

THE SECOND WORD OF GRACE: ACCEPT NO SUBSTITUTES

Exodus 20.1-6

“And God spoke all these words:

‘I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

You shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.”

Exodus 20.1-6

“Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Tell the Israelites this: You have seen for yourselves that I have spoken to you from heaven: Do not make any gods to be alongside me; do not make for yourselves gods of silver or gods of gold.” Exodus 20.22, 23

“We will do everything the LORD has said; we will obey.” Exodus 24.7

Exodus 24.15-18; 31.18; Exodus 34.1-35

“These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.” Exodus 32.4, 5, 8

As we take up this Second Commandment we must understand that it is by no means a duplication of the first. The First Commandment forbids the *having* of other gods. The second forbids the *making* of other gods – Idols. The first is about *relationship* and the second is about *activity*. The activity is either *reducing God* to a thing or *exalting a thing* into a god.

1. Idols are something we make;
2. looked on with holy awe and admiration;
3. passionately defended when attacked or ridiculed;
4. placed at the center of life, meaning, identity and purpose;
5. and looked to in times of need.

With this in mind, what might it look like today?

The proper understanding of the Second Word of Grace requires that the prohibition against making material images of God also forbids dreaming up *mental* images. Imagining God in our heads can be a massive breach of the Commandment.

Exodus 33.18-34.8

Isaiah 40.9-31

God the Son is the submissive *“Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world”* (John 1.29) and the wrathful Lamb from whom men will attempt to hide (Revelation 6.15-17).

“No one has ever seen God, but God the Only Son, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.”
John 1.18; Hebrews 1.1, 2; John 10.30; 14.9; 2 Corinthians 4.6

An idol will disappoint you, for they make promises they cannot keep. If you are not careful, they will dominate your life. And, they will also change you, deform you; keep you away from true knowledge and true worship. As you create this idol, you will become like the idol.