

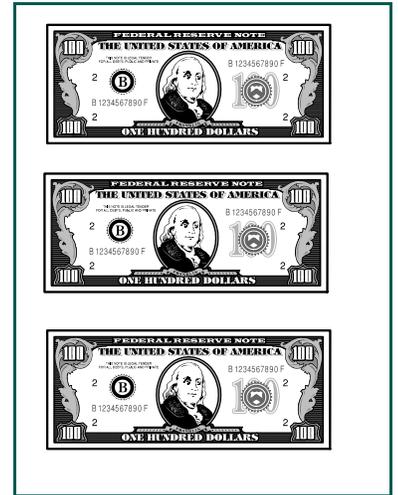
The Golden Calf

Exodus 24:12-18; 31:18 - 32:35; 34:1-7, 28-33

Look at the money pictured at the right.
How can this be a problem for Christians and others?
Which of God's commandments deals with loving anything more than God?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, help me to see how easy it is for things to become more important to me than You are. May I through the power of the Holy Spirit fear, love and trust in You above all things. Bless the Word we are about to study that we may grow in knowledge of You. Amen.



The Story - Exodus 24, 31, 34 excerpts

The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to Me on Mt. Sinai and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them."

So Moses went up to the mountain of God with his assistant, Joshua. Before he left Moses said to the elders, "Wait here for us until we come back to you. Aaron and Hur are with you. If any man has a difficulty, let him go to them."

Then Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain for six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. The sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel. So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

After God spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of stone. God wrote His commandments on these

stones.

The people grew restless waiting for Moses those forty days. They came to Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods that shall go before us. We do not know what has become of Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt."

Aaron said to them, "Bring me your golden earrings." So all the people brought their gold to Aaron and he fashioned it and made a molded calf of gold.

Then they said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!"

Aaron also built an altar before it. Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, ate and drank, and did sinful idol worship before the golden calf.

The LORD said to Moses, "Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves. They have turned aside quickly



out of the way which I commanded them. They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!'"

The LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and I will destroy them and make of you a great nation."

Then Moses pleaded with the LORD his God, and said: "LORD, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians speak, and say, 'He brought them out to harm them, to kill them in the mountains?' Turn from Your fierce wrath, and relent from this harm to Your people.

Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'" So the LORD relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people.

And Moses turned and went down from the mountain, and the two tablets of the Testimony were in his hand. The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God engraved on the tablets. The tablets were written on both sides.

When Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, "There is a noise of war in the camp."

But Moses said: "It is not the noise of the shout of victory, nor of defeat, but the sound of singing I hear."

When they came near the camp, they saw the calf and the dancing. In his great anger Moses cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. Then he took the calf which they had made, burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder; and he scattered it on the water and made the children of Israel drink it.

Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you that you have brought so

great a sin upon them?"

So Aaron said, "Do not be angry. You know how evil these people can be."

Then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, "Whoever is on the Lord's side come to me." And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him.

Moses told these sons of Levi to kill those who still wanted to worship the golden calf. About three thousand men were killed.

Then Moses said, "Consecrate yourselves today to the LORD, that He may bestow on you a blessing this day."

The next day Moses and the people prayed to the LORD to forgive them their sin of idol worship. God forgave them but did send a plague to the people because of this sin against the First Commandment, the sin of worshiping the golden calf as an idol.

The LORD said to Moses, "Cut two tablets of stone like the first ones, and I will write on these tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke. Come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself to Me there on the top of the mountain. Let no man or animal be near the mountain."

Moses did as the LORD said and he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And the LORD wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the Testimony, the skin of his face shone from talking with the LORD.

When Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses they were afraid to come near him. Then Moses gave them the tablets containing the LORD's Commandments and told them all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai.

When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face.

Outer Aim - The children of Israel committed the sin of Idolatry.

What the Story Tells Us - Make these false statements true by crossing out the incorrect word(s) and writing the correct word(s) above them.

1. Moses went up Mt. Horeb to receive God's commandments.
2. Joshua and Hur were left in charge of the people.
3. Moses stayed on the mountain 25 days and nights.
4. The people wanted Aaron to make them some food.
5. Aaron made a golden snake for them to worship.
6. When Moses saw the people worshipping the false god he threw down the two tablets of plastic.
7. The sons of Daniel helped Moses find and kill those who still worshiped the idol.
8. God told Aaron to come again to Mt. Sinai for new tablets of commandments.
9. Moses face disappeared after he had spoken to the LORD.
10. God gave the 7 Commandments for all people to obey.

Inner Aim - God commands that He be the most important thing in our lives.

What God's Word Tells Us - Compare our God and idols by reading Psalm 115:3-4 and answer the questions.

Psalms 115:3-4 - But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

1. Where is our God?
2. What does the true God do?
3. Of what are idols made?
4. Who made idols?

Your Turn - Think about Moses and Aaron. Compare how they were either good or poor leaders of God's people.

What did Aaron do that showed he was a poor leader of God's people while Moses was on Mt. Sinai?

How did Moses show he was a good leader of God's people in this lesson? (Try to name at least 2 examples.)

Passages

Exodus 20:3 You shall have no other gods before Me.

Matthew 4:10 Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"

The First Commandment

You shall have no other gods.

What does this mean?

We should fear, love and trust in God above all things.

(Sydow Catechism © 2000)

Hymn - TLH 430 v. 1, 4, 8 Use a highlighter or light crayon to highlight each name of Jesus.

What is the world to me with all its vaunted
pleasure

When Thou, and Thou alone, Lord Jesus, art
my Treasure!

Thou only, dearest Lord, my soul's Delight
shalt be;

Thou art my Peace, my Rest — what is the
world to me!

The world seeks after wealth and all that
Mammon offers,

Yet never is content tho' gold should fill its
coffers.

I have a higher good, content with it I'll be:

My Jesus is my Wealth — what is the world to
me!

What is the world to me! My Jesus is my
Treasure,

My Life, my Health, my Wealth, my Friend, my
Love, my Pleasure,

My Joy, my Crown, my All, my Bliss eternally.

Once more, then, I declare: what is the world
to me!

Prayer

Dear Jesus, today we learned about how quickly God's people turned to other gods. Keep anything from becoming more important to us than Jesus and His Word. Take care of us and our families today. We thank You that You love us enough to forgive us when we do forget about You and do bad things. Thank You for sending Jesus to be our Savior from sin. Amen.