

“Footsteps”
“Come, follow Me,” Jesus said
Mark 1:17

Kingdom Kids

The Second Commandment: “You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.”
Exodus 20:4

The point: God wants and deserves first place in your life.

Introduction (For Parents):

The Israelites journeyed through lands of many idols. This was akin to walking through a dangerous minefield. God instituted the Second Commandment as a pathway to safety.

Our idols are less obvious today. They come in the form of things that sneak into our lives to grab our time and affection. What is your idol? Is it position? Your children? Your job? Your house? God can become an idol. Let God be your God, not other things.

God wants first place in our lives. Even children have temptations that pull them away from God. This lesson will practically help children identify the things that compete with God as the premier love in life. They will learn that the commandments are not given from a vain god on an ego trip. The commandments are from our God who is the only One who deserves first place in our hearts and lives.

In the third month after the children of Israel had left Egypt, they came to the desert of Sinai. They camped at the foot of the

mountain. They were not to touch the mountain.

God called Moses to the top of mountain where He engraved (wrote) on tablets of stone the Ten Commandments.

The second commandment which God gave is *“You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.” Exodus 20:4.*

While Moses was at the top of the mountain with God (only His voice) the people of Israel pressured Moses’ brother Aaron, to make them a god they could carry before them since they did not know what had become of Moses. Moses was at Mount Sinai for forty days and forty nights.

Aaron told the people to give him their gold jewelry they had been given by the Egyptians when they left Egypt. (At that point, after all the Ten Plaques) the Egyptians were quite glad the Israelites were leaving and they gave them gifts to leave!

Aaron then molded and sculptured a golden calf for the people to worship.

While I could locate it biblically, I believe I heard or read that Aaron had been metalsmith prior to Moses' return to Egypt. That would explain his abilities to make a golden calf and an altar for it.

Upon completion of the golden calf the Israelites, made sacrifices to the calf, and participated in feasts to eat and drink and participated in corrupting behavior.

When Moses came down with the tables of stones in his arms, he was extremely angry and threw the stones down and broke them. You can only imagine how angry he was since the Second Commandment dealt specifically with this issue.

Moses had left Aaron and Hur in charge of the people while he went to the top of the mountain. Even after Aaron had seen, first hand, all of God's miracles, plagues, he still yielded to the temptations of the people wanting an idol. He even lied to Moses about how the idol came to be.

There are scriptures later that tell of Aaron's repentance and God's mercy and forgiveness. Aaron was a Levite and later become a priest and God instructed that only Levites could become priests.

Moses went to Mount Sinai a second time and God wrote the ten commandments once again for the people of Israel.

The 'idols' we have today are much more subtle but can become just as bad as the golden calf worship. Even children have temptations that pull them away from God. Sometimes we act as if a person or a thing is as important as God.

Sometimes we put these things such as, sports, movies, celebrities, games, books, friends, money, and other activities, before our God, who deserves to be number one in our lives. God wants to be first in our lives.

Are sports, movies, celebrities, games, books, friends, money, and other activities wrong. Of course not!

However, when we are 'obsessed' with these things and ignore God, those things can become idols. We should always make time for God and keep a balance on these other things.

Many of our children have trophies for activities they have participated in. Some are for sports, dance, piano recitals, etc. They are in our children's room, but we would never bow down and pray to them and worship them.

I love angels of most any type of angel representations, such as for decorations in art work, 'sit-arounds', stationery, jewelry, and dishes; but I would never pray to them or worship them. As a matter of fact, many times they can be a good lead in for conversations about how angels, in the Bible, always served as messengers for God. And, then talk about God and what He means to you.

Many years ago there was a young boy, named Stephen, who decided and made a commitment that he was going to read his Bible every day! (Wonderful idea!) He did very well until he received a gift for his birthday of a new video game that was about his favorite sport --- baseball. Little by little he spent more and more time playing that game during his Bible reading time than he

did reading God's Holy Word. That is an example of having no time for God.

Things can sneak in and become idols. Idols are little gods. If you ever see the word "god" with a lowercase "g," it means a fake god, not the Lord our God. When you see the word "God" with a capital "G", it means the real true God.

Here are some qualities of both:

Our capital G God:

- Can fill your heart with true joy
- Forgives sin
- Is able to heal
- Is perfectly holy
- Knows your every thought
- Loves you
- Hears everyone in the world at the same time

Little "g" fake gods:

- Cannot make you happy
- Can change
- Will crumble into dust
- Can be carried around
- Are expensive
- Can't love you
- Can be made

Isn't it odd that people would settle for a little god?

Let's try this:

No Room for God

This wet-but-wonderful activity illustrates how a heart crowded with worldly things can remove God from first place.

Give your child some small rocks and a marker. Have them think about what takes up a lot of their time, attention, and money ---for example, TV, video or computer games, soccer practice, or playing with friends. Have them write or draw these things on their rocks. You (the parent) use a permanent red marker and draw several large hearts on a clear pitcher (use an old clear one) and place the pitcher on a tray.

Say: This pitcher is like an empty heart. Let's fill this heart with God. Give each child some cups of water. Pour water into the pitcher and say, "God deserves first place in my heart because . . . "Then have them tell something about who God is. For example, as you pour the water in, say, "God deserves first place in my heart because He is my Creator."

Fill the pitcher is nearly full. Check out the following passages for more God qualities: Psalm 104:24 and Proverbs 3:19.

Say: Our hearts are full of the goodness of God, but sometimes other things try to crowd into our hearts. Now tell me what you have written or drawn on your rocks and then place your rocks into the water. (As the child adds his rocks, the water will overflow. When finished, ask:

- What happened to the water? Why?
- How is this like what happens in your own heart with God?
- How can we keep our hearts full of God so He has first place?

Say: God's second commandment is "*You shall not make any idols.*" Sometimes things we love become like idols crowding God out. But, God wants and deserves first place in your life.