

intentions and efforts of men. How the second commandment of God should so convict and convince us that no one can represent Jesus, Who was and is not only man but also very God in one and the same Person. In all our teaching and preaching of the Bible and its gospel message, let us not be wiser than God, but worship Him as He commands and demands.

Do you care to be guided in the true worship of God? It is very easy to turn aside from the true worship of God on the one hand, and on the other hand, it is so easy to have a form of faithful and true worship which is yet as dead and cold and lifeless as can be! Too often when worship is lifeless, people blame it on the form of worship whereas the root problem is the worshippers not being alive to God and His Word. Rather than spruce up the services with who knows what, and make them alive by our own ideas and forms of entertainment, we should pray God more for His Holy Spirit to open His Word to us and open us to His Word, and to make us alive and warm and thrilled in holy worship before Him! Do you hear and receive God's guidance with His second commandment? May God so bless His Word, indeed, and incline all our minds and hearts that we, coming to our fourth and last point now, realize God's goal also with this fourth commandment.

The goal with all God's commandments is that we love God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, and that we love our neighbour as ourselves, and that you and I know God in our hearts and worship Him with all our heart led on by His Word and Spirit and ever focusing on Jesus Christ as our only Saviour and Lord. True worship is not about what we offer to God so much but more about Who God is as revealed in His Word and as shown in Christ Jesus, the once crucified and now ever exalted Saviour in glory. True worship is aiming always to worship this one true Saviour God now, as He will be eternally worshipped by all His people in heaven above! Will you take care for yourself and others so to worship the Lord, by God's grace, always remembering God's second wonderful commandment, and how it tells of God's greatness, and His grace, and His guidance, and His goal, in and with all true Christian worship? Even so may God bless also these messages, for Jesus sake, I pray. Amen.

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BANNER OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST

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Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)



THE SECOND COMMANDMENT [2]

Dear friends, we are studying the Ten Commandments and this message is again on the second commandment. Last time we learned how the second commandment tells us of the greatness of God and we began a discussion of how it tells us also of the grace of God. We will consider too how it tells of the guidance of God and the goal of God.

The second commandment of God as given in Exodus 20 is about how we are to worship the Lord. *"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven [or carved] image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments."*

Continuing first now on how this second law of God surely shows not just the greatness of God but the grace of God, think with me how all history tells of mankind constantly trying to come up with different and additional ways to represent God and to have more meaningful worship by means of helps and images of our own making. Listen to this fairly recent novel example, in a Christian periodical from 2005, about candles that can supposedly help us get a sense of Jesus' fragrance, or to smell Him even if we can't see Him or touch Him. "A South Dakota couple has recently marketed a line of candles which they claim 'smell like Jesus.' Now, buyers have the option of filling their homes with the fragrance of Christ." The couple made their candles from the spices mentioned in Psalm 45 which they interpreted also as a messianic psalm. In promotion of their candles, the wife stated: "We wanted people to be able to experience Christ in new ways and to be able to read a Bible and have that scent and that candle as a reminder that He is with us all the time." Her husband Bob commented, 'You can't see [Jesus], and you can't touch Him [but]...this is a situation where you may be able to sense Him by smelling. And it provides a really new dimension to one's experience with Jesus'."

Do you hear how this couple even with Scripture seemingly as a basis, is actually promoting another way of worshipping God than the Lord calls for, and they seem so sincere and yet are so wrong? Does the Bible anywhere teach that you can get a sense of Jesus through candles? Are we

to experience Jesus by way of candles? Again, this is using an image or a man-made carving of sorts to somehow get a better sense of God and to get close to Him.....but God forbids this all!

This second commandment brings out the grace of God, in that even though we can and do come up with many inventions in the worship of God, the Lord is yet merciful and slow to anger and ready to forgive. All who come to Him with a repentant heart, confessing sin and turning from sin, and desiring to worship God in spirit and in truth, meaning from the heart and according to God's Word and commandment, can and will find total and free forgiveness of all sin, for Jesus' sake, on account of His shed blood and once for all sacrifice for sinners. How important it is to know this. God's Word says emphatically in I John 1:9, *"If we confess our sins, He [God], is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* The second commandment tells indirectly of the amazing grace of God, for how much transgression against this commandment alone God daily meets with, even from His people! Do you confess and acknowledge this too? How this commandment should make us think of the greatness of God and the grace of God!

Yes, of the grace of God still, even in it's wording when it speaks of God visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him, living in willful and ongoing disobedience before Him, but showing mercy unto thousands [that is thousands of generations], to those who love Him and keep His commandments. In Deuteronomy 7:9 we read these words: *"Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, Who keeps covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations."* Here we learn how God is so abundantly gracious to those who seek Him and will walk in His ways. He will punish those who live in sin, which means hating Him, but He will bless those who will hear His voice and seek to obey Him, which means loving Him.

God graciously warns in this commandment how sin in one generation can result in sin in the next generation, and that is especially true also in connection with the worship of God. How we need to beware of this, dear friends. How do you raise your children and how would you have them live in worship before God? It is so important that we give them a good and faithful example in this matter. Think about this in connection with all your habits and talk and ways in worship and with worship of God. How and what you do and don't do so influences and impacts the up and coming generation! God doesn't punish children for their fathers' sins, but those children who follow on in their fathers' sins and do not walk in God's ways will be punished. Are you influencing and impacting your children in the true worship of God and Biblical devotion and service and reverence before Almighty God? See the grace of God in so seeking to direct us and with His

promise that so living, He will bless us for a thousand generations! In other words, God crowns faithfulness to Him and His Word and causes it by His grace to bear much fruit. This is a promise to live by and to plead before the Lord also with our children and children's children.

We have already touched on it now but coming to our third main point notice further how this second command is wonderful in reflecting not only the greatness of God, and the grace of God, but also the guidance of God. God is out to guide His people in the way of grace and truth. He is out to lead us in the true worship of God and in a lifetime of joyful praises and glory and devotion to Him! With this commandment, the Lord would guide us away from all forms of man-made religion, and all ideas for worship from our world, and from our own thinking and feelings. True worship is worship from the heart that is always in submission to God and His Word and will, and that is always focused on the Lord and His salvation and the only Saviour, Jesus Christ and our need of that Saviour, and His salvation, and our calling ever to live to Him and His praise!

God, with this holy commandment, would graciously guide us from all false forms of worship and lead us more and more by His Word and Spirit into the true worship of God. This is also the worship this radio ministry sponsored by the Free Reformed Churches of North America seeks very much to promote! Will you be guided, dear friend, in the way of true worship of the one only true God? If so, should you not also be ever watchful against all false and man-made forms of worship? Paul writes in Romans 1 how that man left to himself, *"professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.....Who changed [exchanged] the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator Who is blessed for ever."* As we approach the end times, more and more this false worship of God, even within the circles of Christianity is being presented and promoted, but we must not fall for it. We must be on guard against it. Find and attend churches that worship in accordance to God's Word and law and not just as people choose to do.

In line with the second commandment of God, we should only include in the worship services what is characteristic of the worship in the Bible, especially in the New Testament church. It is wrong in worship to include whatever we think is moving and believe will work to affect others. It is wrong to teach and preach and promote the gospel using pictures of Jesus, and making use of the movies where someone, whether it is a person like Mel Gibson in *The Passion* or an animal like Aslan from the *Narnia Chronicles*, is a representation of Christ. Such representations of Christ are always, in fact, according to God's second holy commandment, most offensive misrepresentations of Christ's Person and work, in spite of the best