

Worth & Worship of God Alone

I. Slide#1 Pray For:

- A. *Remind them of daylight savings, spring forward.*
- B. Pray for the *missions trip* down to **Colina** this Saturday.
- C. Morgan Falconeri:
- D. Pray for Norm Harris: on ventilator till end of week (hoping breathe on own after). Circulation to foot.

II. Slide#2 Intro:

- A. **Ted Turner**, founder of the Cable News Network, told a convention of newspaper executives that the Ten Commandments are out of date. Instead, Turner suggested a set of “*Ten Voluntary Initiatives to guide sensitive persons through the new age.*”
- B. **Good news about teenagers today?** According to a poll by the Gallup Youth Survey, **4 out of 5 teenagers** feel the 10 Commandments are **valid**.
Worst news about teenagers today? The same survey also stated that only **3 out of 100 teenagers** can **name** the 10 Commandments.
- C. The 10 commandments, **the very words of God**, provide all the **necessary principles** by which God’s people may **live lives pleasing to Him**.
 - 1. As **Moses** made them relevant for ancient Israel, **Jesus** did for the NT community.
- D. **Remember we said the 2 tablets of stone were divided into 2 sections:**
 - 1. **1st 4 - Relationship to God. 2nd 6 - Relationship to others.** [take the 1st 4 tonight]
- E. **Title: *Worth & Worship of God Alone*** (Deut.5:6-15)
 - 1. The first 2 commandments form the basis for the rest. (they receive extensive treatment in ch’s 6-12)
 - a) The rest follow in order from ch.’s 13-25.

III. Slide#3 [1] NO OTHER GODS (6,7)

- A. Vs.6 is crucial for understanding not only the 1st commandment **but also the other 9**.
 - 1. The Ten Commandments were given to a people already redeemed (brought out... of Egypt), to enable them to express their love for & have fellowship with the holy God.
 - a) In Deut **Egypt** is frequently called ***the land of slavery*** (house of bondage).
[6:6,12; 7:8; 8:14; 13:5, 10; cf. Ex. 13:3, 14; 20:2]
 - 2. The Decalogue was never given to enable them to achieve **justification**, for that has always been granted freely through faith (Gen.15:6; Rom. 4).
- B. Since the Lord had **taken the initiative** in Israel’s redemption the people were **obligated** to acknowledge His right of sovereignty over them and to bow to that sovereignty.
- C. To have **no other gods before Me**, called for a **submission of every area of one’s life to the rule of God**.

1. The phrase **other gods** is a technical term for pagan gods which of course existed in the form of **idols** and in the minds of their worshipers, **but were not real**.

D. What other gods could we have besides the Lord? **Plenty**.¹

1. For Israel there were the Canaanite Baals, those jolly nature gods whose worship was a rampage of **gluttony, drunkenness, and ritual prostitution**.
2. **Slide#4** For us there are still the great gods **Sex, Shekels, and Stomach** (an unholy trinity constituting one god: **self**). **And** the other enslaving trio, **Pleasure, Possessions, and Position**, whose worship is described as “**The lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life**” (1Jn2:16).
 - a) Indeed the list of *other gods* is endless, for **anything** that **anyone** allows to **run his life becomes his god** and the claimants for this prerogative are legion. *J.I.Packer*

IV. **Slide#5 [2] NO CARVED IMAGES (8-10)**

A. Frankly, I'm not tempted to make images of God.

1. **But to say that**, I'm looking at its **outer surface** **instead** of its **inner meaning**.
2. But lets talk about **how** men got to making **images** of their gods.
 - a) They weren't trying to **degrade** nor **destroy** religion.
 - b) **Primitive man** naturally found it hard to **realize** a god or gods that he could not see.
 - (1) You can imagine him **praying off into space** to **an ear of mere nothingness**.
 - (2) **He made an image therefore, to assist his sluggish imagination**.
 - (3) He was trying to bring a sense of **reality** into his **worship**.
 - c) Of course this wasn't only felt by **primitive man** alone, people have made use of **the visible** in order to make more real **the invisible** all through the centuries.
 - (1) **I grew up doing this as a Catholic**. I'll even argue I wasn't **worshipping** our statues **but** only **venerating** them (having great respect for)*ok weird to kiss them if they fell*
 - (a) **Slide#6a Ash Wednesday is today** - derives its name from the practice of placing ashes on the forehead as a **celebration and reminder of human mortality**, and as a sign of **mourning and repentance to God**.
 - (2) **Slide#6b Illustration** of an icon from island of Patmos.
 - (3) **Slide#6c Frank Boreham** tells of a certain lovely saint who had the habit of **setting a vacant chair before him every time he prayed**. This man explained his reason, he told the following story: years before he had complained to his pastor that he found great difficulty in realizing that God was present and listening. Therefore his pastor told him to **set a chair before him**, and to **imagine that is Lord was sitting in it**, as he surely would be. He found the

¹ Your Father Loves You by James Packer, Harold Shaw Publishers, 1986, page for April 17

practice so helpful that he kept it up through the years.

One night he slipped away while others slept. But in the morning, when they found his cold hand resting upon the chair that he had set for his Master, they knew that he had not died alone.

- B. **Slide#7-9 Problem:** The images that these ancient people made in order to *help them worship* were, perhaps, of real assistance *for a time*. **But in the end**, they became a **hindrance** & a **snare**.
1. **How?** little by little worshippers came so to fix their gaze upon **the image** that they forgot **the one** that was **imaged**.
 2. They became so absorbed in the **means** that they forgot the **end**,
So concerned in the **picture** that they lost sight of the **reality**.
So intent upon **that help** that would help them *realize God that they lost God altogether*.
- C. So, **don't take your eyes off the goal**, and **don't confuse** the **means** with the **end**. This becomes the abiding principle 10,000 years from today as it is at the present moment.
1. **The bible can become this**. Is the bible the means or an end?
 - a) Jesus said, **You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me**. Jn.5:39
 - b) **Use the bible like you would a telescope**. It's a wonderful instrument that can bring **far** things **near**.
 - (1) **But some make a toy of it**. Some open the case to **look at it**, then put it back.
But its not to look at but to look...through!
- D. **Slide#10** The second commandment did not prohibit **art** in Israel (as the making of the tabernacle demonstrates), **but rather** the making of an **idol to represent the Lord**.
- E. **The danger in this practice was twofold:**
1. **First**, since other nations used idolatry to express their devotion to their gods there was always the danger that the worship of the Lord could be contaminated by **idolatrous forms** of worship.
 2. **Second**, any attempt to represent God in any form from the natural world would have called into question the sovereignty of the One who cannot be limited by anything.
- F. As a **jealous God** (4:24; 6:15; 32:16, 21) **He does not share His sovereign position with any other**.
1. Simply remember, **worship is always to be spiritual not material**.
- G. (5:9b) **At first glance 5:9b may seem to contradict** Ezekiel 18:20.
1. However, the phrase **those who hate Me** must certainly refer to **the children**, not to the fathers.
 - a) Children who hate the Lord will be punished.

2. Rebellious *God-hating parents* often produce children to the 3rd & 4th generation who also *hate God*. But if *sin* is contagious so is goodness. :)

V. Slide#11 [3] DON'T MISUSE GOD'S NAME (11)

- A. To misuse God's name means literally, "to lift it up to or attach it to emptiness."
 1. This command forbids using God's name in **profanity** but it includes more.
 - a) *Latin*, Pro(before)/*fanum*(the temple) *before the temple or outside the temple*.
 - (1) It's allowing your **mouth**, which Jesus said was directly connected to your **heart**, to become a **common place** rather than a **holy place**.
 - (2) That's why instead our mouths should speak, *Hallowed be your name*.
 - (a) **Reverence** is the doorway into the audience chamber of the king. And that door is fast shut in the face of the profane.
 - b) But this **prohibition** is much more than using **profanity**, but **lying**.
 2. This is a directive against using God's name in a manipulative way
 - a) **Lying** - calling God to witness to the truthfulness of what the person said. Yet, in spite of doing so, the person goes on w/their lying.
 - (1) We're not to use Gods name falsely/insincerely by calling Him to witness to a lie. This was **necessary** because men are given to lying.
 - (2) To *swear to God*, so as to make people believe you, while lying, is lying under oath.
 3. **Today** a Christian who uses God's name **flippantly** or **falsely** attributes a wrong act to God...has broken this commandment.

VI. Slide#12,13 [4] SABBATH DAY (12-15)

- A. The Sabbath Day was *a gift of God to Israel*.
- B. According to Ex.20:11, Israel was to observe a day of rest each week so she could **commemorate God's Creation** of the world in **six days** & His rest on the 7th day.
- C. Thus Israel's observance of the Sabbath was a **testimony** to her belief in the *personal, transcendent God* who created the world.
 1. This belief was a doctrine **unique** to the ancient Near East.
- D. Slide#14a In Deut the reason for observing the Sabbath is **not the Creation of the world**, but the **redemption of Israel from Egypt**, which in effect was the creation of Israel as a nation.
 1. Slide#14b So by observing the Sabbath before her pagan neighbors Israel was expressing her faith in the personal God who **created both the world and her as a nation**.
- E. This is the **only one** of the Ten Commandments **not** repeated in the NT, and Paul argued against enforcing it (Rom.14:5-6; Col. 2:16-17).

1. The day of worship was changed in the early church to the first day of the week, in commemoration of Christ's resurrection.
2. The temporary nature of the command regarding the Sabbath is due to the fact that it served as a **sign** of **the Mosaic Covenant** (Ex. 31:12-17).
3. **Slide#15,16** **After** the Mosaic Covenant was **done away** with there was **no longer a need for its sign**. **In its place** Christians have **the Lord's Supper** as the **sign** of the New Cov.