

# The Second Commandment

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Previously, we covered the keeping of the first commandment as having to do with the worship of the true God. He is the Creator, Sustainer, Ruler, and Provider of this universe, as well as the Source of the Christian way of life. Making sure that He is the Source of *our* values is of primary importance because the effects of wrong worship are disastrous. One effect is that, without the true worship of the true God, the standards and ideals of conduct in moral, ethical, and spiritual areas are left totally to human experience. In comparison to God, human experience is shallow, fallible, competitively and selfishly gained, and as history clearly shows, patently destructive of life.

Romans 1 provides a brief overview of the horrific effects of mankind turning its collective back on the Creator God. Verse 28 from the *Revised English Bible* reads, "Thus, because they have not seen fit to acknowledge God, he has given them up to their own depraved way of thinking [*reprobate mind*, King James Version] and this leads them to break all rules of conduct." The term "reprobate mind" indicates a mind devoid of proper judgment. When God's judgment against Adam and Eve went into effect, mankind's choices in daily life became based almost entirely upon human experience.

This passage shows specifically what happens when people leave the Source of true values out of their lives. They become like a pinball, wandering aimlessly and bouncing from one jolting experience to another. Perhaps humanity can be described as a bull in a china shop, breaking things at every turn and causing an incredible amount of destruction and pain without ever being able to compose itself to create a lasting, peaceful lifestyle. Put another way, people become like animals in a jungle, competing viciously to survive and to eat before they are eaten.

Paul exposes the consequences of a purely secular mind. When God is removed or removes Himself, mankind not only loses godliness, but also true humanity. This degeneration occurs because man is not seeking God. Christ, however, did not seek His own will: "And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him" (John 8:29). This is what made the difference between Christ and the rest of mankind, resulting in His judgment being completely unclouded.

This leaves us with the question, "How can a person discern truth in moral and spiritual areas if he already has the wrong source and is not consistently seeking the right One?" He cannot! John 7:15-17, 24 offers a biblical example of this truth:

And the Jews marveled, saying, "How does this Man know letters, having never studied?" Jesus answered them, and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. . . . Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."

The people could not perceive their murderous intentions. It is hoped that this confrontation helps us see the vast gap in understanding between the people, whose main source for values was human experience, and Jesus, whose source was God. Those confronting Jesus did not realize that they were being misled by their idolatry, as Paul reveals in Romans 1.

## Israel's Idolatrous Example

Ezekiel 20:15-16 refers to a historical situation that shows idolatry's deceptive nature:

So I raised My hand in an oath to them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey, the glory of all lands, because they despised My judgments and did not walk in My statutes, but profaned My Sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols.

These verses summarize that Israel went into captivity and were scattered primarily as the result of idolatry and Sabbath-breaking. As they were breaking those commands, did they believe that doing so would take them into captivity? Probably not, but we can believe it because God records it for our admonition! It is interesting that idolatry and Sabbath-breaking are linked, because the breaking of either leads directly to the breaking of the other.

We can see Ezekiel's general accusation against Israel's idolatry in the specific example of Judah in the writings of his contemporary, Jeremiah. This occurred just before Judah completely collapsed and the Jews were led into Babylonian captivity. At that time, God flooded the nation with godly prophets to give the people a final warning:

From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, even to this day, this is the twenty-third year in which the word of the Lord has come to me; and I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, but you have not listened. And the Lord has sent to you all His servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear. They said, "Repent now everyone of his evil way and his evil doing, and dwell in the land that the Lord has given to you and your fathers forever and ever. Do not go after other gods to serve them and worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the works of your hand; and I will not harm you." "Yet you have not listened to Me," says the Lord, "that you might provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt." (Jeremiah 25:3-7)

Many prophets witnessed against the Jews, but no lasting repentance occurred. A key to understanding why nothing changed is found in verses 6-7 in the phrase, "provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands." "Works of your hands" indicates concepts, ideas, and notions developed from their own minds, not from the Creator's. He refers, of course, to their idolatry. The deceptive nature of idolatry and Sabbath-breaking is such that their damaging effects are more subtle than other sins' effects. The pains of the penalties usually come so much later that most are unable to connect the true spiritual cause with the individual's or culture's moral and spiritual degeneracy.

If one lies, steals, or commits murder, the effects are almost always immediately evident, but this is not so with idolatry and Sabbath-breaking. With those who do not know God, breaking the first commandment leads to breaking the fourth. However, with the converted—those who know the truth—breaking the fourth can just as easily lead to breaking the first.

The Bible reveals that the effect of breaking the first commandment is to break the second, and eventually all the other commandments (James 2:10). In practical experience, this happens because, once a person is no longer responding to the Creator God's values, someone or something else has to be put in His place. Man will worship—that is, give his devotion to—something, and that something is more often than not himself and his own creations!

## The Focus of Worship and Desires

Isaiah 40:9-31 is a long, descriptive challenge by the Creator God urging us to compare Him with anything else. By "us," we should understand "the church" because verses 9-11 are symbolically addressed to the church using the imagery of Zion, Jerusalem, and Judah, all of which are types of the church.

The natural mind—at least partly because it is so physically oriented and tied to the five senses—cries out for something to *help* it worship God. However, nothing in man's imagination can qualify as such an aid because worshipping God in spirit and in truth requires faith and a spiritual connection to God. Thus, when a man devises an image of God other than the true One, a predictable effect takes place, as Psalm 78:40-41 reveals: "How often they provoked Him in the wilderness, and grieved Him in the desert! Yes, again and again they tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel." God will be limited, in the person's mind. He is far more than our minds can conceive, so the person will not trust God to the degree he should.

Every description God gives of Himself relates His attributes, the qualities of His mind and character. He is merciful, gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth (Exodus 34:6). How would a person exactly represent those powers on a piece of canvas, carve them into a piece of wood, or sculpt them in stone or metal?

II Timothy 3:1-2, 5 brings this subject right into our time: "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will . . . [have] a form of godliness but [deny] its power. And from such people turn away!" The state of religion in our time is dreadfully deficient. This description, closely paralleling Psalm 78:40-41, reveals a religion similar to true Christianity, but it is infected by a denial of His power! However, it is idolatry because the denial will not allow Him into a person's life. It results in cultural situations similar to Ezekiel 20 and Jeremiah 25. We need to examine whether we are being affected by it.

Do we limit God in areas such as healing, marriage, childrearing, or tithing through fear that it will not work? Do we refuse to humble ourselves to trust Him in the keeping of His commandments? The basis of idolatry, other than ignorance, is that self-willed man refuses to surrender himself to worship God in the way God commands. Worship is our response to God. It occurs every day in our attitudes and the ways we conduct our lives, not just on the Sabbath and holy days. Prayer and Bible study are aspects of worshipping God. Tithing is part of worshipping God. So are our work ethic and our self-control in not stealing or lying.

Exodus 20:4-6 commands:

You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow 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 to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

Some do not perceive the differences between the first and second commandments. However, the first stresses the uniqueness, the matchless distinctiveness of the Creator God. It draws attention to our obligation to the One without whom there would be no life or hope at all. He is also the Source of

truth, right values, and standards that will produce right relationships and peaceful prosperity so that life is not merely lived but has the potential to contain great peace, joy, and accomplishment. Thus, the first commandment deals with *what* we worship.

In contrast, the second commandment covers the *way* we worship. The Father and Son are unique Individuals who come into our lives from beyond this physical realm. They are absolutely holy, pure, and undefiled, uncreated and eternal. An idol, on the other hand, is someone or something of any other realm that we make and value, giving it devotion that rightfully belongs to the Creator.

John 4:24 instructs us regarding the way God desires that we worship Him: "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth." The second commandment regulates a specific area of idolatry; it deals with God's spirituality. It thus involves our manner of worship in faith, most obviously in that it prohibits the use of physical "helps" or "aids" in worshipping the invisible, spiritual God.

John 1:18 states that no man has seen God at any time. Deuteronomy 4:15-16 provides an Old Testament parallel:

Take careful heed to yourselves, for you saw no form when the Lord spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of any figure: the likeness of male or female.

Since no one has ever seen God, whatever is made to picture Him would be a work of man's hands and a lie. It is helpful to recall that the Holy of Holies contained no representation of God. The Bible frequently uses the image of an altar to indicate the worship of God, yet, except for the Temple's brazen altar, even they were to be made of simple turf or uncut stones (Exodus 20:22-26). Additionally, the second commandment prohibits the use of anything that represents God or could become an object of veneration. Thus, it prohibits any kind of likeness of Christ such as crucifixes, pictures, and statues.

Numbers 33:52 commands the Israelites, ". . . then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, destroy all their engraved stones, destroy all their molded images, and demolish all their high places. . . ." This destruction was not to be wanton, but God intended it to involve only religious, worshipped things. Why?

Any representation of God changes Him into a different god from what He really is. Egypt, from whence Israel came, worshipped oxen, heifers, sheep, goats, lions, dogs, cats, monkeys, ibis, crane, hawks, crocodiles, serpents, frogs, flies, beetles, sun, moon, planets, stars, fire, light, air, and darkness. Very likely, an Egyptian could come up with "good" reasons why he did so. As related in the previous article, a man wrote in an email that he did not care whether the Bible said not to worship as the pagans do through the use of Christmas and Easter. He was going to do it anyway because it was *his* way of praising God. He is worshipping a god of his own design.

Idolatry, then, denies the true nature of God, so obedience to this commandment determines the *way* we worship. It must be in spirit and in harmony with His nature, which the Bible reveals. Knowing God's true nature is important because we become what we worship. Thus, this commandment covers idolatry in a form in which the true God is worshipped through either a false image or a corrupt practice. This false representation perverts His reality. If we idolize, we become the wrong thing.

## Crucifixes and Holidays

Exodus 32:1-4 illustrates how something not directly connected to worship can be twisted into idolatry:

Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." And Aaron said to them, "Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. Then they said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!"

On the surface, they were not really seeking a change of gods, but a change of leaders. Some did not like Moses, and besides, he had disappeared. In their impatience, they moved to entrust their leadership to one who could introduce them to a god similar to what Moses had done. However, they immediately regressed to a god of Egypt because that was all they really knew.

Nevertheless, God and Moses were highly offended because, to them, making the Golden Calf was an Israelite attempt to define God's nature and to control Him according to their desires. The man who said he would keep Christmas regardless is doing the same thing except that he carries his false image in his mind.

In a similar way, the pope takes the people's ornaments of gold, silver, ivory, and precious stones, makes a crucifix or Madonna, and says it is only to keep God in mind. The principle, however, is exactly the same. It will not be long before people associate the image directly with God, and they need it to perform their prayers of praise and request. In this, the first and second commandments are directly broken.

The carnal emailer wrote, "It is *my way* of praising the Lord" (emphasis added). The carnal Israelites in Moses day proclaimed "a feast to the Lord" (Exodus 32:5). Both justify themselves based on a false image of God's nature. In contrast, the spiritual God declared that the Israelites were corrupting themselves by worshipping the Golden Calf, and He showed His displeasure by destroying them. People corrupt themselves by defining God's nature to their own ends.

Mark 7:6-7 defines this travesty further: "This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." Jesus joined battle with manmade supplements to God's Word, the works of men's hands. Traditional religious holidays are also done in God's name, but He is not in them. Despite the outward appearance of sincere piety in keeping them, they are a lie because they simply are not true to God's nature. Celebrating them contradicts a Christian's commitment to truth.

The traditions of which Jesus spoke directly distorted the law of God and thus the image of God. The law is a description of God's character, the image He wants us to carry in our minds and follow in our conduct. Christ repudiates every addition, subtraction, and distortion elevated to a specious "divine" authority.

We will take this a step further. Isaiah 1:13-15 describes an Israelite failing:

Bring no more futile sacrifices; incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies—I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting. Your New Moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; they are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.

The context gives no indication that the Israelites were not observing the Sabbath on the seventh day. Rather, their attitude and way they were observing it contrasted with God's desire. Carnally, man feels free to worship God as he good and well pleases. These attitudes, as well as the practices, break the second commandment.

This passage parallels Amos 5:21-27, which was preached about the same time as Isaiah 1:13-15. Both show crowds in a festive attitude, yet God rejects their "worship" as worthless. Their "holiness" was a sham because it was not backed by righteous conduct in their daily lives. The spirit behind their worship was wrong. Their futile sacrifices indicate their hypocrisies: These people had the morals of alley cats; eyes hot with lust and greed; and fortunes built on crime, envy, murder, and deceit. In reality, they were stingy, hateful gossipers who on the Sabbath appeared before God as if everything was okay.

What kind of a god would accept the conduct the Israelites exhibited? Certainly not the true God! They were going through the motions of punctilious observance, but their hearts were elsewhere, as their daily conduct showed. God is more concerned about right relationships between people than an overly scrupulous regard for formal worship on the Sabbath. Worship cannot be separated from the character and attitudes displayed in daily life. It is a person's reaction to God all through the week, not just on the Sabbath, that matters. We cannot mock God and somehow believe that we will get away with it.

In Isaiah 2:5-18, God testifies of a culture immersed in all sorts of idolatry. He sees a people enslaved by the superstition of astrology—they do not seek God's judgment, but they will seek and do what the omens read! Their material success has produced a self-confidence that deceives them into believing that God is unnecessary. This chapter reveals what resides at the foundation of much idolatry—*pride*, as expressed in the phrases, "The lofty looks of man" and the "haughtiness of men." Pride drives mankind to resist God, so they will not submit to the *way* He wants our response—our worship—done.

So far we have learned about this commandment:

» The most obvious form of idolatry is the worship of a false god using a material representation. The idol does not begin by being a god, but a symbol of the god, and its function is to make the worship of the god easier. Soon, though, people are worshipping the symbol rather than the reality behind it (Acts 19:23-28, 35).

» Some have deluded themselves into thinking that as long as they are sincere they can adapt into Christianity almost any practice, as has been done with Christmas, Easter, Halloween, etc. However, those who do this have, in effect, made their own religion (John 4:23-24; Mark 7:6-7).

» The first commandment concerns *what* we worship. When the first commandment is broken, it prepares a path for the breaking of the second, which deals with the *way* we worship.

## Idolatry and the Tenth Commandment

Paul writes in Colossians 3:5, "Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry." This definition of the tenth commandment has sobering ramifications. Covetousness, the unlawful desire to obtain, sets a person up for pursuing extreme acquisitiveness.

The actual mechanics of the process begin when the individual creates an idol in his mind in order to get something: a spouse, money, power, praise—even a feeling. None of these things are inherently evil, but in the process of achieving them, the person gradually allows the desire to have them to so dominate him that possessing them becomes his only worthwhile activity in life.

For a time, it actually shapes his existence. In desire's grip, he increasingly becomes consumed by it until he is committing other sins in order to achieve his aim. He will lie, steal, or ignore his spouse and children. The desire to get ultimately takes the place of God in many facets of his life, which affects the *way* that person responds to the true God.

Ephesians 5:5-7 declares this sin's seriousness:

For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them.

This is not a sin to fool with! The essential nature of this idolatry is selfishness, the worship of the self. A person's desire becomes the object of his affections and devotion.

The emailer mentioned earlier in regard to Christmas knows the truth, but he certainly does not understand what "bow down" and "serve" indicate, as the commandment states. He is serving, bowing down, to his false image of Christ. *Bow* means "to bend the neck or waist," and it is usually done to indicate reverence, worship, assent, or submission. *Serve* means "to work for, promote the interests of, aid, help, obey, wait upon, or satisfy the requirements of." He is doing both to the god of the Christmas tree.

There are at least three forms of idolatry: The first occurs when the true God is rejected outright, and the individual's devotion is completely given over to another. The second happens when a person uses an aid in defiance of the second commandment. The third form breaks the spirit—the intent of—the law. The ramifications of breaking the spirit of this law are almost endless, as it could involve any other commandment that is habitually broken because of a lack of self-control. One can do this even while worshipping the true God.

A simple desire becomes coveting—a lust—when it drives us to sin in other areas of life. The sin may be actively or passively committed. Suppose we ask God for something He has promised, something good that He desires us to have—perhaps prosperity or healing. If our desire for that good thing becomes greater than our desire to submit to the way He says we must live in order to be

prospered, it will motivate us to use carnal, sinful means to satisfy our lust. Did not Abraham do something similar in his desire to have a son?

This is the essence of the sin of covetousness and reveals why it is idolatry. God permits us to serve ourselves equal to the degree that we serve others. But if we serve ourselves at the expense of others—including God—and without regard for breaking God's other commandments, it raises mere desire to covetousness and then to idolatry. This idolatry is clearly serving the self.

Jeremiah 17:5-13 provides excellent counsel regarding holding desire in check while waiting for God to provide:

Thus says the Lord: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord. For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land which is not inhabited. Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes; but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings. As a partridge that broods but does not hatch, so is he who gets riches, but not by right; it will leave him in the midst of his days, and at his end he will be a fool." A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary. O Lord, the hope of Israel, all who forsake You shall be ashamed. "Those who depart from Me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters."

God called us to glorify Him through faith, which we show by giving ourselves in obedience to Him, patiently waiting for Him to provide, and learning to serve, to give as He gives. We cannot truly be committed to God if we are serving only ourselves because, as Jesus says, "No man can serve two masters" (Matthew 6:24). Psalm 37:34 adds, "Wait on the Lord and keep His way, and He shall exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off, you shall see it."

Romans 7:8-9 shows that even the learned Paul did not fully understand the spiritual aspects of God's law until God converted him: "But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. I was alive once without the law but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." Lust is idolatry because it is serving the self despite what God says. Mere desire becomes idolatry when we willingly, through self-centered foolishness, push aside more important responsibilities to God and men to achieve what we have our hearts set on.

The apostle writes in Ephesians 2:3, "Among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others." Idolatry through lust is related directly to Satan and the *cosmos* he established. He accomplished this because the unconverted see little reason to hold desires in check. In fact, human nature is a perfect vehicle for expressing lust.



Because the unconverted human heart lacks a believing, understanding knowledge of God and His purpose, it relentlessly pursues its desires to serve the self at the expense of anybody in its way. As a result, the world is filled with crimes of lying, stealing, murder, rape, muggings, car-jackings, house-breakings, vandalism, Sabbath-breaking, corporate greed, and war.

In contrast, Christianity is a way of life designed to suit God's purpose: to produce godly character, to bring glory to Him through the Holy Spirit, and to bless His people with health and wealth in both physical and spiritual areas in the right measure and according to His purposes. Those who know and believe this and trust Him will hold their desires in check to please Him, thus avoiding idolatry.

### **Fulfill Any Desire?**

Paul teaches in I Corinthians 6:9-12:

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

How can Paul give a long list of conduct forbidden by God, and then say, "All things are lawful for me"? Does he have a special dispensation to commit sin? Can any Christian have the same privileges Paul seems to enjoy? What does he mean, "All things are lawful for me"?

First, it is helpful to understand that the phrase is better translated as, "I have permission to do anything," "I am free to do anything," or "I may do anything." This removes the strict sense of law and legality that the word "lawful" suggests. Paul is referring to our God-given free-moral agency. This liberty to sin appears in Deuteronomy 30:15-20, where God says we are free to choose either death or life, but He commands us to choose life, clearly implying that we are also free to choose death! History reveals that mankind, under the power of Satan, human nature, and this world, has overwhelmingly chosen death, becoming slaves to wrong choices.

When God calls us, He opens our minds to our nature, the serious purpose of life, the certainty of death, and the sacrifice of Christ for us. We may freely choose to take advantage of God's offer, enter into a covenant with Him, and receive His Spirit, and He frees us from our slavery to Satan, human nature, sin, and death. This begins the process of becoming permanently free from our slavery to wrong choices. Once in this position, we can see why Paul says, in paraphrase, "As a son of God, I still have permission to do anything, but not everything is helpful, or expedient, to fulfilling God's purpose for me if I desire to fulfill the covenant and enter God's Kingdom."

He then makes the strong statement, paraphrasing verse 12, "I will not allow myself to be mastered by human nature's lustful desires. I will control myself because, otherwise, I'd just be serving myself, not God or my fellow men." I Corinthians 9:27 confirms Paul's strong desire and efforts to guard himself against sin: "But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."

He writes in Romans 14:22-23: "Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin." Happy—blessed—is the person who overcomes lust, which in reality is idolatry, because it affects the way he worships God.

It is crucial that we have a conscience that does not condemn us. A great deal of guilt and self-condemnation comes from failing to live up to what we know we should do but fail to do because we are serving our own lusts. We cannot worship God with love, joy, enthusiasm, zeal, and deep devotion with a defiled conscience. In this regard, a helpful rendering of God's advice to Cain in Genesis 4:7 is, "If you do well, shall not your countenance be lifted?"

A person who really knows God through a combination of communication with Him in prayer, knowledge of Him through study, and an understanding of Him through obedience needs no material representations of Him. Such people know His truth, character, and purpose. They believe them and trust Him, and their minds are at peace.