

**Aim:** A look at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment

Last week we looked at the first Commandment which said "You must not have any other God but Me." Exodus 20:3<sub>NLT</sub>

**What did that mean?** (God is to be the most important thing in our lives)

Today we are looking at the second Commandment, but since it is a long one we will break it into three parts.

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**Part 1: "You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods." Exodus 20:4, 5a<sub>NLT</sub>**

If you just read the first sentence you might think that we shouldn't have paintings, statues or photographs; but remember how God gave Moses the detailed plans for the Sanctuary? The Sanctuary had pictures and statues of angels – so that the Commandment must mean something different.

If you read the first and second sentence together, then you will realise that it is talking about having a picture or a statue and worshiping it. As we said last week, most people in Australia don't worship idols, but sometimes people have a picture of Jesus or a candle or something which they look at when they pray, or they have something special which they like to hold in their hands. I think God was warning us not to do that, because we can forget that we are praying to the real God who is everywhere.

**What do we do when we pray?** (Fold hands, close eyes, kneel down etc)

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**Part 2: "I lay the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me." Exodus 20:5b<sub>NLT</sub>**

Lets imagine there is a mother and father and they sin by always coveting the things that other people have and they always complain that they don't have what their neighbour's have.

Now as their children grow up they learn how to complain really well by listening to their parents.

They grow up and have children of their own, and those grandchildren grow up listening to both their parents and their grandparents complaining.

Even if one of the children or grandchildren learns to be thankful for what they have, when they have children, their children will still get to listen to the grandparents complaining and so on...

The things that we do don't just affect us; they affect those around us too.

**Optional: Discuss how breaking the other commandments, particularly the last six can affect families.**

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**Part 3: "But I lavish unfailing love for a thousand generations on those who love me and obey my commands." Exodus 20:6<sub>NLT</sub>**

This is my favourite part: if YOU choose to follow God, then He will show you His great love and give you lots of blessings or good things. But that is a choice that you need to make every day. Make a habit to talk to God when you first wake up in the morning, and when you go to bed at night; and find a good time during the day when you can read some of the Bible, even if you start by reading a couple of verses each day. When you do this, you will find that making good choices is easier, and that you don't stuff up as often, and you will be a lot happier.