“Law of Love and Liberty: Worship God Rightly”

Exodus 20: 1-6

(notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 6/28/20)

We all want to worship God rightly, right? But how do we do that? By just singing the old hymns? By just singing the new, praise songs? Maybe it’s not about tunes and rhythm at all…

Worshipping God is a life that is lived, not a song that is sung. Worshipping is shaped by who God is and what He has done. We worship a God who is incomparable, jealous, and merciful. Jesus Christ is the perfect image of God. Jesus is God, and we worship Him!

God alone must be worshipped; God must be worshipped as He is, not as He is imagined. In Exodus 20 God reveals Himself audibly. In His written Word He has revealed Himself and His nature. Like the Israelites of old, we must also listen. Every one of these commandments describes the only right response to who God is and what He has done. He is our infinitely powerful and sovereign Creator. He keeps His covenants with His people (just like a marriage covenant). God is incomparable. Whatever description we come up with is going to be insufficient. Pick all the nouns and adjectives you want, and you will still fall short, distorting who He is. (Read Isa. 46:5) He is too glorious, too majestic, to be portrayed in mere images. In 2020 we say, “But I don’t have any statues in my closet.” But our images of God are usually not made of wood or metal. Graven images are simply any objects of worship that demand our loyalty.

Stop and ask yourself, “How do I worship God?” Be careful: Any conception of God that does not match how God reveals Himself in His Word is idolatry. Let’s get personal. Does your concept of God allow you to still live in fear? Does it allow you to live in sin, ignoring your conscience? Does it allow you to live where you don’t care about God’s laws and commandments? Does your concept of God hem you in with legalism? Every time we minimize God (put God in a box) we commit idolatry. Every time we forsake God or doubt God’s goodness we commit idolatry. John Calvin wrote, “The human mind… is a perpetual forge of idols… (it) dares to imagine a god suited to its own capacity.”

Our God who is incomparable is also a jealous God. (see also Exod. 34:14) Just like your spouse in your marriage covenant, you want someone who is 100% faithful. God is jealous for YOU. Don’t get sidetracked by the reference to “the third and fourth generation.” God is NOT referring to generational sin. He is referring to the fact that when people have misconstrued notions about God, it tends to get passed down through generations. Sins tend to perpetuate themselves across generations. Thomas Watson said, “A daughter is the second edition of her mother, and a son is the mirror of his father.” Sin in one generation strongly influences subsequent generations. It is wrong to think thoughts like, “You can’t help being an alcoholic, because your dad was one.” Stop it! This is just making an excuse for sin. Excuse-making leads to hopelessness and helplessness. Generational curses do not exist; God holds every person accountable for his own sin.

Read Exod. 20:6. Aren’t we in need of mercy right now? God is merciful- it’s His nature. Thankfully we don’t receive the judgment we deserve. God longs to extend mercy to those who come to Him. His mercy is made manifest in His Son, Jesus Christ. Read Heb. 1:1-3. Jesus is the perfect image of God. HE IS GOD! Run to His mercy (see Titus 3:4-5). The way to respond to the 2nd commandment is to run to mercy, the saving cross of Christ.

With His Holy Spirit, God is restoring His image in you. That’s what sanctification is all about. He made you to reflect His image. The Law points us to Christ for justification AND sanctification. He is remaking you to be like Jesus. One day we will be like Him. In Christ, God re-creates His people to be His image bearers. Let us always and forever reflect the bright Light of our great and glorious God.

**QUESTIONS**

1. What does Pastor Steve mean when he says, “God must be worshipped as He is, not as He is imagined”?
2. What other “objects of worship” demand our loyalty in 2020?
3. Why do we (and by “we” I’m talking about me!) sometimes still live in fear? Here is what Paul David Tripp said in New Morning Mercies today (June 28): “When you forget God’s sovereignty and His grace, you give room in your heart for fear to do its nasty, debilitating work. Pray right now for grace to remember.” What other attributes of God should we stop and remember right now?
4. How do YOU worship God?
5. Good qualities also tend to be passed down from generation to generation. Give examples from your own family.
6. Clarence Thomas and Ben Carson are 2 examples of men who didn’t make excuses. Can you name others?
7. Justification and sanctification are sure big words. How would you explain them to a non-believer?

“How Deep the Father’s Love for Us” (Townend)

It was my sin that held Him there

Until it was accomplished

His [dying](https://www.definitions.net/definition/dying) breath has [brought](https://www.definitions.net/definition/brought) me life

I know that it is finished

I will not [boast](https://www.definitions.net/definition/boast) in anything

No gifts, no power, no wisdom

But I will [boast](https://www.definitions.net/definition/boast) in [Jesus](https://www.definitions.net/definition/Jesus) Christ

His [death](https://www.definitions.net/definition/death) and resurrection

Why [should](https://www.definitions.net/definition/should) I gain from His reward?

I [cannot](https://www.definitions.net/definition/cannot) give an answer

But this I know with all my heart

His [wounds](https://www.definitions.net/definition/wounds) have paid my ransom

How deep the Father's love for us

How vast [beyond](https://www.definitions.net/definition/beyond) all measure

That He [should](https://www.definitions.net/definition/should) give His only Son

To make a [wretch](https://www.definitions.net/definition/wretch) His treasure

How [great](https://www.definitions.net/definition/great) the pain of [searing](https://www.definitions.net/definition/searing) loss

The [Father](https://www.definitions.net/definition/Father) turns His face away

As [wounds](https://www.definitions.net/definition/wounds) which mar the [Chosen](https://www.definitions.net/definition/Chosen) One

Bring many sons to glory

Behold the man upon a cross

My sin upon His shoulders

Ashamed, I hear my [mocking](https://www.definitions.net/definition/mocking) voice

Call out [among](https://www.definitions.net/definition/among) the scoffers