

Week 3: Exodus 20.1-6

This week's message deals with the "angry God," an idol common in our day. The overall point is to show God for who He is in relationship, to discuss His jealousy over us and His mercy.

Icebreaker: Consider watching one or more of these videos which demonstrate the perception that Christianity is about an "angry God":

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4TAtRCJIqnk&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DDSj8sv0uKs&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-8GIEQjqW8>

1. Read Exodus 20.1-6. What is the foundational issue behind the first two commandments? Why do you think God makes such an issue of idolatry? See Psalm 115.4-8, especially verse 8.
2. George Bernard Shaw once said "God created man in His image and then man returned the favor." It is often said that people worship a God who fits in well with their own father or family background. Do you agree?
3. In the sermon Bob said that the "angry God" is one of the most common idols, or misrepresentations of God. Do you agree? If so, why do you think that is the case?
4. In the sermon holiness was described as identity, morality, and zealousness in relationship, in that order. Read the story of Jesus healing a man with a withered hand in Mark 3.1-6. In verse 5 the TNIV says that Jesus was "deeply distressed." The Greek can be reasonably translated as anger (see the NASB of the same verse). Who or what does Jesus identify with in the story? Does this tell us anything about Jesus identifying with us? What is the morality displayed by Jesus? (*answer – it is a morality of mercy rather than a morality of judgment as displayed by the Pharisees*). What is the morality displayed by the Pharisees? Does this tell us anything about the kind of morality we should display? Compare Jesus anger with that of the Pharisees. Which is more like your anger?
5. Bob said that the key to holiness is devotion, that we can turn to God in times of weakness and failure and receive strength. Does this make sense to you? Can you think of some specific ways this might work out?
6. Pray for each other in specific areas to "be holy as I am holy."