

THE TEN

COMMANDMENTS

THROUGH THE EYES OF JESUS

SERMON NOTES

Week 2 August 27, 2023

"Idols, Images and the Invisible God"

Exodus 20:4, 32:1-4; Isaiah 40:18-19, 25-26, 28-31;
Numbers 14:18; Ezekiel 18:20; John 1:1-4, 14, 14:9,
Colossians 1:15-16; Genesis 1:27



I. Introduction / Review

- A. The first commandment is "you shall have _____ other Gods before me."
- B. The second commandment is "do not make an _____ for yourself."

II. Idolatry in Biblical Times

- A. The Egyptians made idols that not only came to represent their gods, but they believe they were the _____ of their gods.
- B. Even though God told the Israelites not to have images or idols of God, the Israelites repeatedly _____ them.

III. American Idols

- A. There are some things that are meant to remind us of God, or in some way represent God, that we can come to put in _____ of God.
- B. Anything that ends in an 'ism' is subject to being an _____ in our lives if we let it.

IV. Representing the Invisible God

- C. While we are not supposed to create Idols for ourselves, God came and showed us who he is in _____.
- D. We were created to represent _____ to one another.

Things I Would Like to Remember About This Message



ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE *Aug. 28- Sep. 2, 2023*

INTRODUCTION

For as long as human beings have been around, we have longed to see God. We want to see, feel and touch our gods. The ancient Egyptians made idols that not only came to represent their gods, but they believe they were the *essence* of their gods. The second Commandment, given to the Israelites during this time, forbids the creation of idols or images to represent God.

Monday: Genesis 31:3, 14-19

The items Rachel took were “images [that] were consulted in order to learn what a person should do in particular situations. According to Judges 17:5 and 18:14-20, they were held in high regard by the people.”* What are some sources today you might consult about what to do instead of God? When can those sources become spiritually perilous?

Tuesday: Exodus 20:4-6, 32:1-8

The second Commandment might seem obsolete. In our developed world, who worships hand-carved stone or wood figures? What (besides money and fame - the most obvious, easy answers) do some people worship?

Wednesday: Isaiah 44:14-20, 46:3-7

God’s message through the prophet is poignant. “I’ve carried you since the beginning of your life and I’ll carry you until you’re old,” Yahweh promises...These images correspond to no reality; the sad implication is that when you cry out to them in a crisis like the one coming to Babylon, you get no answer.”** What has helped you discern the value of a God who can “carry” you, rather than any god you have to carry on your own strength?

Thursday: Luke 2:8-15

We are used to shepherds in manger scenes, Christmas pageants and paintings. But in Jesus’ day, most priests shunned shepherds because, caring for flocks, they couldn’t observe “holiness” rituals. But God made them the first “audience” for Jesus. And after hearing the angel choir, the shepherds said, “Let’s go right now to Bethlehem and see what’s happened.” What moves you to “go right now” to learn more about God, especially as revealed in Jesus?

Friday: John 1:18, Colossians 1:14-20

The Greek word *monogenes*, translated as “the only Son” in John 1:18, expressed utter uniqueness. Jesus bridged the gap between God (creator) and humans (creatures), because Jesus, and only Jesus, was both. Scholar N. T. Wright observed that “John knows perfectly well he’s making language go beyond what’s normally possible.”*** When did you first begin to realize the power and the implications of Jesus’ uniqueness in human history?

MOVING FORWARD

We may not worship idols like the ancient Egyptians, but we have our own idols. God forbids us from making an idol or to represent God in our ideology, other people, church buildings, Bibles, or anything else. While we are not supposed to create idols for ourselves, God came and showed us who he is in Jesus. If we want to know what God is like, look at Jesus. In addition to knowing God through Jesus, God calls us to represent Him on this earth so people can see God in us.

Answers to the sermon notes: IA) no, B) idol. IIA) essence, B) made. IIIA) place, B) idol. IVA) Jesus, B) God.

* William D. Reyburn and Euan McG. Fry, *A Handbook on Genesis*. New York: United Bible Societies, 1997, p. 717.

** John Goldingay, *Isaiah for Everyone*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015, p. 179.

*** N. T. Wright, *John for Everyone, Part 1: Chapters 1–10*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004, p. 5.