

Ain't Nothing Like The Real Thing

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Date: 06 October 2024

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[0 : 00] Thank you.

Thank you.

Maybe the most famous section in the Bible, known as the Ten Commandments. And we talked about how Exodus 20 comes off of Exodus 19. I know, shocker.

And in Exodus 19, we have a marriage. We have a covenant between God and Israel. God is laying out his vows, and Israel responds, we do.

And they enter into this covenant at Sinai. And then we enter into Exodus chapter 20, where we have the Ten Commandments. And the first commandment is what?

[1 : 32] You're to have no other gods before me. That is that God wants an exclusive marriage with you. He doesn't want your heart to run after any other thing, but to love him most.

And we talked about how that exclusivity is actually good for you. God loves you so much. He wants you to have the very best, amen? And no one's better than him.

And so he tells you, I don't want you to have anybody else. I want you to have me alone, no other gods before me. Now we're going to look this evening at the second commandment.

And no, I am not planning on looking at each commandment individually. But these early commandments are really important because everything else flows out of them. And so we will devote our attention this evening to Exodus 20 and verse 4 through verse 6.

And so if you are able to stand, I will invite you to do so as we look together. And I'm going to actually start reading back in verse 1, and then we'll read down to verse 6.

[2 : 40] God spoke all these things, saying, I am Yahweh, 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, or any likeness of anything that's in heaven above, or that is in the earth below, or that is in the water under the earth.

You shall not bow down to them, or serve them. Why? I am Yahweh, your God. And I am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children of 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.

This is God's word. Will you pray with me tonight? Will you actually do that? Like right where you are, just in your mind, pray for me, pray with me, that God would speak to us tonight.

So God, we come to you now, and we ask as we do each week, that as we gather around the authority of your word, that you would come and speak in power.

[3 : 53] Lord, help me to preach this passage faithfully, that your people might not just be fed with truth, but Lord, that we would experience your grace, and experience your love towards us in Christ Jesus this evening.

And I pray it in Jesus' name, and God's people said, Amen. You can be seated. Allison Kloss could not find a date to prom. There just weren't that many guys that she really liked in high school, and to be honest, none of them seemed all that interested in her.

Allison said, quote, it seemed like all the good guys were taken. And the ones that weren't, well, I really wasn't interested in them. Besides, Allison had set her sights on something bigger than high school boys.

In fact, she wanted to go to prom with a celebrity. And of all the celebrities that she could pick to go to the prom, you'll never guess who she picked.

Wasn't Brad Pitt. Wasn't Leonardo. Wasn't Denzel. Of all the celebrities she could pick to go to prom with her, she wanted Danny DeVito.

[5 : 12] That's right. That Danny DeVito. You see, the reason why is Allison was a huge fan of the show, It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia, which, if you don't know, stars Danny DeVito.

And she knew there was no way a celebrity such as Danny DeVito would ever go to prom, a high school prom with her. So she did the next best thing.

She took to Amazon, and she ordered a life-size cardboard cutout of the actor. And when the day of prom arrived, she dressed him up in a tie, a jacket, a little corsage, so that he looked nice for the prom.

Then she duct taped him to a scooter, because she thought, that's going to be a whole lot easier to dance on the dance floor with Danny DeVito.

And then she headed out to the prom, and evidently the two had a wonderful time. Aren't they cute? What a cute couple. Well, needless to say, Allison got a lot of attention from this, not just from her classmates, but the local news.

[6 : 20] And it didn't stop there. She not only got attention from the local news, she eventually got attention from the Associated Press, and it became national news. The news even made its way all the way to DeVito himself, who decided that he'd take a cardboard cutout of Allison on a date to Patty's Pub in Philadelphia.

You just cannot make this stuff up. And when Allison was asked why she did this, which, by the way, I think is a very appropriate question, she answered, making things work with a human date can be exhausting.

But cardboard Danny isn't like that. He just goes with the flow. We never argue. We never fight.

And he treats me the way a woman should be treated. What have we come to? Now, before you make too much fun of Allison, which everything in me wants to go like dad joke on steroids, right?

But I'm not going to make fun of her because she's not the only person to ever do that. There was a woman in Chicago. Her name was Alice. And when her son, Dave, went to college, she struggled so much with losing her son to college.

[7 : 45] In fact, he was the only one of her four children that actually went to college. She made a life-size cutout of him. That's real Dave on the left and cardboard cutout Dave on the right.

Well, flat Dave, as he was called, who I hear is a real stand-up guy. Okay, I had to work in one, okay? She took that cardboard cutout to the dentist's office, to motorcycle shows, to graduation parties.

Alice even kept a scrapbook of all these pictures of where she took her cardboard and son. The Chicago Times heard about this and also asked Alice why.

And she said, quote, Well, Dave misses out on a lot of our family events. At least this way, he still gets to be there. Now, I don't even know what to say about all this, but most of you would not go to that extreme.

But even if you wouldn't go to that extreme, here's what's true of all of us in one way or another, and that is that we tend to cling to images that represent someone or something that's very important to us.

[8 : 57] Are you following me? We cling to images of some kind that represent someone that's important to us or something that's important to us. You know this. You do this.

It's why many of you keep photographs. And you keep photographs of people because those people represent a real relationship that's important to you.

Some of you in your home, you've got a variety of different souvenirs. And you keep those souvenirs because they remind you of that perfect vacation that you went on or that memory you don't want to forget.

Some of you still have trophies. And those trophies represent that moment in time where you were an amazing athlete in your glory days. Back in 82, I used to be able to throw a pigskin a quarter mile.

Are you serious? I'm dead serious. Watch this. What the heck are you doing?

[10 : 03] I had to get an Uncle Rico in there for you, Wayne. Anyways, all of us hold on to symbols. We hold on to images that represent things. Now, why do we do that?

Now, listen in. Listen very closely. The reason we do that is because when you can't have the real thing or when you feel distant from the real thing, what do you do?

You substitute it with something tangible. When you don't get the real thing or you feel distant, you substitute it with something that's tangible. Listen, the problem with that is that if you and I are not careful, the substitute, I hope you're listening, the substitute will keep us from experiencing the real thing.

The substitute becomes a substitute for the real thing and if we know anything that's true in life, we know this. Ain't nothing like the real thing, baby.

Ain't nothing like the real thing. Come on, you know the lyrics to that song, right? Three of you know that song. Okay, I gotcha. I've got your picture hanging on my wall, but it can't see or come to me when I call your name.

[11 : 21] I realize it's just a picture in a frame. I read your letters when you're not near, but they don't move me, they don't groove me like when I hear your sweet voice whispering in my ear.

Everybody say it with me. Ain't nothing like the real thing, baby. All right, so. Now that song is all talking about how you gotta be careful that substitutes end up becoming the substitute for the real thing.

Everybody with me say yes? Yes. That is exactly why God commands the second commandment. That is exactly why God gives us this second commandment.

Look at it again. Verse four. God says, you shall not make for yourself a carved image. You're not to have any likeness of anything that's in heaven above or earth beneath or that is in the water under the earth.

You shall not bow down to them or serve them. Why? I am the Lord. For the Lord your God is a jealous God. Now, the first thing is at first glance of this second commandment, it appears very similar to the first, right?

[12 : 40] It doesn't seem like there's a big difference between the second commandment and the first commandment. In fact, how many of you, if you're willing to admit, show of hands, how many of you grew up Catholic or Lutheran? Raise your hand.

Yeah, almost the whole room, okay? It's all right. It could be worse. You could have been Baptist. But that's what I grew up. So Catholics and Lutherans actually, they take these two commandments together.

They see them as one commandment rather than two. And I think that's totally wrong. And I think it's not only wrong, it actually misses a really important point that the second command is intended to teach.

So what's the difference between the first commandment and the second commandment? Notice it here on the screen. Oh man, this will preach. The first command forbids the worship of false gods.

Everybody with me? But the second command forbids the false worship of the true God. That's a very important distinction to make.

[13 : 41] In other words, what God is saying as He is entering into this marriage, this covenant with the people of Israel, He's saying, I don't want you to worship any other gods before me. And when you worship me, don't worship me falsely by making an image or something likeness of what's in heaven above.

And here's why I say this is so important. It's so significant. And you know this to be true. And it's very important that we understand this. Notice it here. You can worship the wrong thing or you can worship the right thing the wrong way.

And so, in other words, God wants you to worship the one true and living God and He wants you to worship Him the right way. Everybody got that? Say amen. That's why this second command is so important.

Now, remember the context here. All of this is being driven out of the context of Exodus. And I mentioned last week. I mean, we see in the first few verses that God says, I am Yahweh, your God.

I'm the one that brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. And He enters into this covenant with them in Exodus 19. And what He says is, I don't want you to worship these false gods.

[14 : 58] There are other gods. We talked about that. There are small g gods. There are created gods. There's only one true and living God. One eternal creator.

Are you with me? And so, I don't want you to worship anything else as God. I am the true God. I don't want your heart to look to money or your vocation or anything in this world as your ultimate God.

You look to me and me alone. But I also don't want you to try to somehow reduce me down to an image and worship me in a false way.

Let me explain the context from Egypt. Every single one of the Egyptian gods, we do not have time to go through all of them. That would be a really long sermon as if they're not long enough. But all of the Egyptian gods were represented by an image.

I mean, if you look just here in the text where he talks about heaven above, earth beneath, and water under the earth, you see that there in verse 4. Well, the Egyptians actually had a god for each of those three categories, and each of those gods had an image with that appropriate god.

[16 : 07] So, for example, Horus, the protector god of the sky, the heavens above, was symbolized as a hawk. Sobek, the god of the Nile, that is the waters below, he was symbolized as a crocodile.

Anubis, the god of the dead, that is under the earth, was symbolized as a jackal. So, each and every god of the Egyptians had an image or a symbol that went along with that.

God is saying this, I do not want you to worship other gods before me, and I don't want you to reduce me down to an image that you carve with your hands.

You are to have no likeness of these things. Now, you might say, why does this matter? I mean, is God just, he doesn't like to have his picture taken? You know, is he just like, what's the big deal about the image?

Let me give you four reasons why it is a sin to make an image of God. Number one, it restricts God. It restricts God. Listen, every image falls short in some way.

[17 : 14] So let's say I wanted to image God. Let's say I want to, I want to emphasize that God is powerful, mighty, and bold. Would you agree? That God is powerful, and mighty, and bold.

So I'm going to image him as a lion. That's my image. And I'm going to create this image, and I'm going to bow down, and I'm going to worship that lion. But the problem with that is, you have, you've restricted God, and only some of his attributes.

Because guess what you would miss if you did that only? You would miss the fact that God is a lamb. He is approachable, and he is gentle, and he humbles himself, even to the point of coming to die on a cross.

Do you see? Calvin writes, quote, whenever God is set before our eyes in visible form, his majesty is adulterated, and he is figured to be other than he is.

So when you say, God is this, you're ignoring all the other things that God is as well. So if you do this, you're restricting him. Number two, not only does it restrict God, it reduces God.

[18 : 26] That is, you're trying to bring God who is not on your level, amen, down to your level. You're trying to make the God who is big, small. The God who is relational into something you can't have a relationship with.

Paul addresses this in the book of Acts. Look at Acts 17, 24. The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man.

He's not served by human hands as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, everybody say it with me, an image formed by the art and imagination of man.

You see, you're reducing the creator God to a very small thing. So God says, don't create that image. Thirdly, it redefines God.

It restricts Him, it reduces Him, and then it redefines Him. Since God did not reveal Himself in form, if you try to form Him, listen, whatever form you give Him is not Him.

[19 : 50] If God didn't reveal Himself in form, so if you try to form Him, whatever it is that you formed isn't Him. Let me say it this way. This will be really, really super clear. Listen in. If God is not a thing and you make Him into a thing, that thing is not God because God's not a thing.

Do you get it? That's what I thought. It'd be very simple. Let me say it again. God's not a thing. If you make Him into a thing, that thing is not God because God is not a thing. It's why Deuteronomy warns this.

Deuteronomy 4.15, Therefore, watch yourselves, be very careful, since you saw no form on the day the Lord spoke to you at Oreb.

Out of the midst of the fire, beware lest you act corruptly. How? By making a carved image for yourselves in the form of any figure. In other words, God didn't, the day He spoke to you, He didn't reveal Himself as a form.

So don't put Him into a form because when you do, you're redefining who He is. Number four, and this is the dangerous part of it, is not only do you restrict Him, reduce Him, and redefine Him, you ultimately will replace Him.

[21 : 02] You'll replace Him. It goes like this. You make an image of God and you run the risk of doing what? Loving the image more than you love God. I don't know if you've ever seen, it could be like in real life of someone on their deathbed, or I've seen this like in movies where like someone's about to die and they reach out for their rosaries, or they reach out for a necklace, or they reach out to some type of tangible object because what?

It's giving them that comfort in that moment of death. In other words, rather than reaching out to God, they're reaching out to a thing. And if you're not careful, it's because that thing has become the substitute for the real thing.

Are you with me? Habakkuk 2.18. What prophet is an idol when its maker has shaped it, a metal image, a teacher of lies?

For its maker trusts in his own creation when he makes speechless idols. That's the danger, is your substitute has become now your permanent God.

So God is essentially saying in these first two commandments, worship only me, that's commandment number one, and secondly, don't make an image because you're going to restrict me, reduce me, redefine me, and eventually replace me.

[22 : 38] Now how do you think Israel did in keeping the second commandment, the covenant in which they enter into with Yahweh? Well, as Charles Barkley would say, terrible.

Absolutely terrible. They did an awful job. In fact, if you go, we looked at this last week, if you go to Exodus chapter 32, you're going to see that they not only break the first commandment in Exodus 32, they also break the second commandment.

Do you remember the context from last week? Moses has been delayed up on the mountain, and they ask that as the people of Israel come to Aaron, and they ask Aaron to make gods for them that they can worship, and Aaron says, hey, take off all your gold and all your earrings, and they put it together, and they form an idol.

Look at Exodus 32, in verse 4. He received the gold from their hand and fashioned it with a graving tool and made a golden calf. You remember this? And then Israel says, or then he says, these are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.

It wasn't Yahweh that brought you out of Egypt. It was these golden cows that you just created with your own hands. That's the danger here, and that's what Israel does.

[23 : 54] And so they not only worship other gods above him, but they misrepresent the God who brought them out of Egypt. Is everybody with me?

Okay. Here's what some of you are thinking. Whew! Finally, a commandment I've never broken. I mean, I'll be honest, Pastor, I've broken the first commandment.

There's no doubt that there's been times my heart, Romans 1, has worshipped and loved creation more than my creator. That has happened. There's no doubt. But I've never broken this command.

You know why? Because I don't have like a carved wooden statue at home, or I don't have like any image in my bedroom of who God is. And so this is a commandment that really doesn't apply to me.

Not so fast. I'm going to give you, yeah, we've got time for it, but there's four ways that you and I violate the second commandment. Four ways that you and I break this and have broken this repeatedly.

[24 : 54] Here's the first one. Oh man. It's that we base our view of God on imagination, not revelation. Come on.

Somebody say preach, preacher. All right. You were good. You were ready for that one. All right. You knew it was coming eventually. Acts 17 is where Paul says he can't be reduced down to an image that's in the imagination of mankind.

We do this all the time. We do it in two ways. I want everybody to listen because I am pleading with you. I am asking you. I will get down on my knees and beg you, stop saying this.

Get it out of your vocabulary as a Christian. You've said it. I've said it. I could take you to places where I've said it. Stop saying these two things.

Will I think God is like, fill in the blank. Don't give a hoot what you think God is like. What matters is how has God revealed himself?

[25 : 57] That's a great place for an amen, okay? You're ready for the preach, preacher. You weren't ready for the amen, okay? Do you get what I'm saying? Will I think God is like, doesn't matter what your imagination says.

And it doesn't matter at all what you think God is like. It matters how God has revealed himself. Here's the second thing. Stop saying it. Well, I could never love a God who, fill in the blank.

I could never love a God like that. Oh, if that's what God is like, I could never love a God like that. You don't get to define who God is. If God has revealed himself that way, that's who he is regardless of whether you like it or not.

So stop saying, well, I think God is like, and start saying, well, God has revealed himself as. Stop saying, I could never love a God who, fill in the blank, and say, I love God however God has revealed God.

So we do this too. Oh, and if you want to, fortunately, I'm not able to show this clip, but if you want to see a clip that illustrates this, Talladega Nights. Talladega Nights, you remember the prayer scene around the table and Will Ferrell.

[27 : 11] And listen, I'm not saying any of this to offend anybody. Please know that my heart is not to show offense on any of these examples. It's to show you how this is a common thing we do.

And it is offensive, but it's ultimately offensive to God to think that we can create an image of him on our own. Talladega Nights, Will Ferrell, this is his prayer.

This is what he says before the prayer, quote, I like the Christmas Jesus best when I say grace. Now, when you say grace, you can say it to the grown-up Jesus or the teenage Jesus or the bearded Jesus, whoever you want.

And then Cal, his buddy, chimes in and says, quote, I like to picture Jesus in a tuxedo t-shirt because it says, I want to be formal, but I'm here to party.

And I like to party, so I like my Jesus to party. Do you see what's going on in that conversation? In other words, all of us have an image of who we think God must be like, an image that fits with our comfort level.

[28 : 16] Listen to Psalm 50, verse 2. Oh, man. These things you have done, and I have been silent. You thought I was one like you.

That's crazy. See, you think I'm like you. You reduce me down to whatever it is that you like.

It's why when I think of Jesus, I like to think of Southern Jesus who drinks sweet tea and says, y'all. I'm certain that Jesus says, y'all.

I think when we get to heaven, He's going to give you, welcome, y'all. I got sweet tea and pecan pie pronounced correctly. Right over here waiting for you. That's how it's going to be because I'm tempted to reduce Jesus down to my imagination.

This is not meant to offend anybody. Some of you think Jesus would wear a MAGA hat and vote a certain way, right? I mean, you think like Jesus would be the defender of the Republican Party because you're trying to reduce Him down to your own particular values.

[29 : 24] Or maybe you like hippie Jesus and you just think, man, He just loved everybody and we just sit under a tree and talk about nothing for five hours or whatever. I don't really know what hippies do.

Or, Jesus definitely likes my sports team. I mean, if Jesus, Jesus would definitely be a Vikings fan. Oh, no doubt. Or He would definitely be a Packer fan or whatever, okay?

There's something I really want to, but I'm not going to say it, okay? Okay? Self-control, right? My point is this. It's not to give any of those examples to offend anyone. It's simply to say it's almost like we think there's a build-a-God workshop.

You know what I'm talking about? You ever been to Build-A-Bear? Mall of America? You just go in and build whatever bear you want. And we do the same thing with God. Well, I like these attributes about God. I don't really like those.

I like Southern culture, so I'll make sure that God's a Southerner. Stop! Stop! You're not reducing an image down to your hands.

[30 : 27] You're reducing it with your minds. And you're trying to form a God that might be comfortable to you, but is not how He has revealed Himself.

And so we do this as well. Do you remember when Moses gets the revelation of God and he says, Who are you? Who shall I tell them is sending me?

What does God say? I am. I am that I am. I am what I am. Not what you think I am. Not what you want me to be.

Here's who I am. I am. And so that's who we are to worship. Amen, faith family? In fact, notice just how serious God takes this back in verse 5.

He says, You shall not bow down and serve them. I am the Lord. I am the Lord your God. I am a jealous God visiting the iniquity of your fathers, the children, the third generation, fourth generation of those who, everybody say it with me, hate me.

[31 : 37] Here's why this is so important. It's really, really important is because of this. Notice it on the screen. Because if you don't love the real God, I'm sorry to inform you, you don't love God.

You love something, but it's not God. If you don't love the real God, as God has revealed Himself, you don't love God.

So don't have any other gods before me, and make sure when you worship me, you worship me rightly. Here's a second way we do this. I won't spend as much time on these other words as I did that one.

There was just total dead silence. You're like, I hope he's right. Second, second way we violate the second commandment is this. We confuse, oh man, this could be a whole other sermon.

We confuse the expression of worship with the essence of worship. Here's how this gets said. But I can only worship God if we're singing hymns. I can only worship God if there's a band on the stage.

[32 : 43] I can only worship God if I'm in a particular denomination. I can only worship God if it's on Saturday or Sunday morning or on and on and on a week ago.

In other words, what have we done when we do that? We have, listen to me, listen, listen, we've reduced the focus of worship, which is God, to a form of worship, which is what you like.

We've reduced the focus of worship. The focus of worship is not anything on this stage. Our focus of worship is on God and God alone.

Amen? Amen? Not a form of worship. So when you say, I can only worship God this way, it's because you love the form rather than God Himself.

You have substituted something for God and that's a particular style of music or a particular way of singing.

[33 : 48] So that's a violation of this command. Here's a third one. Here's a third one. We walk by sight and not by faith. We walk by sight and not by faith. What's the whole reason?

We're not on the screen, but go back in your minds to Exodus 32. Why? Somebody say, there's so much I want to say and I got to keep this short. But when Israel is demanding Aaron for an idol, why?

It's because they want something tangible. They want something they can see. Moses, who knows where he is? He's probably in a Starbucks line somewhere. He's delayed.

We don't like, like we need something now. I want something tangible. I need something I can see. And we do the same thing. We do the same thing. We want something that we can see and touch and feel.

That is, you can't trust God unless you have something physical or tangible sign. The problem is, there once again, you've substituted something that's by sight rather than that's by faith.

[34 : 52] Listen, how has God called us to worship Him? By what you see or by what you do not see? By what you do not see.

Without faith, it's impossible to please God. So, we are not to be the kind of Christian that says, I got to have something tangible or I can't worship God because God has specifically told us to worship Him by faith and not by sight.

Number four, is that we make salvation about our works instead of His work. We make salvation about our work instead of His work.

That is, the God of our life, oh, somebody say preach preacher because this is, this is gospel stuff right here, is that our God becomes the work of my hands.

It becomes what I do. I'm worshipping God based on what I do rather than what He's done. That's idol worship.

[35 : 56] You're looking to the works of your hands. You're looking to the good works of your life to be your source of God rather than God Himself and the work that He has done for you in Christ Jesus.

Our God is not our work. It is the work He has done for us and it is very easy to let our good works become our functional God.

See, you're just as, I'm just as guilty as Israel. I have violated the second command over and over and over again and God calls us back to say, no other gods before me and worship me rightly.

Now, how do we, how do we get out of this? How do we, how does the gospel transform the second commandment? Why does God forbid, let me ask this question, why does God forbid that we make an image of Him in the first place?

Okay? Good. If you've zoned out, what do you do? Okay, good. You're ready. Here we go. You're zoned back in. I'm almost done. This is the most important part because if God has commanded this and I've continually violated it, how do I get out from under this covenant breaking?

[37 : 10] What is my hope in this? Now, follow me. Why did God forbid image making in Exodus in the first place?

Are you ready? You ready? Listen. Because He'd already given an image of Himself. He doesn't want you to make another image because He's already given an image of Himself.

You know where I'm going with this. I'm going back where? To Genesis chapter 1 in verse 26. Then God said, let us make man and, say it, our image after...

You're kidding. That's the same language of Exodus chapter 20. After our, say it, likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the heavens, over the livestock, over the earth, over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

In other words, God already has an image. Do you know who that image is? You! Humanity was created in the image of God.

[38 : 19] And what happened, you know the story, Genesis chapter 3, sin enters in, destroys that image, breaks that image, shatters the glass of that image.

And so, what is God now doing? Yes, even as we're in the book of Exodus, God is preparing a way to bring an image bearer to the world.

Look at what, look at what the New Testament says about Jesus. John chapter 14, verse 9. Jesus said to him, Have I been with you so long and you still do not know me, Philip?

Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. Hebrews chapter 1, verse 3. Jesus is the radiant of the glory of God, the exact imprint of his nature.

2 Corinthians 4, verse 4. In their case, the God of this world was blinded the minds of unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the, say it, image of God.

[39 : 22] Colossians 1, 15. Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. Amen? Amen? Now, what is the goal of our Christian life?

What is all of this about? To be better people? No. To be a nicer neighbor? No. What is it all about? Listen to what the Scripture says, Romans 8, 29.

For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to what? Be conformed to the image of his Son.

And look at Colossians 3, 9 and 10. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after what?

The image of its creator. Stop. Think. Think. Think about the flow of Scripture here.

[40 : 27] In Genesis, God creates image bearers to reflect his glory to the world. Sin shatters that image bearing capacity.

So we come to Exodus and God says, I don't want you to make any images. I don't want you to carve anything. I don't want there to be any image made of me. Why? Because if you make other images, you're going to miss the image I'm sending to the world.

You're going to be so obsessed with golden cows that you miss Christ. And then you come to the Gospel and Jesus is introduced how?

As the true image of God and the goal of your life when you put your faith in Him is to be conformed back to that image of God.

So you ask me the question then, how do I obey the second commandment? How do I not break the second commandment? Here's the answer. Don't make an image of God be the image of God.

[41 : 36] Don't make an image of God be the image of God. Faith family, don't show the world what God is like by the works you've made with your hands.

Show the world what God is like by what Christ has done in your heart. Image God.

God. Don't create an image of God be the image of God that you are in Jesus Christ. God does not want you to make an image God wants you to be His image as Jesus the true image bearer lives His life through you.

The world doesn't need images of God because they already have them. they're you as Christ reveals God through you.

So if you want to walk out of here tonight obeying the second commandment it's this stop shaping God and let God shape you.

[42 : 50] stop shaping God and let God by your relationship and covenant and marriage with Him through Jesus Christ shape you into the image He created you to be.

Show them the real thing. Susan was tired of all the pressure particularly from her mom.

she was getting older and she was always being pressured by her mom to get married. She finally couldn't take it anymore she'd had enough and one day her mother brought up the topic again and Susan just said mom stop it it's not like I can just go out and buy a family and then it hit her maybe I can I'm not making this up Susan married a mannequin I mean it was the perfect relationship they had coffee in the morning together they went dancing together they even started a family with little baby mannequins they went on vacations together and while there was a bit of satire to it all underneath Susan was actually trying to make a very valid point and it was this particularly to her mom why would I conform to someone else's image when I can create my own faith family hear me tonight whether it is

Allison taking a cardboard Danny DeVito to prom or Alice creating a cardboard cut out of her son to take around town or Susan and her family of mannequins Israel in Exodus 32 creating golden cows or you worshipping the God of your imagination every single one of us wants to fashion with our hands what our heart wants most listen once more to the second command you shall not make for yourselves an image of God why because you already have one his name is Jesus Christ and you shall image him and all God's people said amen let's pray

Lord thank you so much for our time in your word tonight to help us understand this second commandment and there should be a sense of conviction because we've all in so many ways violated this commandment we have worshipped the God of our imagination rather than the God of revelation we have substituted you with other people and other things and yet we also feel tonight a sense of your amazing grace that in Jesus Christ you are restoring us to your true image and that even though we have violated the second command Jesus fulfilled it and in him in him in him alone we can worship you rightly and so I pray now as we come to this moment of remembrance where we turn our minds to the way that you have revealed yourself which is on a cross and on an empty tomb that is not imagination that is revelation that is true and we go there tonight in remembrance of what

[46 : 47] Christ has done that we worship you in spirit and in truth in Christ's name I pray amen and