



[Exodus 20:4-6](#)

(4) You shall not make for yourselves any graven image, or any likeness of *anything* that *is* in the heavens above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the waters under the earth. (5) You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them, for I, the LORD your God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, (6) But showing mercy to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments.

A Faithful Version

Many do not perceive the difference between the first and second commandments. The first stresses the uniqueness of the Creator [God](#), who is the Source of [truth](#), right values, and standards that will produce right relationships. It deals with **what** we worship. An idol is something we make and assign value to here on earth, but God comes into our life from beyond this physical realm.

The [second commandment](#) covers a specific area of [idolatry](#), God's spirituality. [Jesus](#) says we must [worship God](#) in spirit and truth ([John 4:24](#)). God wants us to worship, be devoted, and respond to what He is and what He is doing, not what we think He looks like. He wants us to emulate His character and the way He lives. The second commandment deals with the **way** we worship.

The second commandment's most obvious aspect governs the use of physical "helps" or "aids" in worshipping the invisible, spiritual God. It prohibits the use of anything that represents God or could become an object of veneration. It forbids any kind of likeness of Christ such as crucifixes, pictures, and statues.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[The Second Commandment \(1997\)](#)

Related Topics:

[Character](#)

[Idolatry](#)

[The First Commandment](#)

[The Second Commandment](#)

[Way We Worship](#)

[Worship](#)

Commentary copyright © 1992-2016 [Church of the Great God](#)
A Faithful Version copyright © 2013 [A Faithful Version](#). All Rights Reserved.