So when we bring this kind of impulse to make God more manageable, when we bring it into the worship service, in particular, our worship devolves and we are distracted from God's word.

Here's how that works. Our worship becomes more about our eyes than it becomes about our ears. See, when Moses was up on Mount Sinai, we're told that God wrote the law.

Did you notice how it phrased it? Our translation's a little bit different, but it says, Moses came down with a carved tablet. Same word as used for a carved image.

You know, isn't that kind of funny that there's a little bit of a word play going on? God is carving His word into stone doing the exact thing that He told the people not to do.

Except, He's carving His words. not carving a visual image. And I think the point for us is, what God is saying is, He is prioritizing His word over His sight.

[ 19 : 06 ] He's prioritizing your ears over your eyes. You know, He, this is a consistent theme through the Bible to listen to God's word.

That's why He gives prophets and preachers. That's why He still does this. You know, that's why we as His church do this silly thing where one person stands up and does a monologue for, you know, like 20 or 30 minutes.

Sometimes longer. You know, educators will tell you that that's a terrible way for people to get information. You need multimedia. You need to be in teams. We need to break you up into teams of four and give you a group project.

That's what would really work. Our educators can tell us that. But what God has said is, He actually wants to change our lives through the hearing of His word. Bible scholar Peter Lighthouse, he says it this way, Eyes are the organs, in the Bible, eyes are the organs of scrutiny and judgment.

With visible things, we assume a stance of criticism, command, and control. But, in the Bible, hearing is virtually identical to obedience.

[ 20 : 22 ] You know, God could have revealed Himself visually. God could have given us what He looks like. But, He is the unseen God who speaks.

That's who He has chosen to be. See, the way for you to know God's presence is first for you to listen to His word. But, the problem is really clear.

We live in a world, we live in a world where the visual spectacles are all around us, right? We have constant images that are drawing our attention away.

Our eyes, in our culture, our eyes are given far more priority than our ears. And, frankly, that's seeped into the church, hasn't it?

The way that our modern church often chooses to worship plays into this. I mean, you know, give me a break. Do you really need a statue to bow down to when you have a celebrity preacher who can capture your attention?

[ 21 : 24 ] You know, somebody who, especially if they wear cool sneakers and fashionable clothes and they have a well-placed tattoo, you know, just so you know they've got a past. Now, I make fun of that, but like, you know, I think about, you know, Kyron makes fun of me.

He's like, oh, you and your J.Crew style. You know? J.Crew is like, cool for middle-aged dudes. You know?

But, there's a sense in which he's right. There is the, there's a fundamental temptation for the dynamic to happen in the church where somebody like me or anyone begins to draw your attention away from him and draws your attention to me in order to make his mystery more understandable more palatable but I bring your attention to me.

That's not what I'm supposed to be. You know, this is why preachers wear robes actually so that you ideally won't notice them as much. You will see him.

I'm not going to wear a robe, however. Now, you know, I could say it this way. To the extent that I draw your attention unwarranted, I break the second commandment and I'm responsible for that.

[ 22 : 50 ] Now, don't get me wrong. I want to be clear that I'm not trying to criticize other church traditions that are choosing to worship in different kinds of ways because the reality is every worship style has the potential to do this.

You know, the modern kind of overly visual style of worship that seeks to imitate the entertainment style of our culture does this.

You know, I've been at Moon River this weekend. I don't know if any of y'all went. Still got my wristband. I might go tonight. Leon Bridges. Hopefully, you'll be there. Come say hello if you are.

But, you know, I love a good concert and what a concert can do for you is a music concert can draw you in. It can give you this sense of transcendence that feels like worship.

Right? But there's a problem when we import that, when we confuse that sense of transcendence, of emotional transcendence with actual the formation of our souls through God's word being brought to us in the worship service.

[ 23 : 58 ] We can confuse that. But that happens in the, that happens also in an overly liturgical, or not overly, but in a, in a historic liturgical style.

We can elevate ritual and superstition as a way to make God seen. You know, all of these forms are, are intended to give people a sense in God's, in the confidence of God's presence.

But they're ways that God has not directed us to worship Him. And look, there's a danger for this at grace and peace. Now, you know, look, we, we are intentionally, we don't have the band on the stage.

That's an intentional decision on our part to minimize the kind of entertainment style, even though I think Kyron's really talented and you should be entertained by him. We're intentionally minimizing some of that.

You know, the lighting in here isn't great. If you watch online, sorry people online, it's, you know, we're not doing anything flashy. You know, it's like one or two camera shots.

[ 25 : 10 ] There's, you know, there's not a lot of flash going on here. But we're also trying to not have overly ritualized ways of doing worship.

because there's a danger even for us that we would confuse the forms with a way to manage the infinite mystery of God.

See, anything that we use to help you picture God can simply become a caricature of him, a diminishment of his majesty, and it distracts from his word.

Peter Lightheart again says this, the second commandment summons us to resist the temptation to fear, trust, serve, and live by the spectacle.

Instead, to walk faithfully, we must turn our ears to the word of God. God's word is that thing that rests secure.

[ 26 : 15 ] Okay, so we can diminish God, we can distract us from God's word, but thirdly, we can destroy God's image. So, here's the hard thing about this passage, is that God has already revealed himself in a particular visual way, right?

I mean, Jesus was the word made flesh. Jesus had a body, he still has a body. You know, John Owen was famous for saying that the dust of heaven, or the dust of the earth sits right now on the throne of heaven.

When Jesus was ascended, he didn't lose his body. There's still something physical about him, even in the resurrection, that he carried with him to heaven.

He still has a body. I don't know how that works. I don't know where that is. It ain't up there. I don't know where it is. We can talk about that another time when we talk about metaphysics. But when Jesus ascended, he left his spirit.

And what did his spirit do? His spirit gave us his word. He empowered his word so that we can hear. But he also did something better. He gave us something visual and tactile.

[ 27 : 35 ] He gave us the waters of baptism. He gave us the bread and the wine or juice of communion. He gave us things by which he intends for us to know to see him and to know him.

But there's even more than that. You remember back in the garden. God created man in his own image. In the image of God he created him.

Male and female he created them. God created you and me so that we would reflect what God actually is like.

You see God prohibits images right here in the second commandment because he's already shown us what he's like in the face of your neighbor. In the water and the bread and the juice and his word.

He's already given us everything that we need to make the infinite, eternal, and unchangeable God understandable. He's given that to us.

[ 28 : 43 ] You see when you attempt to make God more manageable than he has already given by focusing on whatever thing you can see and touch and imitate and control you not only diminish God right?

You diminish who God is but you actually begin to deny and diminish the image of God in other people that he's given to us. You destroy his image as well as his people.

See that mixture of word and sacrament and neighbor is the key to answering that nagging sense of God's absence. It really is the key.

If you want to begin to find an answer to that nagging sense of whether or not God actually is real and has something to say, what you need is God's word, his sacrament in the worship of his people and you need to know your neighbor, the people who are sitting just to the left and the right in front and back of you in this room, this actual room.

See, to ignore what God has given you will lead to confusion and false idols and ultimately to despair. Did you notice in this, go back to this passage, did you notice there's kind of a progressive and degenerative nature to this?

[ 30 : 11 ] Verse 5, well, it starts off with, you shall not make for yourself, that's the verb, make for yourself a carved image or any likeness of anything that's in heaven above or the earth beneath or in the water beneath the earth.

Verse 5, you shall not then bow down to them or serve them. Do you see how there's a progression there? Not make, bow down, serve.

And it's degenerative, look at this, it's generational even. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers on their children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me.

That means that this kind of degenerative denial of who God is and his image actually descends through us.

Our children pick up on this, is what he's saying. And you begin to see this generationally, even to the third and fourth generation.

[ 31 : 13 ] But, verse 6, showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me. There's an intentional comparison there. Third and fourth generation compared to thousands upon thousands upon thousands.

God's grace is far more expansive than the power of your sin. God's love to you. You see, he is like a jealous husband who's devoted to his bride, not wanting her to stray after other lovers.

And that's why he's saying, don't do this. Don't diminish who I am. Don't try to control the image of me. Just take what I have given you.



You see, you can hear God even if you can't see him. God's saying, you see here that needs to be there for us to, you know, we tend to think of the second commandment, you're like reading the Ten Commandments and you get to the second one, you're like, don't make idols and you're like done check got that one that's the easy one right um but i think what what god is saying is is there's an insidious quality to this it roots our way our its way into our souls and it begins to change if we can't see if we can't uh hear god the way that he has asked to be heard we can't see other people the way that he's called us to see them we can't love one one theologian made this point that i think is fabulous he he says idolatry is inherently dehumanizing it diminishes people as god's image that idolatry is at the root of all injustice and oppression and cruelty in the world the second commandment god is not just outlining the false ways that we worship him he's actually demanding that we honor him by honoring his image in this world in our neighbor what did jesus say that the the law can be summed up with love the lord your god with all your heart soul mind and strength and love your neighbor as yourself did you see the way in this passage god dealt with this that he wanted to he wanted to make his people vigilant and by making he had to become vigilant did you see what uh he did in exodus 32 to the people what did he do with the uh the golden calf he had aaron grind it up right and then what did he do he spread it in the water and he made the people drink it that would not pass you know osha standards why did he do that he wanted the people to see that he was vigilant for his own image and that what they were doing was actually uh uh poisoning themselves this actually links to another old testament passage where there's a a test of adultery where there would be dirt from the the tabernacle floor would get put in a a jar and shaken up and then the person would drink it and if they got sick that means that they had committed adultery and if they didn't get sick it means they didn't which is super weird super weird but there is this this this this link in the bible we can get into that other passage another time but there's this link in the bible that that what we consume changes us and what he's saying is don't do this you have to be vigilant about it one of the bands i saw last night was uh drew holcomb and the neighbors he's kind of the host of this whole moon river thing but there's this great this line from this song that i was thinking about last night uh it's this song called ring the bells and here i just want to i want to read to you a little bit about this ring the bells this time i mean it bid the hatred fare thee well take back your pieces of my jesus and take your counterfeit to hell bang the drums this means war but not the kind you're waiting for when we say mercy won't be rationed here that's what we're fighting for this song is all about this kind of vigilant going after this beautiful world the this life of mercy and goodness

and anything that is counterfeit to that is something that should be well he says take your counterfeit to hell i love that see god's invitation is not to see this commandment in some sort of a silly don't bow down to a statue it's an invitation for you to pursue god's word as though your very life depended on it to pursue his word as the only way that you can hear him and to love the sacraments as a tangible sign of god's grace and his presence in this world and to love your neighbor with abandon to break boundaries for the good of your neighbor to to see them as worth everything for you okay i'm going to take a second and tell a story that i heard about um about uh the queen who died this week there have been lots of stories i just loved this one she was um uh apparently every legislative session in britain i did not know this i'm learning lots of things uh but apparently every legislative session starts with a visit from the queen and it's this very regal tradition she walks up this this grand stairway to this hallway that ends at the house of lords and her like uh crown guard is in the hallway and it's the stone hallway and they all stand there and she processes down with crown on the whole kind of regalia uh regalia and they hit as she passes they hit their swords against the wall and it creates these sparks as she walks down the hallway and the hallway ends at the house of lords and she goes in and she sits down on her throne and it is this moment where she commemorates every legislative session by reminding those legislators that they are there to enact the will of the people it's beautiful a couple years ago uh there was a break in the tradition and um so they they had to break some tradition because they had to accommodate her as she was getting older she couldn't do the stairs as well anymore so they took her to an elevator back behind the stairs and uh to go up to the floor where the the hallway was and so they went on there but there was a mistake the elevator operator pushed the wrong floor and um so instead of opening at this hallway it opened on the maintenance floor of the of the you know the uh buckingham palace i guess buckingham palace i i don't know where house of lord thank you westminster um yes and uh so they open up on the maintenance floor and um let me just read some of this um rather than the entrance to parliament it was the maintenance floor the lift goes up and door opens and alice from the cleaning crew with her head down pushes the cleaning cart onto the elevator as she has done a countless times only this time she pinned the queen of england against the wall of the small lift the doors closed behind her and alice was stuck in the lift with the queen and her guard she of course as you would let out an expletive not fitting the presence of royalty then an awkward silence ensued not knowing what to do with the silence was broken by the queen's uncontrollable laughter and then a most remarkable invitation rather than opening the doors to let alice off the queen asked the lift operator to take them down to the proper floor and when the doors opened out walked the queen and alice the maintenance worker the queen and alice the maintenance worker the queen in her regalia along with alice in her maintenance uniform processed side by side down the royal hallway but what gets even better is after this

[ 40 : 07 ]    alice got an invitation once a year to come have tea with the queen her new friend and i thought you know there's something so dignifying about that that you have someone with all the power in the world with all the the image who has everything for them and they dignify the humanity of someone who would never been in the same room with her there's in the gospel of jesus in this world that we are all in that we call the church the church of jesus christ what we believe is that the infinite eternal and unchangeable god has made himself known to us has condescended to us and we now live in a world that though we are a bunch of maintenance workers in the in the in the you know the the palace of the king we are those who sit at his table as well because of that you can have confidence that you can hear him even when it feels like you can't you can participate in these elements you can be with one another dignifying his image with one another and what you will find is that he speaks louder than you think you'll be able to hear let me pray for us and ask the lord's guidance to do that father we ask that you would help us to do this as we worship you for we pray it in christ's name amen you you you you