

THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY CHILDREN'S MEETING LESSON

DATE: April 14, 2019 (Northeast Conference)

SUBJECT: THE TEN COMMANDMENTS: The Second Commandment—You Shall Not Make For Yourself An Idol

SCRIPTURES: Exodus 20:4-6; 20:23; 32:1-35; Joshua 24:19-20, 23; Deuteronomy 4:10-20, 23-28, 39-40

AIM: Our God is a jealous God (hating evil). All statues or pictures that are made to represent Him are not gods, they are idols. God hates idolatry and will not tolerate it. We should also hate and reject anything of idolatry. We should love God above anyone and anything.

MEMORY VERSES TO CHOOSE FROM: Exodus 20:2a, 3 (I am Jehovah your God,...You shall have no other gods before Me.); Isaiah 45:5a (I am Jehovah and there is no one else; Besides Me there is no God;) Exodus 20:4a, 5a (You shall not make for yourself an idol,...You shall not bow down to them, and you shall not serve them; for I, Jehovah your God, am a jealous God,...); 1 Thessalonians 1:9 (For they themselves report concerning us what kind of entrance we had toward you and how you turned to God from the idols to serve a living and true God); 1 Corinthians 10:14 (Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.); 1 John 5:21 (Little children, guard yourselves from idols.)

SUGGESTED SONGS: 103 (Ev'rybody Ought to Know); 9313 *BSS Daniel #13* (Our God is Living - verse 1 only); 142 - verse 1 (I Belong to Jesus) ; 143 (I Love Him Better Every Day); 144 (I Love Him, He Loves Me); 146 (I Want the Lord to Have the First Place); 5210/5211 (O How I Love Jesus); 8208 (You Shall Love the Lord Your God); 8315 *BSS Moses Vol. 2, #15* (Moses Climbed the Mountain High); 6711 *BSS Matthew Vol. 2, #20* (The Great Command);

CRAFT IDEAS: 1) *Continuation of last week's project to make Ten Commandments tablets.* Draw an outline of a tablet on brown or grey construction paper/cardstock, brown paper bags, a manila folder or cardboard. Write the first commandment and the second commandment on the tablet. 2) Prepare crossword or word search puzzle.

BACKGROUND: God gave the Ten Commandments to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai to show who He was and to show His tender heart of love toward them. God wanted to be the unique beloved of the children of Israel (Jer. 2:2). He wanted the people to return His love and love Him alone. This is why He told them that they should have no other gods before Him. He was Jehovah, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the slave house. Do you remember **what the first commandment is?** “**You shall have no other gods before Me**” (Exo. 20:3). Jehovah alone was the God that heard the cry of the Israelites, Who saw their sufferings and answered their prayers. This is the God Who created the universe. He is the true God, the only one God, and the living God, the One Who listens to our prayers and helps us. He is the God Who cares and provides.

CONTENT: Now, we come to the second commandment that God gave to the children of Israel: “**You shall not make for yourself an idol, (or graven image) nor the form of any thing that is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water beneath the earth. You shall not bow down to them, and you shall not serve them: for I, Jehovah your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, yet showing lovingkindness to thousands of generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments**” (Exo. 20:4-6). God told His people not to worship nor serve idols for He is a jealous God. All images made by man's hand are idols, they are not god.

I. Our God is real. He is a holy God; He also is a jealous God. He created us. He hears us when we pray and watches over us, and He alone should be our God. Our God will not tolerate anything made by men's hands to “represent” Him, to replace Him. This is idolatry.

II. An idol is any kind of image, carving, statue, painting, photograph, charm or pendant that is made to represent God or that is supposed to be related to God. In the Old Testament, God commanded the children of Israel not to make or worship idols like many of the nations around them did. In modern times, some people keep statues or pictures of people or animals to worship. They may bow down or kneel down to pray before them, or offer gifts to them or light candles before them. These are physical idols, and we should never have any of these. Sometimes, you may see a picture of “Jesus”, or jewelry, or a cross with a man hanging on it. These are also idols. People may feel that these objects make God feel nearer or seem more real to them, and they may trust in them for security or “good luck.” This type of superstition is just the devil’s deceit. The devil lies and cheats people to keep them from knowing the real, living, and loving God. God is the only One we should trust and worship.

III. An idol is anything that takes the place of God in our hearts. God wants to have the first place in our hearts. He wants us to love Him first and best, just as He loves us. He promises lovingkindness to thousands of generations to those who love Him and keep His commandments (Exo 20:6). Therefore, not all idols are physical statues or images; an idol is also anything that takes away the first place that God ought to have in our hearts. Anything we love more than God, (such as a toy, a sport or activity, cell phone, money, success, popularity or even a person) is an idol. The Bible tells us that He is a “jealous” God (Exo 20:5; Deut 4:23-24). This means He is offended if we love something more than we love Him.

IV. God’s dealing with the idol and idolaters (worshippers of idols) (Exodus 32). Moses was with God on Mt. Sinai for forty days, receiving the 10 commandments and other laws from God. It seemed like a long time to the children of Israel, who were waiting for him under the mountain. They did not know what had happened to Moses, so they asked Aaron to make a god for them, which would go before them. Aaron took golden earrings from them and made a molten calf. They said, “This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!” (Exo 32:4b). And when Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it. They also had a feast to the Lord.

God saw what was happening and spoke to Moses on the mountain, “Go, get down; for your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves. They have turned aside from the way which I commanded them. They have made for themselves a molten calf; and they have worshipped it and have sacrificed to it, and said, This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!” (v. 7-8). God was so angry at the children of Israel, He said “My anger may burn against them and I may consume them...” (v. 10b). Moses entreated the Lord on their behalf not to destroy the people. When Moses went down the mountain with the two tablets of the testimony, he saw the calf and the people dancing. Moses’ anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands and shattered them at the foot of the mountain. He took the golden calf which they had made, burned it with fire, ground it to powder, scattered it upon the water and made the children of Israel drink it.

Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, “Whoever is for Jehovah, come to me.” And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves to him. And he said to them, “Thus says Jehovah the God of Israel, Let each man put his sword upon his thigh, and go back and forth from gate to gate throughout the camp, and each man kill his brother, and each man his companion, and each man his neighbor” (v.26-27). And they did according to the word of Moses. We see that the people’s idolatry was a most serious sin that brought forth God’s anger and judgment.

SUGGESTED APPLICATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM: *Please pray and fellowship over which applications to cover. Please do not try to cover all the applications. It is sufficient to cover just **one or two applications** which are appropriate for the age group of the children you are serving.*

- **God hates idols. We should have the same heart as God has and hate idols.** (Joshua 24:19-20). We all need to check to find out if anything around us is an idol or is related to idols. We should throw them away or destroy them. (Note to serving ones: We should be sensitive and seek the Lord on how to present this to our specific children. Some may be in families that keep some kind of idol, especially when one or both parents are not believers. In such cases, perhaps the children can pray for their parents rather than make the decision for their parents.)
- **We should never bow or kneel down to any statues or images or pictures.** If we find ourselves in circumstances in which others do so and there may be an expectation on their part for us to join them, we can tell them we are Christians and do not feel comfortable participating. We should not be involved with idolatry. When we see other people worshipping idols in any form, we should not have a spirit of condemnation towards them. Because they do not know the true God, we should tell them about the Lord. We can tell them what we have learned from the children's meeting—that the Lord Jesus is the only one and true God and that there is no other god beside Him.
- **We should give the Lord the first place in our heart.** Anything that is more important to us than the Lord is a hidden idol in our heart. These may be persons (sport stars, movie stars, etc.), things (such as a cell phone, money, designer clothes and shoes) or activities (such as TV, computer/video games, sports, novels, movies, music, etc.). Even though some of these things are good, whenever they occupy too much of our time, energy and thoughts, they are actually idols. They may even keep us from attending the church meeting on Lord's Day. We should pray to the Lord to help us love Him more than these things.

Adapted from *Bringing Children from Adam to Christ—The Ten Commandments*, Vol. 3, Lesson 5, and the Church in New York City Children's Meeting lessons: 5/17/98; 5/19/02; 5/26/02; 6/29/08; 4/13/14