

Read: Exodus 32:15-29

Stop the Chaos!

Exodus 32:19

When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Imagine this: A very relaxed Moses comes down Mt. Sinai after an amazing experience of seeing God face to face. But his mood changed when he heard and saw people singing, dancing, and worshiping the idol of a golden calf. Praises meant for the true God were now given to a golden, man-made god that their Egyptian captors had worshiped!

Now imagine the eyes of Moses burning with righteous anger as he raises his arms above his head to smash the tablets of stone that contained the Ten Commandments. It's time to stop the chaos!

The First Commandment is found in Exodus 20:3. God says, "You shall have no other gods before me." There are severe consequences for the sin of worshiping an idol, a thing that cannot love or save. Three thousand people died because they did not repent of their sin and did not turn back to the ways of the Lord.

Are there "idols" in your life? If God entered your home and saw all the things that we spend our time with, what idols (gods) would he see? An idol is anything that can take our time, our attention, and our gifts away from the true God. It could be a toy, pet, sport, hobby, television, reading, music, phone, friends, and games.

It's time to stop the chaos!

God says: "I am more important than these things! You are *my* child; I give you life and breath! I want you to be with me in heaven for eternity and not in hell! I want you to enjoy a long life on this earth with me as your first priority! Everything will work out for your good when you stop putting things before me and stop the chaos! Listen to my words of love and forgiveness in the Bible, and spend time with me in prayer. I know you; I listen to your desires and needs! I am here to catch your worries and anxieties when you throw them at me. I will take care of you and be with you! Come and worship me! Stop the chaos of putting things before me! I love you!"

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- What is the First Commandment?
- What did the Israelites worship instead of the true God?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- What were the consequences for the Israelites that did not turn to the true God?
- Identify at least three things in your life that could become an idol if you're not careful.

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Agree or disagree: God is trying to scare us into obedience when he threatens us with death as a consequence of idolatry.
- True or false: There is not a golden calf in your life that was able to separate or stop Jesus' love for you on the cross.

Closing Prayer:

Dear Lord please help me to keep your First Commandment because you are my first priority! Help me to stop the chaos and make time for you first. Amen.