

Serm. Series: The Good, The Goad, The Guide: Ten Commandments

Sermon Text: Exodus 20:4-6 Revealed Worship

Because God is jealous for His people's worship He reveals Himself and His worship in His Word with a dire warning against false worship and divine hope for true worship.

1) God reveals Himself and His worship to keep us from idolatry.

- i) The Invisible God (Deut. 4:15; John 1:18; Rom 1:20; Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17; Heb. 11:27)
- b) You can't capture in an image what or who God is, therefore images of God are forbidden. (Deut. 4:15-40 "Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves")
- c) The invisible God is not discovered by man's searching, but He reveals Himself:
 - i) in His works (Rom. 1:19-20)
 - ii) in His Word (Deut. 4; Heb. 11:1; 2 Tim. 3:16)
 - iii) in His incarnation (John 1:14, 18)
 - iv) by His Spirit's illumination (1 Cor. 2:10-16)
- d) Acceptable worship is revealed by God.
 - i) John 4:21-24 ". . . we worship what we know . . . the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and Truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship Him. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in Spirit and Truth."
 - (1) "Spirit" is the Holy Spirit
 - (2) "Truth" is Jesus (John 14:6)
 - ii) Acts 17:29-31 "times of ignorance . . . now He commands all people everywhere to repent"
- e) **Application:**
 - i) False Worship:
 - (1) from corrupt lives (Isa. 1:12-14)
 - (2) from human ingenuity (Acts 17:29 "art of man")
 - (3) from human reason (Acts 17:29 "imagination of man");
 - ii) Depend upon Scripture as the whole counsel of God and upon the Spirit in prayer.
 - iii) Regulative Principle of Worship
 - iv) Forbids "the making any representation of God, of all or of any of the three persons, either inwardly in our mind, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever" (Larger Catechism Q. 109).

2) God is jealous for His people's worship.

- a) "for I the LORD your God am a jealous God" (v. 5)
- b) Judgment on False Worship: Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10); Hophni and Phineas (1 Sam. 4); Uzzah (2 Sam. 6); Jesus' judgment on temple abuses (John 2)
- c) Care for True Worship: Exhaustive instructions for Aaronic Priesthood and Levitical service; Christ's mission to redeem worshipers (John 4); Christ appointed as worship Leader (Heb. 2); God Himself, in the Person of the Holy Spirit, indwells the Church as His temple—house of worship (1 Cor. 3:16).
- d) **Application:**
 - i) God delights in your worship.
 - ii) Do you delight in God in worship?

3) False worship expresses hatred of God and invites the misery of sin upon one's posterity.

- a) "those who hate Me"—idolatry/false worship is hatred of the true God

b) “visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation”—the number of generations likely to be alive at one time

c) **Application:**

i) False worship distorts the truth about God in the minds of you and your children.

ii) False worship is the most explicit sin as it is a direct affront to the glory of God.

iii) False worship has temporal (Rom. 1:21-32) and eternal consequences (Rev. 21:8)

iv) We are redeemed from false worship by Christ (Heb. 5:1-10; 1 Thess. 1:9-10)

4) True worship expresses love of God and enjoys God’s covenant love upon one’s posterity.

a) “those who love Me and keep My commandments”—true worship loves the true God

b) “showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation”—God’s covenant faithfulness extends to our posterity

c) **Application:**

i) True worship magnifies the glory of God in the minds of you and your children.

ii) True worship is the most explicit love of God as it is a direct delighting in the glory of God.

iii) True worship has temporal and eternal blessings—the steadfast love of the Lord endures forever (Psalm 118:1-4; 136; Rev. 5:8-14)

iv) **Suggestions for Corporate Worship:**

(1) Go through order of worship for family worship on Saturday.

(2) Listen in agreement (amen) during public prayers.

(3) Practice singing and sing out during worship. Luther, “Next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise. The gift of language combined with the gift of song was given to man that he should proclaim the Word of God through music.”

(4) Read the Affirmation of Faith before the service so that you can read it with full conviction.

(5) Don’t sleep through the sermon!

(6) Think much on God’s grace in Christ. Calvin, “Men will never worship God with a sincere heart, or be roused to fear and obey Him with sufficient zeal, until they properly understand how much they are indebted to His mercy.”

Doxology: Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to Your name give glory, for the sake of Your steadfast love and Your faithfulness. Psalm 115:1