

**How I Love Thy Law**

Psalm 119:97

**No Other Gods**

Exodus 20:3

**The True Worship of God**

Exodus 20:4-6

**A Name to Be Reverenced**

Exodus 20:7



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**February 5, 2017 — No. 3866**

**February 26, 2017 — No. 3869**

*Reformed Witness Hour*

(www.reformedwitnesshour.org)

**Station Listings**

<b>Station</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Time/day</b>
KARI	Blaine, WA.....	550AM.....	8:00 P.M./Sunday
KCWN	Pella, IA.....	99.9FM.....	3:30 P.M./Sunday
KDCR	Sioux Center, IA.....	88.5FM.....	5:00 P.M./Sunday
KGDN	Tri-Cities Walla Walla, OR.....	101.3FM.....	5:00 P.M./Sunday
KLOH	Pipestone, MN.....	1050AM.....	8:00 A.M./Sunday
KLTT	Denver, CO.....	670AM.....	1:30 P.M./Sunday
KPRO	Riverside, CA.....	1570AM.....	11:30 A.M./Sunday
KSPO	Spokane, WA.....	106.5FM.....	5:00 P.M./Sunday
KTAC	Moses Lake, WA.....	93.9FM.....	5:00 P.M./Sunday
KTBI	Wenatchee/Moses Lake, WA.....	810AM.....	5:00 P.M./Sunday
KTRW	Spokane, WA.....	630AM.....	9:30 A.M./Sunday
KYAK	Yakima, WA.....	930AM.....	5:00 P.M./Sunday
WFDL	Fond Du Lac, WI.....	1170AM.....	8:00 A.M./Sunday
WFUR	Grand Rapids, MI.....	102.9FM.....	8:00 A.M./Sunday
WFUR	Grand Rapids, MI.....	1570AM, 92.9FM ...	4:00 P.M./Sunday
	NYC-Long Island, NY.....	101.5FM, 94.9FM, 104.5FM, 96.5FM ...	8:30 A.M./Sunday
WORD	Pittsburgh, PA.....	101.5FM.....	10:00 A.M./Sunday
WPFG	Carlisle, PA.....	91.3FM.....	8:00 A.M./Sunday
<b>UK</b>			
GOSPEL	Northern Ireland.....	846AM.....	8:30 A.M./Sunday
<b>Canada</b>			
CKNX	Wingham, ON.....	920 AM.....	7:00 A.M./Sunday

**THE REFORMED WITNESS HOUR***February 5, 2017*  
*No. 3866**How I Love Thy Law*  
*Rev. Rodney Kley*

Dear radio friends,

It is a privilege and delight for me to be back on the air for several months. It is my prayer with you that the radio messages that I bring will be a blessing to you and that God will use these broadcasts for the spread of the gospel and of truth; that they will be used for the gathering of His church; and that they ultimately will bring glory to His name.

It is my plan in the coming weeks to bring a series of messages on the law of God, that is, on the Ten Commandments. I believe this is a relevant topic, especially in our day, not only because of the immorality in our society, but also because the law of God is neglected and misunderstood in the church and among Christians.

I want to begin today not by looking at the law itself (next week we will begin with the first commandments), but I want to look at what the psalmist says about the law in Psalm 119:97ff. I want to read this entire section of the Psalm, verses 97-104. The psalmist says:

O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.

I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.

I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.

I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me.

How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.

Before we explain these words, let us have a word of prayer.

Father in heaven, we pray that Thou wilt open our eyes to understand wondrous things out of Thy law, out of Thy Word; that our ears may hear and our hearts may receive Thy Word today. We pray it for Jesus' sake, Amen.

Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible and the

most beautiful of all of the Psalms. It is the Bible's commentary on itself and describes the beauty and treasure of God's Word. It was very likely written by David when he was a young man. In verse 9 he asks this very important and profound question: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" And he answers: "By taking heed thereto according to thy word." In that verse we understand why this psalm was written—as an explanation of God's Word.

The psalm is an elaborate acrostic poem—twenty-two sections, corresponding to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Each section has eight verses, all of which begin with the same letter of the alphabet. This shows us that every detail of God's Word is carefully worked out—every jot and tittle, every minute part of it is inspired by God.

The theme of this psalm is the Word of God, and every verse in this psalm, with the exception of one, mentions the Word of God. So the psalm says one hundred and seventy-five different things about God's Word.

The psalm uses many synonyms to describe the Word of God. These are some of them: the word, the law, God's decree, commandments, testimonies, ordinances, precepts, judgments, paths, name, and so on.

Each of them gives a unique perspective on the Word of God.

In the text that we consider today, the psalmist exclaims, "O how love I thy law!" What he loves here is the law. We can understand that more broadly to refer to the books of Moses, the Torah, the first five books of the Bible, or to refer to the different kinds of law and commandments that God had given to Israel: the moral law, the civil law, and the ceremonial law. But it also has application specifically to the law of the Ten Commandments. We want to think especially about that today.

He calls this law "thy law," that is, God's law. This means that the law comes from God. We remember that in the book of Exodus, when God came down on the mountain, He thundered the law from the mountain and the people did not want to hear the voice of God because it was so dreadful. God wrote this law with His own finger in two tables of stone as a permanent statute. So the psalmist says in verse 102, "thou has taught me," that is, God Himself teaches in the law. That is important to remember as we come to the commandments: God Himself speaks and teaches from the law.

Calling the Ten Commandments the law of God also reminds us that the law is a revelation of God Himself. The Ten Commandments do this.

Him, to believe on Him and to believe on Jesus Christ His Son and to trust Him. Psalm 9:10 puts it this way: "And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee." The primary way for us to reverence the name of God is to believe in His revelation of Himself, in the Scriptures and in His Son Jesus Christ. We do not say, "Well, we can't know God," but we look at His revelation and we confess His name.

That is another important way that we use God's name. We confess His name. We confess His name as it is revealed in Scripture. We confess it with care. In Psalm 39:1 the psalmist talks about the care that he wants to use as he confesses God's name. He says, "I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me." He means this, that he does not want to misspeak, he does not want to speak incorrectly regarding God as he confesses God's name, speaks of God's name to others. He wants to be very careful.

Still one more way in which we use God's name is by worship. With that, too, we must be very careful, as we saw in the previous commandment, that our worship be in truth. It must be according to God's Word. So, in Ecclesiastes 5, Solomon says,

"Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God. For God is in heaven and thou on earth: therefore let thy words be few."

So, with this commandment, we see that God has spoken to us. He has revealed His name. He has given us to know His name personally and He has given us the ability to know His name in our salvation by His Spirit and in His Son Jesus Christ. And He says, "My name is holy, so use my name with reverence." How seriously do you take this commandment? How seriously should we not take this commandment?

May God give us a desire to honor and reverence His name as we see it as holy.

Let us pray.

Father, we thank Thee for the revelation of Thy name in Jesus Christ Thy Son, and that we can know it, that we can know Him, and that Thou hast given us the ability to be able to see and understand the things that natural man could otherwise not receive. Help us, Lord, to reverence Thy name in all of our life, in our knowledge, in our confession, and in our worship. We pray it for Jesus' sake, Amen.

represents who He is, so we also should be jealous of His name.

Yet, we must use the name of God. Some, understanding the seriousness

of this commandment, would not use God's name. The Jews, for many

years, would not use the personal name of God: Jehovah. So they referred to Him as Adoni, even when the name Yawah is used in the Scriptures. Today, something that is similar to this is those who refuse to use the name of God to swear in an important civil ceremony—to take an oath of marriage or a vow to tell the truth before a justice. But we must use the name of God. We may and we must. Psalm 99:3 says this: "Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy." God's name is holy. God's name is great. God's name is terrible, and the response is this, that we use it in praise. We praise God in His name. We do not refuse to use the name of God but we use it appropriately.

So, how do we appropriately use God's name, take God's name? We do it in these four ways.

First, by knowing His name, by searching out from Scripture the revelation of the truth of

God's name; that we learn theology; that we learn truth; that we are careful as we study the Scriptures; that we put a premium on knowing God from the

Scriptures. Jesus says "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only

true God and Jesus Christ, thy Son." This has to do not with just the knowledge of God from Scripture, though. It has to do with the knowledge of God in every area of creation, because, as we said, all of God's self-revelation, all revelation, is associated with the name of God. So, this means that, as we search out the rest of creation—all other subject areas—we do that in light of God's special revelation in the Scriptures. We take care that, as we learn science, as we learn math, as we use medicine, it is regulated by God's revelation in the Scriptures.

And, this means, too, that education and learning are important in themselves, so long as we come to them from God's Word. We should never think of learning as just learning for learning's sake, but as learning because this is God's world in which we live.

Second, to use God's name appropriately means to believe

They not only tell us what *we* must be, but they show to us something of the holiness and the character of God. Through the law we come to know God Himself. There is nothing more important for us than this: to know God.

Because the law comes from God, the law comes with authority and the law comes without error. That is true of all the Scriptures, but especially now of the Ten Commandments. Concerning this law, the psalmist expresses a deep and a sincere love: "O how love I thy law!" A great exclamation. This is not an isolated statement in the psalm. There are at least six or seven different places in the psalm that the psalmist speaks of this love. I will read just a few verses. Verses 162-165: "I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil. I hate and abhor lying; but thy law do I love. Seven times a day do

I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.

Great peace have they which love thy law." The whole psalm is really an expression of the believer's love for the Word and the law of God.

The idea of love in the Bible is much more than a feeling and much more than words. If all we had is a good feeling about the law of God and about the

Word of God, that is not love. Love is a commitment, and love is action. Think about marriage love. It is a commitment to spouse principled on one's love for God, which shows itself in action, in serving, in selflessness, in forgiveness. A love for God's Word is the same. It is a commitment to God's Word that shows itself to be sincere in action.

In this section, the psalmist shows the sincerity of his love for God's Word in several ways. At the end of verse 97 he says: "it is my meditation all the day." He means that the law of God fills his mind, that he cannot think about anything else. It is not just a matter of feeling, but he thinks through the law of God. He thinks through the Word of God, not just on one day a week, perhaps Sunday, but every day. The law of God is in his mind, the law of God controls his thinking

and controls His emotions. Emotions are fickle.

They are easily fed. They change easily. But the mind is solid and the mind is stable, harder to teach but almost impossible to unteach. The psalmist says he "meditates on the law of God." If you love the law of God, you will meditate on the law of God.

The psalmist also shows the sincerity of his love for God's

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law here when, in verse 103, he expresses his deep satisfaction in the law of God. "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" He does not think of the commandments and the Word of God as something like bad medicine that tastes horrible and does awful things to your body, but in the end has a good result. The Word and the law of God are not like that. To the believer they are sweet to the taste. On entrance, they are sweeter than honey, sweeter than every earthly pleasure. Job says, "I have esteemed the words of thy mouth more than my necessary food." The spiritual food is more important than any physical food. Now we know that that is not true for all, but this is the result of the regenerating work of the Spirit who gives us a taste and the desire for the Word of God.

The psalmist also shows that his love for the Word of God is genuine in his walk. This is not just a matter of words or a feeling, but of his life. So the psalmist says in verses 101, 102: "I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word. I have not departed from thy judgments." One of the main ways that we show our love for God and our love for the Word of God is by obedience to that Word. Jesus says in John 14, "He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." And again, "If

ye love me, keep my commandments." This is expressed in I John 2 quite strongly when John says, "Whoso keepeth his word, in him, verily, is the love of God perfected. Hereby know we that we are in him." Again, in I John 5, "By this we know that we love the children of God when we love God and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." A life that is directed by love for God is not a life that finds the Word of God to be grievous and heavy, but rather loves to walk in obedience to God's commandments and finds this to be the way of communion and of fellowship with God Himself.

There is one more proof of the psalmist's love here for God, and that is in verse 104 when he says, "I hate every false way." He means by this that he hates sin. Every false way is every evil way, every way that is contrary to the Word of God, every doctrine and teaching that disagrees with the truth of God's Word, every choice and action and Word that is against the commandments of God. The psalmist is saying that, as he draws his conviction from the law of God, he is sensitive to sin and it stirs up in him a reaction against sin. The more he loves God's law, the more he meditates on God's law; the more he learns God's law, the more he hates what is against

that He is not. God has revealed Himself in Scripture, and false teaching misrepresents the God of the Scriptures. This tells us how important it is to know God as He has revealed Himself in truth in His Word.

Still another way and probably the most common way that God's name is used in vain is by unbelief. To say something different about Jesus Christ than is true of Him in the Scriptures is to take the name of God in vain. John talks about this in I John 4:2, 3 when he says, "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is the spirit of antichrist." So to say something different about Jesus Christ than is true of Him, to refuse to believe on Jesus Christ, is to take the name of Jesus Christ in vain. It is the spirit of Antichrist. Now the spirit of Antichrist is a spirit of blasphemy, because the Antichrist comes and speaks blasphemy against the name of Jesus Christ.

Perhaps the most common way that believers take the name of God in vain and treat it lightly is by hypocritical living. When God saves us, He puts His name on us, He calls us by His name. We bear the name of God. Yet, when we go out and

live in the world by speaking and doing and even by thinking things and desiring things that are against the name and the revelation of God, then we who bear God's name, say something different about the name of God than is true. Then God's name is often used as a cloak for our sins and a justification for our sinful living. We are Christians.

It is important for us to think about these things. God's name is holy. The commandment itself brings home to us the seriousness of this commandment: the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain. In the Old Testament, the punishment for openly blaspheming the name of God was that one was stoned to death. Leviticus 5 says that even one who heard another take the name of God in vain with blasphemy and did nothing about it, did not report it, that one would bear his own sin. This means that the sin of blasphemy or the sin of taking God's name in vain is a sin worthy of discipline in the church, worthy of one being excommunicated from the church of God. It is taking the holy things of God and making them common, treating them as nothing. Perhaps we think of other sins as the worst sins that could be committed—scandals, or sins that are committed against us. But, how jealous are we for the name of God? God is jealous of His name because it

different ways in which we can take God's name in vain. The most obvious way is to cut down God's name. God's name is high. To curse God's name, to use God's name flippantly, to deliberately blas-

pheme in the name of God is to take His name in vain. You remember Job's wife,

who said to him, "Curse God and die." That is, speak against God, speak as though there is no God, and then die in defiance against God. Certainly we see this misuse of God's name in the world and the society in which we live.

Another way that God's name is used in vain, though, is to use it carelessly, to use expletives, exclamations that include the name of God or a softened form of the name of God. So, somebody, instead of saying, "O my God," will say, "O my gosh," or instead of saying "Jesus," will say, "Geez." They are calling on the name of God in a rather flippant way.

We might also be guilty of using God's name in vain even in vain repetitions of the name of God in our prayers without thinking, without thinking of the name of God that we bring to our lips. So, we constantly say, "Lord," or "my Father," when it

would be better for us to think specifically of a revelation of God's name that suits the petition that we make. If we ask God to do something, we would pray to the Almighty One. If

we ask God to show us His love and care, we would pray to our Father. If we want God to de-

liver us from the power of some sin, we might pray to our Savior and use God's name more appropriately in our prayers that way.

Still another way that we might use the name of God in vain is to allow others to treat the name of God with disrespect. Just think of how quickly we would rise in defense of the name and the flag of our country. Or, just think of if you heard somebody using your own name or speaking ill of your wife or one of your children—how quickly you would rise up in defense of that person and that person's name and reputation. But how often do we speak out for the defense of God's name when we hear it misused?

Perhaps the worst way that one could misuse the name of God is to misrepresent the name of God by false teaching, by heresy—to say that God is something

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God's law because, as he learns God's law, he learns the mind of God Himself, which is opposed to all wickedness.

Do you love the law of God as the psalmist did? This is a personal expression: how I love Thy law. If you love God, you will truly love His law. Every believer will say with the psalmist, "How love I thy law." We cannot be lukewarm to the law and the Word of God. If you are lukewarm towards the Word of God and the law of God, you are lukewarm in your love towards God.

In this section of the psalm, the psalmist also explains to us why he loves the law of God. He gives us here at least two reasons.

First, he loves the law of God because it gives him wisdom. He says that through God's commandments he is wiser than his enemies. He says he has more understanding than his teachers, for God's testimonies are his meditation. He says he understands more than the ancients because he keeps God's precepts. The enemies are those who are opposed to him because he loves the Word of God, because he stands by the Word of God. There are people who oppose the truth of God's Word and will become the enemies of God's people who love God's Word.

The psalmist speaks of

teachers. We should think of those who are experts in knowledge: professors, educated people. The psalmist says he knows more than the ancients. By this he means not able people of history whose ideas have carried through into the current world. He says, because I have the law of God in my heart and meditate on it, I am wiser than all of these. Now, we have to understand here that he is talking about people who are worldly wise—the teachers and the ancients—people who are marveled at for their skill and knowledge, people who do not have the Word of God in their minds and whose wisdom is only worldly, people who are really fools who say in their heart, "There is no God." What he is saying is not that he has more knowledge in his head or more understanding even of science and how things work in this world, a book knowledge. But he is saying that he, as one who has the law of God, has an understanding and an insight into life that goes way beyond the understanding of the natural man. That is because, with the law of God in his mind, everything in life is put into its eternal perspective. He is saying that he can look at the realities of life, the issues that face us in this world, the dilemmas that man faces, with the Word of God, and he can understand all these things better than anyone

in the world because the law of God brings us to God. It reveals God to us and it brings us before God. That is a marvelous thing. It puts everything into an eternal perspective.

You watch the evening news, you read the Press, you go to college and you hear about politics and history and social issues. As a believer who has internalized the Word of God by faith, you can understand these things in light of God and things eternal. This is what the psalmist means. This brings the whole world before God and puts everything into its eternal perspective. That is why he loves the law of God. Here is the reason to love God's commandments: they give us wisdom beyond the understanding of man.

The second reason that the psalmist gives is here in verses 101 and 102, where he speaks of refraining his feet from every evil way and not departing from God's judgments. He says the reason for this is that God has taught him. He means that God's teaching through the law restrains him from sin. It has a sanctifying power in his life. It guides him in the way of obedience.

There are two ways for a person to walk through life. One way is the broad way of sin and pleasure that leads to eternal death and hell. The other way is the narrow way of obedience that leads to life. The psalmist is saying not only that he desires to walk on that narrow way, but that he does walk on it. "I have not departed from thy judgments" (v. 102). How does he do that? Very often when a person deviates from the way of obedience, when he falls into sin, he says something like this: "I couldn't help it. I didn't have the power to stop myself from sinning." That is right. We do not have the power. We cannot help

ourselves. We are inclined to all sin. But here is the psalmist's answer, here is

what gives the power to resist and to overcome sin: the law, the commandments of God. Back to verse 9: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" How does a person young or old keep his life holy? In verse 11 the psalmist answers it: "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." The psalmist, because he loves the Word of God and loves the commandments of God, meditates on them. This keeps him from sin. As he treasures the

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of the questions that Moses asks God in his reluctance is: "What will I tell the people when I come to them and they say unto me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say unto them?" Then we read in Exodus 3:14 that God said to Moses: "I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." This is the personal name of God. It refers to God's self-existence. It refers to the fact that God has always existed, that He is the eternal God, that He is not dependent on anyone else. It refers to the fact that God is immutable, the unchanging God. It refers to the fact that God is faithful in His immutability to His promises that He makes towards His people. So God tells Moses when He is about to deliver Israel from Egypt: "This is my name. I am the faithful, unchanging, immutable, eternal, covenant-keeping God." He reveals that name to His people in the bondage of Egypt. That is marvelous. It is a revelation of the character of God in connection with the salvation of His people.

When we come to the New Testament, we see this name, I AM (which, in the Hebrews also takes the form, Jehovah, which we, in our English translations often have as the word LORD in capital letters), in the name of the Savior. In Matthew 1:18 ff. Joseph is told in a dream that he should call the son that is born

"Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." When the angel describes the meaning of the name Jesus, he focuses on the second part of that name: Je-sus. That refers to Him as the Savior. But the first part of that name, Je, is the name Jehovah, or the name I AM. So the name of the Savior is: Jehovah Saves. This is the name of God, the personal name of God, and He gives it to His Son, Jesus Christ. So we see in Jesus Christ the revelation of the name of God, and particularly of God as a saving God to His people.

Another way that we see that the name of God is wonderful is by looking at the Scriptures as the name of God. The psalmist says that God has magnified His Word, that is, the Scriptures, above all His name. That is, the Scriptures are the central revelation of the name of God. After God Himself and Jesus Christ His Son, this is the revelation of God. Here is the name of God. We find it in the Scriptures. In the Scriptures God condescends, God reveals Himself to us in His wonderful name.

The third commandment forbids taking the name of God in vain. To take the name of God in vain is to use it as though it means nothing, to use it without thought, to drain it of all its meaning. Because God's name is His revelation, there are many

Psalms 8 puts it this way: "O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" All the creatures that God has created, this entire universe, all of God's works in time, God's providential ruling over all things, these all call us to see the name of God, the God who has revealed Himself. So God's name is something with which every human interacts on a daily basis.

The name of God is wonderful, it is wonderful in itself. We see that that name is wonderful when we think of the way it was revealed, for example, to Moses, or in that prophecy we just referred to in Isaiah 9. Even in creation: "How excellent is thy name in all the earth!" The name of God itself—His names, His attributes, all His revelation shows us something of the wonder of God's name.

But, as God's people in the world, we find God's name to be especially wonderful because we know that name. It is not only a name of majesty and a revelation of the terror of God, but it is a name we come to know personally and know in love. This is remarkable because we could not know the name of God. Job says: "Canst thou by searching find out God?" In I Corinthians the apostle Paul

says that man, by his wisdom, knew not God, and by all his searching, he could not find out God. The natural man, he says, receives not the things of God. The wonder of God's name is that He has told it to us, that He has revealed it to us. Think about this with your own name. You do not just share your own name and your identity with anyone. We live in a day and age when we want to protect our identity from being stolen. This is true even in interpersonal connections. You do not just walk up to and introduce yourself to just anyone. But you want to have a relationship of trust before you reveal that name to someone. You get closer, and then you tell them your personal name.

So, the revelation of the name of God to us His people is an evidence of God's friendship, God's covenant, God's love towards His people. We see this especially in Exodus 3, where

God reveals His personal name to Moses as the name that Moses should bring to Israel.

This is revealed in connection with God remembering His covenant promises to deliver Israel from the land of Egypt. In Exodus 3 God calls Moses to go and lead Israel out of the land of Egypt. Moses is reluctant. One

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Word of God in his heart, as he internalizes it, possesses it, has it ever with him, there is a power that God uses by His Spirit in the heart of the believer to give him grace and strength to resist sin and to fight temptation.

We know the stories of Jesus' temptations. He was hungry and He said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone." He was tempted to fall down and worship Satan. He said, "It is written: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve." He was tempted to throw Himself down from the temple and the devil encouraged him: "He'll give his angels charge over thee." And He answers with the Word of God again: "It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." It is written, it is written.

Because He had studied, meditated on, knew and treasured the Word of God, He had the power to resist temptation. This is the way to answer the devil and to answer evil and sin. Is that your experience, that the Word of God keeps you from trouble, that it restrains you? How I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day!

That does not mean there are not going to be times of temptation in our life when Satan

will fight against us. In fact, the more we are in the Word, the more valiant Satan's attacks on us will be. But the law of God *in* my heart restrains me from sin. It keeps my feet from going where they should not go. It keeps my eyes from looking at what they should not see. It keeps my hands from doing what they should not do, my mouth from saying what it should not say, my ears from hearing what they should not hear. God's law is the guide that keeps me on the straight and narrow. It is a powerful tool that God has given to direct me in a way of love and obedience.

Do you see here a great reason to love the law of God?

*God's law is the guide  
that keeps me on the  
straight and narrow.*

That is what the psalmist is saying: "I love thy law, O Lord. It restrains my feet from every evil way."

There is one more great reason in this psalm to love the law of God. It comes out especially in the very last verse of Psalm 119, verse 176. I find this to be a very striking way for the psalmist to end this psalm in which he expresses his love for God's Word. He says: "I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments." What is he saying? He is saying that the law of God leads him to see

his need of the Shepherd. Like a sheep, he has gone astray. As we stand before the commandments of the law of God, this is what we see. Over and over we see our disobedience; we see our sinfulness. We say, “I cannot keep the law of God. It’s requirements are too difficult. It demands love; it demands a heart and attitude towards God and the neighbor, a heart and attitude of love. And these are beyond me. And here is the humble approach towards the law of God: I do not keep Thy commandments; I have gone astray like a lost sheep. Lord, seek me.

We always need the Shepherd, and the Word of God leads us to Him. The law leads us to Him. It reveals to us our sinfulness. At the end of the psalm, all the psalmist can say is: “I’m a sinner.” The law is, as Paul says, a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ. What a great reason to love the law of God. As we look at the Ten Commandments, I expect that we will see in each one of them at least these

five things: something about God and His glory and majesty; something about ourselves and our sin and sinfulness; Jesus Christ as the answer in the gospel to our great need; who we are as a result of grace—what God makes us to be; and then, the way of thankful obedience.

As we think about those things and the revelation of those things to us in the commandments, we say: “O how love I thy law! It is my meditation, all the day.”

Let us pray.

Father, we thank Thee for Thy law. We love Thy law because we love Thee. We love Thy law because it brings us to Thee. We love Thy law because it shows us our need of the Shepherd, Jesus Christ. We pray that as we study the commandments in the coming weeks, they will give us life. The entrance of Thy Word, we know, gives life. We pray this for Jesus’ sake, Amen.

*We always need  
the Shepherd,  
and the Word of God  
leads us to Him.*

names of Eve, “the mother of all the living,” and of Sarah, who was a princess in Israel.

God’s names all have meaning, but they mean so much more than our names. Our names are really simply tags. Perhaps they come to mean something after we identify them over a period of time with a person, but God’s names describe God’s own character perfectly. Yet, they cannot do this completely because God is infinite. So, God receives many name in Scripture. We can think of a few: Lord, God, Jehovah, El-Shadai, the God of Hosts, and many more. Besides the names of God in Scripture, we also find the attributes of God, or the descriptions of the being of God, which are also a revelation of the name of God. For example, in Exodus 34:5, 6 we read this, that when Moses desired to see God, “the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,” characteristics of God—that He is gracious and longsuffering and merciful and so on, we call His attributes. These, too, are part of the name of God.

Further, since Jesus Christ is God and shares the names of God Himself, His names are also

the name of God. For example, Isaiah 9:6—“Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” God’s own names are given to Jesus Christ. So Jesus says, in John 17:6 and 26, that He had come to reveal the name of God. “I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.”

When we think of “Jesus” as the name of God, and the names of Jesus as the names of God, we see that all of God’s revelation of Himself is really His name. God’s self-revelation is His name. In John 1:18 we read that “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” So, Jesus Christ, who is the name of God, and who bears the names of God, reveals to us and declares to us who God Himself is. So, earlier, in John 1:14, John writes of Jesus Christ “(and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” God’s name is His revelation in His Son Jesus Christ.

This helps us to see that all of God’s self-revelation is His name. Even God’s general revelation in the creation is associated with the name of God.

## THE REFORMED WITNESS HOUR

February 26, 2017  
No. 3869

*A Name to Be Reverenced*  
Rev. Rodney Kley

Dear Radio Friends,

**W**e began a series of messages several weeks ago on the Ten Commandments of the law of God as we find them in Exodus 20. We have looked at the first and the second commandments, and today, in Exodus 20:7, we will look at the third commandment. It reads this way: “Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.”

As we have already seen, behind each of the commandments there is a principle or a truth regarding God. In the first commandment, God teaches us that He is the only God, and so He demands exclusive worship. In the second commandment, God teaches us that He is a Spirit, and so He must be worshiped in spirit and in truth. In this third commandment, we learn that God’s name is holy and so must be revered by us. That it is holy means that it is set apart, that it is consecrated for holy use. This is because God Himself is holy. As the jealous God (the second commandment: “I the Lord thy God am a jealous God”), God is jealous that His

name be used with holiness and reverence.

In the beginning God created man to know Him and to cherish His name in his heart, to love God, to treat God’s name and God’s revelation with reverence. But man does not do this. There is no commandment more relevant than this one. We see this not only by looking at the cursing and swearing that goes on in the world today, but also what happens in the church with God’s revelation. So God has given us a commandment regarding His name. Along with that, Jesus also teaches us to pray and to make this our prayer: “Hallowed be Thy name.”

The name of God refers to His person or character. It was very common in the Old Testament to give names with meaning. So Moses received the name he did because he was “drawn out of the water.” Elijah means “My God is Jehovah,” and it describes the entire ministry of Elijah and the battle with Baal over who was God. Elisha: “My God is Savior”; Joshua: “Jehovah saves.” Then you have

## THE REFORMED WITNESS HOUR

February 12, 2017  
No. 3867

*No Other Gods*  
Rev. Rodney Kley

Dear Radio Friends,

**L**ast week I introduced a study on the Ten Commandments by looking with you at the words of David in Psalm 119: “O how love I thy law.” Every true believer says these words with David. As Christians we do not see the law of God in the Ten Commandments as a list of pleasures that God withholds from us, but the law itself is our delight. We love the law of God.

The reasons for this love are, first, that the law shows us something of the perfection and the character of God Himself. The law is a reflection of His righteousness and holiness. Because we love God, we love to be like God, and so we love His law.

Another reason that we love the law is that God has written the law in our hearts. In our natural and sinful state we hate God and His law, and so we delight in disobedience (Rom. 1:32). But as a result of the new life of Jesus Christ in us, we delight in the law of God after the inward man (Rom. 7:22).

A third reason that we love

the law is that the law is essential to the gospel. We should never separate the law of the Ten Commandments from the gospel or set it up in contradiction to the gospel. Rather, it is essential to understanding the gospel, for it shows us not only the glory and the beauty and the character of God in His holiness and righteousness, but also our sin and our need of Jesus Christ. It shows us what the Spirit makes us to be—as new creatures who are regenerated. And it shows us how to live in thankfulness for our salvation in the gospel.

As we come to the law today in Exodus 20, we see that it is introduced with these words: “I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” It is important to see that God gave the law to Israel on Mount Sinai after He had redeemed them from the bondage of Egypt. He is not giving them the law as the way of obtaining their redemption and their salvation by their righteous works; but having delivered them, having saved

them, He shows them the way of obedient gratitude as His covenant people. Their obedience was a response to their redemption, not the reason for their redemption.

Similarly, we should never think that we obey the law of God in order to merit God's favor. If that is our thinking, then we will always remain under the curse, and salvation becomes impossible (Gal. 3:10). Rather, we obey the commandments out of gratitude to God for our salvation.

The first of the commandments, given in Exodus 20:3, is worded like this: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Coming first, this commandment is foundational to the rest of the law of God. There are several things that show this.

First, this commandment teaches us about God. The knowledge of God is where everything else begins. God is the origin of all things in the creation. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." And the fear of God is the beginning of all wisdom (Ps. 111:10).

This commandment is foundational, in the second place, because in identifying Jehovah as the only God, it also gives Him the right to be the only law-

giver, the One who ultimately determines what is right and what is wrong. If there were multiple gods, that would mean there is no ultimate standard for morality.

Third, this commandment is foundational to the others because its requirement is really the basic requirement of the entire law. We could summarize the first commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," in these words: "Thou shalt love God exclusively." We recognize that this is Jesus' own summary of the law when He says, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength."

In the fourth place, this commandment is foundational to the others because the sin that it forbids, idolatry, is essentially the root of all other sin. Adam and Eve sinned because they wanted to be like God. That was idolatry because, as soon as we desire what God forbids us, we are already, in effect, denouncing the true God and His sovereignty in giving us what we have.

It is important, therefore, that we understand this commandment correctly and that we always keep it before our minds in connection with obe-

we worship Him. Then we have seen three main elements of worship, that the church gathers for prayer, that the church gathers to give for the causes of the kingdom and the poor, and then that the church gathers to receive from God the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments—His grace through these means that He has given to the church.

The second commandment places before us a motivation for worshiping God as He demands. That motivation is expressed in the commandment both negatively and positively. We sometimes use negative motivators with our children. We discipline them when they do not obey or listen. We have that here in the commandment. It is expressed in a threat that God, who is a jealous God, visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him. The punishment that God speaks of here is this. In generations, a church will be judged that does not worship Him as He commands. And a church that does not worship Him as He commands, it says here, hates Him. It is out of love for God that we worship Him as He commands. God is jealous of His name. God is jealous of the love of His people. This is God's prerogative because He is God alone who has not only created

but also redeemed His people.

But in this commandment, the motivation is also expressed positively. The motivation is this: That God shows mercy in generations to thousands of them that love Him and keep His commandments. In the book of III John, verse 4, we see that there is no greater joy than to hear that children, that is, the church in her generations, walks in truth. But the way for that to be preserved in the church is through worshiping God as He commands. Where the worship of God as He has commanded it is lost, and especially where the preaching of the gospel is lost, there the church in her generations will depart.

So, this is the second commandment for the church: Worship God as He commands and He will bless you in your generations. May God grant that we, His church left in the earth today, will obey this commandment.

Let us pray.

Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast given us the privilege to worship Thee and that Thou hast also given us Thy Word that we follow and worship Thee according to that Word and in this way receive blessing in the church and also in our generations. Amen.

ments and to hear the preaching of the gospel.

Now the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments are primary in what God demands the church to do in worship. These are not our responses in worship, but these are primary because these are the ways that God comes and speaks to us. He speaks to us in the preaching; He administers His grace to us through the sacraments. Our prayer, our praise, and our giving are responses in worship to what God has given to us.

As you look for a church that faithfully worships God, the preaching of the gospel should be the primary thing for which you search. Romans 10

says that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. We must be impressed with God. We do not come together in worship to impress others but to be impressed with God Himself. In the Great Commission, Christ tells the church: This is what you must do as a church, you must go and teach all nations, baptizing them. Sadly today, in many churches, in modern worship, the preaching of the gospel has fallen away and the church

has slipped into ignorance and has departed from the Word of God. That is because the preaching has been lost. Preaching is the tried and true way for the preservation of the church. It may seem foolish in the eyes of man but it is effective to salvation—the power of God unto salvation.

Above all, this is what we must find in a church, and this is what a church must keep to as she seeks to be faithful to this commandment that demands that we worship God as He commands. What you look for in a church is not friendliness or programs that it might offer or ways for you to be involved but this, centrally: Is the gospel preached in this church?

The church that faithfully preaches the Word of God is a church that faithfully worships God according to this commandment.

So, we have seen in this commandment three important principles for worship. God demands that we worship Him corporately; God is a Spirit, so worship is a spiritual activity; and God places demands not only on the fact of worship but also the form of worship—how

dience. When God says in this commandment, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me,” He forbids all idolatry. The sin of idolatry is not simply the worship of an idol god, but is the substitution of something or someone, anything or anyone, in the place of the true God. Idolatry takes many forms and the human heart is always busy devising a variety of idols either as objects of affection or things in which man would trust.

In Old Testament times, and still in many parts of the world today, idolatry came to expression in the invention of a deity or a number of deities and the representation of that deity with a statue before which one would worship. Such a god is created by the mind of man and is, therefore, limited by man’s own limitations. Often such a god is crafted to suit the moral and material desires of man. So, by this, God is brought down to the level of man.

Scripture points to the folly, indeed, the lunacy, of such idolatry when it points out in Isaiah 44:10ff., that from one tree a man will craft a god who is worshiped and then the rest of the tree he will use for firewood

and food preparation. How can a god, crafted from wood and stone, be a real deity?

A false god, though, can be created in many other ways than just constructing a statue. Idolatry is the invention of a god in the mind. So, there is mental idolatry. Atheism and materialism, which say there is no personal god and that the only reality is this material world,

*Idolatry takes many forms and the human heart is always busy devising a variety of idols either as objects of affection or things in which man would trust.*

are such mental idols. The Bible tells us that this is the epitome of folly, to say, “There is no god.” The fool says in his heart, there is no god. Folly is to ignore reality

to one’s own harm and destruction. Other mental idols include all forms of human philosophy that attempt to explain this world apart from the revelation of God in Scripture. We think of things like Pantheism, Humanism, Deism, Daoism, and others.

Two of the most prevalent forms of idolatry in our day, in Western culture, are worldliness and modernism. Worldliness sets earthly pleasure and gain, personal fame, advancement in education, or anything else in this life as the goal and the purpose of one’s existence. Modernism sets man and his knowledge and discovery above

God's revelation in Scripture. It judges that the Bible is full of primitive ideas that we have now outgrown.

A form of idolatry that often comes into the church is false teaching. All heretical doctrine that formulates a teaching contrary to the teaching of God's Word in Scripture is idolatry. One example of this is the teaching that God loves everyone and that He loves them so much that there is no such thing as hell. Such a teaching denies the reality of the justice of God. It also denies much of the Bible's teaching and, in the end, makes the gospel and the death of Jesus Christ totally unnecessary. This is just one small example of a false teaching, but it shows us that man today is no different than the ancient Egyptians or the ancient Greeks or Canaanites who invented gods after their own imaginations. A god who is always and only a loving god suits the lifestyle and the desires of the modern man.

Idolatry, though, is not only *instead of* the one true God. It is also to have an object or idea *alongside of* the one true God. Even when a man attempts to serve both God and someone or something else, he is guilty of idolatry.

This commandment teaches us that Christianity and the worship of Jehovah God is an either/or, not a both/and reli-

gion. Jesus makes this clear when He says in Matthew 6:24, "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Jehovah God, because He is the only God, demands exclusive devotion and worship. He has made us, we are His creatures, and, by virtue of this, He has the right to demand our worship. For believers, this is doubly true, for not only has He made us, but He has also redeemed us and made us His own peculiar treasure.

The most common form of idolatry is to trust in something created rather than in the creator. So, money, medicine, insurance, education, alcohol, entertainment, sports, or even my own wits may all be gods in which I put my trust, when I ought to be depending on Jehovah. Though these are not true deities, each of them has the power to enslave my heart and to steal my allegiance from God. Does that not make every one of us guilty of idolatry?

This commandment not only forbids idolatry, but it also requires the exclusive worship of the one true God. To help us understand this requirement of worship, I am going to give you eight different verbs or actions that I hope are a good summary of what God requires of us when

people of God into the presence of God through congregational prayer. So, in prayer, the minister brings the needs of the congregation as a whole into the presence of God.

Another aspect of our prayer is song. Perhaps we do not think of our singing in worship this way, but singing is an aspect of prayer. Our songs are prayers to God. The book of Psalms is a book of prayers to God. These we do together, we do this corporately. Colossians 3 speaks of singing and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. These belong to the worship of God corporately. So the church together should sing. The singing of the church should not be a performance, but the corporate lifting of prayer and praise to God in the songs that God has given. This is the first element of worship that we find prescribed in Scripture: prayer and song.

The second element that we find prescribed in Scripture is giving. Paul says in I Corinthians 16:2, "On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." Paul is talking here about the church gathering together publicly for worship. He says that when they gather together for worship, they should take collections or gatherings of money. This also

is a part, then, of the churches corporate worship. There are two causes, really, basic causes, that we support through giving in the church. One is the work of the church itself, that is, kingdom work, the work of the church in the preaching of the gospel locally and the work of the church more broadly in bringing the gospel through missions and in other ways to the ends of the earth. But then, the other cause, the one that Paul identifies here, is the care of the needy and poor through collections. Is this a part of your worship in the church? This is a part of worship that we do not often think of as worship, but it is worship, because worship is a response of praise to God, in which we give to Him from what He has given to us.

The third main element of worship prescribed in Scripture for the church is the administration of the means of grace, that is, the preaching of the Word and the sacraments. We find that the early church, in the book of Acts, chapter 20, gathered together to do exactly this. "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them" (Acts 20:7). Notice the two things there. They came to "break bread," that is, to celebrate the Lord's Supper. Then "Paul preached unto them." They gathered corporately to receive the sacra-

sent God that reaches down to the level of the people because worship is a difficult thing. Today you hear something like this: We are a seeker-sensitive church, that is, we worship God according to the will or the desire of the seeker, those who come in worship. But this is backward. Worship is fellowship with God, yes. But it is not us bringing God down to our level but it is God bringing us up to His level as God. He meets with us in worship, yes. But we stand in the presence of a holy God, and He seeks us in worship, we do not seek Him. It is by a miracle and a wonder, through the blood of Jesus Christ, that we are able to come into the presence of God, and He seeks such to worship Him who worship Him in spirit and in truth.

So the principle that the Protestant churches and the Reformed churches have set on worship is this from Scripture, that whatsoever is not commanded by God in worship is forbidden. So Reformed churches, throughout history, have had a careful liturgy for their worship—an order in their worship—and they have

examined each of the elements of worship and asked this question: Has God commanded this in Scripture? There is no need for us to become creative as we come before God in worship. God has expressly set down in Scripture how we are to worship Him, and we follow that pattern as a church as we come before Him in worship.

So, the question is: What are

the biblically prescribed elements for worship? Basically, there are three.

The first is prayer, corporate prayer. Prayer is not only intended by God for the individual,

but prayer is intended by God for the church corporately. So Jesus teaches us in the Lord's Prayer to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven." That is the prayer of the church, that is the expression of believers together. So the early church gathered together for prayer (Acts 2:42) and prayed for the Spirit, or prayed for the needs of God's people as Peter was in prison. When we gather for worship, the minister prays. But that is not a personal prayer. It is a representative prayer. It is the minister bringing the

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He says, "Worship me alone." Worship is not limited to what you do in a church service but involves your whole life. So, each of these actions is worthy of our consideration and meditation.

First, to worship God is to know Him, to have a right and proper knowledge of Him. This knowledge must come from the Scriptures. Only in the Scriptures can we know God. God is not what we feel He is or what we think He might be. He is not some abstract unknown idea. He is not to be discovered through science or reason. But to know God is to know Him as He has revealed Himself in His Word and by His Son. Do you know God?

Second, to worship God is to trust in Him. Perhaps this is the real test of whether one worships the true God. From day to day, are we trusting in the Lord, or are we leaning on our own understanding (Prov. 3:5, 6)? What is it that gives you security as you go through life? Is it yourself, your friends, your money, your job, your family, your education, your insurance policies, and so on? God is almighty, He is faithful, He is true, and He is trustworthy. He keeps His promises. And He will never fail His people. So He calls us to put all our trust in Him. Do you trust in God?

Third, to worship God is to submit to Him and to do this

humbly and patiently. This means not only that we must obey His commandments, but especially that we must submit to the providence of God in our lives. Life can be difficult, and God's people can be put through some severe trials of persecution, of grief, of sickness, of poverty, of anxiety, and so on. These are real experiences for God's people. But God sends them, and with humility we recognize that we deserve no better. With patience, we trust that God knows what is best for us. Do you patiently submit to God?

Fourth, to worship God is to expect all good things from Him alone. On what is it that you pin your hopes? In what do you find joy and solace in life? In Philippians 4 the apostle says, "Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice." Our God is the God of goodness and blessing, the overflowing fountain of all good. We must look to Him, and not to any creature, for true happiness and fulfillment both in this life and for the next. Do you put your hope in God alone?

In the fifth place, to worship God is to love Him. Our love for God should be total—"with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength." Every ounce of your being, every part of your existence, must be used to love God. This love should be willing; it should be sacrificial; it should be

dedicated; and it should be exclusive. We must be consumed with God. Do you love God with all your being?

In the sixth place, to worship God is to fear Him. To fear the Lord is to have a constant consciousness of who He is, in all His heaven-

ly majesty,  
and to know  
who you  
are before  
Him. John  
Calvin said  
that this is

*This love should be willing;  
it should be sacrificial;  
it should be dedicated;  
and it should be exclusive.*

all that a man needs to really know: God and himself. The one who fears the Lord is directed in every action, thought, and word by the awareness of God. He lives before God. Do you fear the Lord?

In the seventh place, to worship God is to glorify Him. To glorify God is to put Him first, to see that He gets all the recognition in everything that we do. We are not here for ourselves, but God has made us for Himself. How easily we forget this and live for our own reputation or our own pleasure. But the Scriptures say, “of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen” (Rom. 11:36). Do you live for God’s glory?

Then, in the eighth place, to worship God is to obey Him. When we acknowledge that He is God alone, we will give ourselves

in total obedience to His will. We will be careful and we will be meticulous in both our public and private life not to commit the least thing that goes against His commandments. That does not mean that we are sinless, it does not mean that we are perfect. But it does mean that we de-

sire to be  
governed  
in all our  
words  
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thoughts

by the knowledge, the reality, of God. Do you obey God in obedience to this commandment?

As we conclude this message, I call your attention to the fact that because there is only one God, there is also only one Savior. This commandment, in teaching us that Jehovah is God alone, brings us to Jesus Christ, the only Savior and demands that we put our faith and trust in Him alone for salvation. Anyone who denies that Jesus Christ is the Savior and the Son of God does not obey this first commandment.

The Scriptures tell us that God is jealous of His worship. In Isaiah 42:8, He says, “I am the LORD: that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.” Yet, at the same time, the Bible says of Jesus in Hebrews 1:6 (this is a quote from the Old

ship—that worship is not something external, it is not simply a going through the motions of external worship, but that worship is deeply spiritual—it is a matter of faith. God demands not just practicing worship, but He demands a heart. This brings us back to the basic requirement of the Law and that is that we love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This is important for us because, as we think about worship, we must realize that sometimes in our worship of God, even as we gather with the church in worship or as we think about God in our own minds, we do create images of God or we do not worship God as we should in a spiritual way. When I say that we create images of God, I mean that sometimes our ideas of God are not correct. For example, in Isaiah 40, Judah was saying that God did not see her affliction. Or she said, later in the prophecy of Isaiah, that God’s arm was too short to reach them in order to save them. Sometimes we think the same thing: God does not see our problems; God does not have the strength to deliver me from my sins or my troubles; and we form an image, in our mind, of God. Or, we might go simply through the outward practices of worship without truly engaging, in our hearts and in our minds, with the Word of God, so that in faith we believe in God and

worship Him. That is the second principle: God is Spirit, and He must be worshiped in spirit.

But in John 4 Jesus also says that God must be worshiped in truth. This also fits with the second commandment. The reason that we may not worship God with images is that images are not true representations of God. The only way we should worship God, then, is the way that He has commanded us. That is what Jesus means when He says that we must worship Him in truth. Here it is important to see that God not only demands the fact of worship, *that* we worship Him, but God also places demands on the form of worship, *how* we worship Him. Our worship must reflect the character and the glory and the majesty of God. The alternative is that man worships God according to his own will, not according to God’s will. Then man comes to God with this kind of an attitude: “I’ll bring to God whatever I think or whatever I want.” You have an example of this very early in Scripture when Cain and Abel brought their sacrifices to God. Abel brought what God had demanded—a sheep—for a sacrifice. But Cain brought of the fruit of his own hands and the work of his own hands. This kind of worship, will-worship it is called, has a history in the church. Rome worships God with images, and it argues that the images are a way to repre-

spiritual. It is a spiritual activity. Behind each of the Ten Commandments in the law of God, there is a principle or a truth regarding God. The Law is not only a revelation of what we should be or what God requires of us, but it is a revelation also of the character of God. In the first commandment, we see that God is unique, that there is no other god. In the fifth commandment, we will see that God is a God who possesses all authority and that He demands, in relationships, that we honor His authority by honoring those whom He places over us. In the ninth commandment, when God demands that we tell the truth, we will see that God is a God of truth, that God is the standard for what is true.

In this second commandment, we see that God is a Spirit. The reason that we may not worship God or represent God by images and that God forbids such worship is that God is a Spirit. Jesus expresses this in the Gospel According to John 4:24 and 25 when He says to the woman at the well: "God is Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." When we say that God is Spirit, we mean, in the

first place, that God is invisible, that He is an invisible Being. He does not have a physical form. We mean, in the second place, that God is a Spirit, distinct from all other spirits. Angels also are spiritual beings, but God is infinite and so the omnipresent Spirit. The Scriptures teach us that, as the infinite

One, God is One who dwells in a light to which no man can approach. They tell us also that as a Spirit God cannot be represented. We see this, for example, in Deuteronomy 4:15, where Moses says to the people: "Take ye, therefore, good heed unto yourselves, for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spoke unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire, lest ye corrupt yourselves and make you a graven image." Moses' point is, you saw nothing when God delivered the Law from the mountain except for smoke and fire, and that was not just to cover up and to hide the being of God, but it represented that God is majestic and glorious, more glorious than man could ever see or comprehend.

What we learn in the second commandment, then, as we think about God as a spirit is that God demands a deeply spiritual expression in wor-

Testament), "Let all the angels of God worship him." Jehovah says, "I am jealous of my worship," and then the Scriptures say, "Let the angels worship him [that is, Jesus]." If we follow simple logic, our conclusion must be that Christ is worthy of worship because He is God alone.

It is in that light that we must read this first command-

ment. To worship God is to believe in Jesus Christ, His Son. Jesus says in John 14:1, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." Thomas says in response to Jesus' resurrection from the dead: "My Lord and my God." It is by believing in Jesus Christ that we worship the true God. We believe in Jesus for salvation from sin. We trust in Him alone and no else for our forgiveness and righteousness.

Believing in Jesus Christ means that we flee all idolatry. We do not put our trust in any creature. We do not place our confidence in ourselves or what we accomplish. But we put our confidence in God alone as He has revealed Himself in His Son Jesus Christ. Do you do that? Do you believe in Jesus Christ alone

for your salvation? Are you trusting yourself or something else other than Christ for your righteousness and acceptance with God?

When God says, "Worship Me alone," He is saying, "Believe on My Son, Jesus Christ, as the only way to the Father."

Anyone who denies that Jesus Christ is the Savior and the Son of God does not obey this first commandment.

May the Lord grant that we have such a faith.

Let us pray.

Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast made Thyself known as God to us—the only God who has condescended and revealed Thyself, and especially revealed Thyself to us in Thy Son Jesus Christ, so that we have a way of acceptance and righteousness and forgiveness and being received in Thy presence. Turn our hearts, Father, away from all the things of this earth, so that our exclusive goal and our exclusive trust may be in Thee and in things eternal. Forgive us for the sins that we commit against this commandment, too. We pray it, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

## THE REFORMED WITNESS HOUR

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*The True Worship of God*  
*Rev. Rodney Kleyn*

Dear Radio Friends,

In our previous message, we began to look at the Ten Commandments of the law of God as they are given to us in Exodus 20. Today I want to look with you at the second of those commandments. We read that from Exodus 20:4-6. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."

At the outset, I want to notice two things with you about this commandment. The first is that it has special application to the church. The first commandment says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." It speaks to all of humanity—also those who worship strange gods—and addresses their sin. In the second commandment, God speaks to the church; He speaks to those

who worship Him, and He tells them how they are to worship Him—without graven images.

The other thing that we notice in this commandment at the outset is the seriousness with which God takes the breaking of this commandment. He says, "I the LORD thy God am a jealous God." He is jealous of *how* He is worshiped, not only *that* He is worshiped. And He speaks of judgment on those who do not worship Him in the proper way, and a blessing on those who do. We will return to this at the end of our message.

As we look at this commandment, we see three principles about worship that we want to examine.

The first is this: that God demands that we worship Him corporately. That is, God demands that we worship Him with other believers. The demand for worship really comes already in the first commandment when God says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Last week already we saw a number of different ways that we worship God: we trusted Him, we believe on Him, we confess

Him, we know Him, and so on. The second commandment is addressed to the church of God. Worship is not only an individual thing. Too often today someone will say, "I don't really need to worship with the church," or "I don't really need to worship God on a Sunday," or "I don't really need to hear the Word of God in the preaching. If I go out on the weekends and enjoy myself in nature, I see the wonder of God around me and I worship Him there."

But God has revealed Himself in a special way in His Word, and in the Word we find the saving revelation of God which is Jesus Christ, and God has given the church the commission to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is there especially that we find the revelation of God and the way to worship Him. We must worship Him according to His Word. And we are to do this with fellow believers. This commandment is addressed to the nation of Israel. It concerns not just individuals, but this is a commandment that tells *Israel* how they are to worship Him. You remember that it was *Israel* who worshiped God in the golden calves. And God is addressing exactly that kind of sin that the nation may be involved in.

So, this is a special word for the church today. We need the church. One of the things that God reveals about Himself is that He gathers a church. The

church is called the "body" of Jesus Christ. In that church God distributes gifts to the different members of the church, and the blessing for God's people comes through their place in the body of Jesus Christ. How impossible to say, "I'm a member of Christ," but to not be a part of His body as it comes to expression here on earth in the church.

The New Testament teaches us that God has set up an order for the church, that He has established officers in the church and elders in the church. The pattern in the New Testament church was that she gathered corporately. We see this in Acts when we read about different congregations that were established as the church expanded through the preaching of the gospel. There is even this, that the church is called in the New Testament the temple of God. Paul says to the church at Corinth: "You are the temple of God." So, when believers gather together and the Spirit of Christ is with them, then the church becomes, and is in a special way, the dwelling place of God. Hebrews 10:25 says to us that we should not forsake the gathering of our souls together as the manner of some is. We ought not come up with excuses for not gathering with the church of God for worship.

The second principle that we want to set forth regarding worship here is that worship is