

The Ten Commandments
The Problem with Idols
Exodus 20:4-6

We are enamored with human glory and celebrity. We are captivated by Nobel prizes, sports champions, Fortune 500 lists, Oscar winners, Grammy winners, and celebrity families. We want to excel in human achievement and seek our purpose in humanitarian causes. All of these things are good things, human achievement is good, but we need to realize that anything that exalts human glory can become an idol if it becomes the thing in which we place our hope or find our joy.

1. Idolatry seeks to usurp God's authority.
2. Idolatry seeks to manipulate God's power.
3. Idolatry seeks to confine God's image.

God and God alone is permitted to make a graven image of Himself. The Bible tells us that in creation, we are made in His image. We must not make images of God because we ourselves bear the image of God. But because of our sin, we do so in a diminished way. No one has imaged God perfectly, except one. Speaking of Christ, Paul wrote in Colossians 1:15, "He is the image of the invisible God." We reject idols and the images they project because in Christ, we see all of God that we need to see. To obey the second commandment is to turn from worshipping lesser versions of God, and to worship the one, true God.

For further consideration:

How do you rate your obedience to the second commandment? What false teachings have you encountered firsthand that diminishes God? How does the false gospel of prosperity preachers violate the second commandment? What image of God do they conjure up in their ideas about faith and prosperity? Which attribute of God are more tempted to emphasize and which one are you more tempted to diminish? What happens when we fail to consider all of the attributes of God together? How do we shape the image of God for our own sake and convenience? What idolatry do you need to repent of and flee from? What are the things in your life that are not idols but have the potential to become idols? What precautions can you take now to keep them from progressing?