

Theme: Imagination

Exodus 20:4-6: 4 "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. 5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

The second of the Ten Commandments prohibits us from fashioning idols, because these idols reflect not the true God, but the God we imagine. When we come to know God based on our own imagination, there are two serious consequences. First, we will project our weaknesses and limitations on God. For example, when we are indifferent to the injustices around us, we may mistakenly believe that God is indifferent to the injustices of the world. Or when our love for others is conditional, we may mistakenly believe that God's love for us is conditional. Secondly, we will fashion the image of God according to our own preferences. For example, when we prefer a gentle, loving, compassionate, and forgiving God, we may deliberately ignore the biblical description of God's holiness, righteousness, justice, and judgment.

May the Lord help us, not to know God according to our own imagination, but to know Him according to His revelation. The second commandment shows us that God is a god who is jealous and punishes the sins of those who hate. But at the same time, He is also a God who loves to a thousand generations. The reason God is "jealous" is not because He is jealous of other idols, but because the God who created the universe and is ruler of all things. He knows that when people choose to worship idols and know God according to false imaginations, they will perish as a result. Therefore, God's punishment of our sin and identification of our flaws are in fact a manifestation of love, in order to save us so that we will not perish. Not only that, God revealed through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ on the cross, His complete holiness, righteousness, and unconditional never-ending love.

Reflection

- Do we know God according to our own imagination and not God's revelation?
- Do we determine God's image according to our own preferences, so that we deliberately ignore the description of certain attributes of God in the Bible?

Renew

- Pray the Lord will help us see where our understanding of God has deviated and is incomplete. May He renew our understanding through reading the Bible and prayer.
- Pray that the Lord will help us to have a balanced understanding of God's righteousness and love, that God's love can be seen in the commandments and that God's righteousness can also be seen through His forgiveness.

Prayer Requests

- Pray for the spirituality of the church. Ask the Lord to use the adult Sunday School, theological lectures, bible in one-year daily reading, bookstore, and other channels to help the brothers and sisters have a correct, balanced, and in-depth understanding of God.
- Pray for theological institutions and associated staff around the world, asking the Lord to use their position to help the church stand firm on the truth and not be influenced by wrong trends.