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Exodus 32:1-9. These are God's words. Now, when the people saw That Moses delayed coming down from the mountain. The people gathered together to Aaron and said to him. Tom 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 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. The fashioned it with an engraving tool and made a molded calf. Then they said, this is your god. Who is rule? That brought you out of the land of Egypt. So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it and Aaron made a proclamation and said tomorrow is a feast.

To your way. Then they rose early on the next day. Offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat to drink, And rose up to play. And Yahweh said to Moses. 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 of Israel. That brought you out of the land of Egypt. And you always said to Moses, I have seen This people.

And indeed it is a stiff neck. People.

So far the reading of god's inspired and And they're into it.

The Lord Jesus gives us the only way of coming to him. God gives us the only way of coming to him and the Lord Jesus Christ. It is by grace alone, through faith alone. That we are saved. We cannot come up with the way. Of coming to God. Any more than we can be God any more than we can attend for sin, any more than we can produce righteousness, any more than we can produce by our own power life in ourselves.

The only way to come to God is in the way that he is provided, in the way that he is said. This is why when Jesus was At the, well, with the woman. And she really did not want to talk about how many husbands she had had or whether the one that she had now was even her husband.

She changed the topic. To a theological. Dispute between the Samaritans, which she was in the Jew, which she had perceived the Lord Jesus to be. And asked whether they should worship at the mountain, or at the temple. Cuz after all God was the one who had gathered Israel up on a mountain.

And give them a tabernacle. And she thought that, The temple was. Something unique to the house of David, from which the northern tribes have been broken apart and that she had the true in ancient religion on her side. The traditions of her father's and even her father, Jacob, who had dug the well.

At which they were speaking. And yet Jesus made clear that it's not the ancientness of tradition or the human people who are associated with the worship, but that the worship would be according to the word of God. I said the Jews are right. Salvation is from the juice.

Salvation coming of course, by the word that was given. And she understanding that it's a Verbal revelation question said, oh well, when the Christ comes He will tell us all things. Jesus told her, of course, prior to that that the question of the mountain or the temple didn't matter anymore.

Because the hour was coming and was now coming when those who worship, God had to worship him in spirit and in truth, and in part, Because the worship leader that God had appointed. Who was standing in front of her at the time, or sitting with her at the time.

Was about to die rise again from the dead and ascendant to heaven. And he was not going to be leading the worship of God's people. Either on a mountain. Or. From a physical temple on earth, he was going to be leading it from glory. By his spirit by his word.

And they could only worship God through faith in Jesus Christ because that's the only way we have access to Jesus. Jesus, who said to The apostle. The apostles. At the end of the gospel of John. Oh, after Thomas said gotten to see him and believed And they said, Having seen me, you believe.

Buster those who haven't seen me and believe. That would be everyone of you who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus of whom Peter said him. We not having seen, isn't it interesting? Hey Peter, Peter had seen him. Peter had seen him perhaps more than anyone else on earth, say, perhaps his brother John at the time.

Him whom not having seen you love. We love him. And we have not seen, we believe in him. And we have not seen. This is the essence of the Christian life and this is the essence of Christian worship. This is the reason that the faith chapter from which we have quoted, Hebrews chapter 11, which tells us that faith is evidence in certainty of things, invisible and things.

Not yet this is why it appears in the book of Hebrews. The Book of Hebrews is an entire book. About how when Jesus had attained for our sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high and from there, he leads our worship. He has gone with his blood into that of which the holy of holies was a copy.

And now he leads the preaching and he leads the singing and he leads the suffering at his table. He leads the praying, he leads all of the worship of his gathered people on earth which is why you must never forsake the assembling of yourselves together on earth because there's no other place that you have the same access to the worship in heaven.

Then in the sacred assembly. That are great. High priest, leads from glory. But we have a problem. It requires faith. You can't see Jesus's face. You can't hear Jesus's. Voice. Don't mean the inner voice by which his spirit affirms. Do you like we heard this morning in the preaching how For those who believe they remember.

Those times and the Lord blessing to us, may it increase and be weekly for us where you're listening to the word of God preached and you suddenly become aware That God himself christ himself is, addressing you. As you listen to this preaching. That's the Lord Jesus by his spirit using the words, which he recorded on the page, which are his very own words.

Is addressing your soul. And speaking to you, And you're under obligation. To hear and believe whatever he teaches you and obey whatever he commands. But we can't hear that voice. Vibrating our eardrums. We do not see his face, he is not perceptible. To our senses. Well, that was the problem.

In Exodus chapter 32, that's what led to this dreadful incident. With the golden calf and does the Holy spirit carries Moses along to write this. He gives us what's called an inclusio. He gives us the same sort of language at the beginning, and at the end, The people see that Moses's delayed in verse 1.

And you always says to Moses, I have seen this people Yahweh says, I have seen this people. In verse 9. And that corresponds to inverse 1 with the people. Saying, 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.

So God, they cannot see, but Moses. They used to be able to see But now Moses, they cannot see either. And so, they're saying to Aaron. We believe that God has brought us out of the land of Egypt. We believe that Yahweh has delivered us out of the house of slavery, out of the land of Egypt, out of the houses, out of the house of bondage.

But we need something that we can see. Come make for us. Something visible. That will go before us.

They're not content to know God by faith. To know God and the way that God has given them to Know him. They want to walk. By sight.

But dear Christian. The reality of our God, the reality of our lord, Jesus Christ, the reality of his salvation, the reality of the access that we have to him in worship and the fellowship that we have with God and with Christ, The fellowship that we have with God in Christ and worship is one that can only be perceived by faith.

Cannot be perceived by sight. And so when we come to Exodus 32 versus 1 through 9, we come to something that's very relevant for us. Because as we know, we've just spent many weeks, haven't, we considering God's plan for them to give them something tangible? Who's mercifully, giving them a tabernacle and a bronze altar with sacrifices, that would be, that would be Offered on that altar to point forward to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And they would know about the, the lampstand and the table with the showbread and the ark, and the holy of holies and the atonement cover of the ark and the chair beam that were built into the cover of the ark and God had given them. All of those things that have taught us still all of those wonderful things about the finished work of Christ.

Christ is our tabernacle on Christ, is our priest and Christ is our sacrifice Christ is the one in whom the smile of God shines upon us. Christ is the one in whom we have fellowship with God. Like the table fellowship that men can have with bread Christ. Is the one who is the aroma that pleases God.

And who anoints us and sets us apart as holy and sanctifies us. And he had given them all of those pictures appointed forward to Christ. For us, he's removed. Many of those things, hasn't he He's just giving us Christ. Was giving us Christ by his word and his sacrament, but the sacraments are very unimpressive.

A little bit of water poured out. Or if you don't see that. We baptized with water and Christ baptizes of the Holy spirit. You get a little bit more water. But you dip into It's really not that much more. Just makes it a little more difficult. And the meal.

Little bit of bread, little bit of wine. No, some of sometimes we tried to divide the The number is exactly so that everyone can have as big a bit of bread as possible. That might mean, you get a bite and a half, instead of a half a bite. A little bit of wine.

It's really not much, is it? And even when we come, What do we, what do we what are we reminded of? As we come to the table every week? You can't feed upon Christ and have fellowship with Christ and we confirmed in Christ. By what you do with your mouth.

Faith must receive him. You're to do this and remembrance of him. Not in quantity of bread or in quantity of wine quality of greater wine.

And so, there's This danger. That having to walk by faith presents. And that danger is. That if we add it all to what God has said, if we had it all to the way that God has given us to worship him, we will have something that has the appearance of wisdom, but lacks its power.

The appearance of godliness. But lacks the power of God. And indeed we will provoke God's wrath even by the worship that we offer. And that self-directed worship. Becomes not just a self-indulgent worship. But worship that forms a self-indulgent. Life. And that when we add anything, we lose. Everything. When we add anything.

We lose. Everything. So the first place,

Having an appearance of wisdom. If we worship by sight instead of by faith, if we add to what God has given us, We may do things that have an appearance of wisdom or even have a form of godliness. It's not so much a form of God, it's just an appearance of wisdom but it lacks its power.

And it provokes, God's wrath. The people see that Moses always been coming down. They say, as for this Moses, we do not know what has become of him. They make this request to Aaron. They say, you know what, Aaron? I don't like this worship. Well, I'd like worship that that does more for me that what we're doing now.

Just it doesn't do anything for me. Because it's most this Moses, we don't know what's become of him. An Aaron replies to them, he doesn't reply to them. Yes, but Moses is the mediator of the covenant and we've already heard the words of God. And the reason he went was Was to hear God's words and and bring them back to us and so we can't do anything without the word of God.

So we'll just wait. Until you returns. No Moses. Sorry Aaron responds with what seems like wisdom. Aaron says to them. Break off the golden earrings. He's going to lead the entire community in sacrificial giving He doesn't say okay, I will make something for you. He says, no this should be something we all do together.

He leads the community of the redeemed to give sacrificially. And he highlights the role of the husband and the father. Verse 2 still break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives and your sons and your daughters. And so in this, this community project of sprucing up the worship of god, not only is everyone going to give sacrificially, but the dads are going to leave their families.

Husbands are going to leave their wives. And they're not just going to give that which is Valuable that because it's, it's gold. But that which has meaning Even as they heard in the book of the covenant, you remember back in chapter 21 and verse 6 and the Those parts of the case law that were given in the book of the Covenant and the ear piercing ceremony.

If a slave wanted to be in the house forever. Is going to use that, which was symbolic of wanting to be in God's house forever and to belong to him and have him as master who brought me out of Egypt, rather than the Egyptians as masters from whom. He delivered me indeed, not only.

Not only does Aaron make this collection in versus two and three, but then he uses his skill and just as we heard last week, it's spirit given skill. After all. Does Aaron not have this ability in in smelting gold and in fashioning it and then and then tooling it finally at the end.

Does he have this skill for no purpose? Surely the holy spirit has given us all the wisdom that we have. And Aaron has these skills. And here's the brother of Moses, after all, He's going to be anointed by priest. Not too many days from now.

And then they're going to celebrate Redemption. They're going to celebrate the redemption of God. They say, this is your God of Israel. Who brought you out of the land of Egypt?

Not only do they celebrate redemption. They do it as a worshiping of Yahweh. They institute a feast for the worship of Yahweh. So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it Aaron made a proclamation and said tomorrow. Is a feast to Yahweh. It appears. It appears wise, doesn't it?

You see? Errors and worship that provoke, the wrath of God, man-made additions to worship. Don't start out with Androgynous people who are picking their own pronouns. Doing interpretive dance. Some of you are laughing, I'm talking about something that Happened in the worship of a PCA church in New York.

Several years ago now. Or. The interpretive painting that. One of my dear wife's great friends from college, a sister college to Asbury. Same theology is Asbury. She was a. Beautiful blonde, girl. And she was so excited to let us know a couple years after we had graduated, how Her church had decided to put her up front, surprise, surprise.

So that she could paint her impressions of the sermon. And then she would sell off the painting. Tell him, give something for all the guys to do watch. Watch her, do the painting and then raise funds for the church. Worship errors. Usually don't start out that way. They usually start out with something that has more of the appearance of wisdom.

And those who add to what God has given us to worship. They say things like, But we should really celebrate the redemptive works of God. This is a feast to Jesus. Put Christ back into it. They say of things that Christ. Was never in. Never invented. Didn't give his people to do.

It has the appearance of wisdom. And, When we get to the end of the next point because the two go together, We'll see that not only does it lack its power so that it leads us to be more enslaved to sin rather than more freed from sin, which is supposed to be the result of the worship of God.

Not only, does it lack power against sin it positively provokes, God's wrath? How great is the fury of God? That will That we will consider next week. Lord sparing us Lord willing. And we'll see. God telling Moses. Let me alone. That my wrath may burn hot against them. In other words.

Oh, that's the third point. We'll get there in a moment. So, The Golden Calf has the appearance of wisdom. And that's one of the reasons why it has such staying power and first Kings 12, When durable and the son of knee batch is coming up with the calf worship at Bethel and Dan

instead of the temple of Solomon, which is going to come to be associated with the, the southern kingdom.

And with the family of David just like, we're thinking about a moment ago, in John 4 between Jesus and and the Samaritan. When Jerro bones coming up with it. He refers to the cast. As your god of Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. It is a way of worshiping Yahweh.

It's not meant to be a substitute. Because we're going to hear when you add anything, you lose everything. And by the time Jerome the sound of knee bat does that there's hundreds of years. Of tradition among the redeemed. People of god, celebrating his redemption in that way. I'm shortly many.

Of the Levi's too. By the way when Jeroboam came up with his whole new church calendar, and he came up with A new groups of priests the Levites ended up doing what moving south. They return to Judah and you can imagine a levite pleading with people To worship God.

And in the way that the god who actually saved us has has given us to come near to him and them saying, oh, come on, This liturgy has ancient tradition. For hundreds of years, it was started even by the man who was high priest. The first type priest, the pope of Israel.

Started these traditions. And we're celebrating the south. Don't you want to celebrate the Salvation of god? How can you be upset with us for doing that? It has. The appearance. Of wisdom. You know what else has the appearance of wisdom? You're in my measuring worship by what we can perceive.

That was a really good worship service today. How how do you know it made me feel good. Poor made me feel bad. I've run into those churches too. Once had to preach a whole second set of candidating sermons because I hadn't made the congregation feel badly enough, And so, this the session asked for Matthew 7 depart from me, I never knew you and Philippians 2 workout, your own Salvation, with fear, and trembling for the next time.

But worshiping with the songs we like or the kind of preaching we like and and deciding the value of worship by whether I Feel like going down there. Well, most of you going over there, for me going down there. Have from the Manson Hill. No, we must measure. The values of things by what God says, not what we can perceive.

The second place we find that the self-directed worship leads to self-indulgence. Verse 6. Is the verse that the apostle Paul by the spirit and 1 Corinthians, 10 actually picks to represent this entire incident. Then they rose early in the next day offered burnt offerings and offered and brought peace offerings.

And then he says And the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play. Now I'm sure there were some very sincere believers for whom the highlight of the day. Was the burnt offerings and the peace offerings? Did they got to see a tangible representation of atonement and deliverance and forgiveness?

And, you know, when when everybody else hit the buffet table and and got up and started having the the games and something like, no, this was supposed to be a feast to Yahweh. Let us dwell on how God has really saved us. But this is how it always evolves with man-made religion, it evolves that way with God's religion.

Where we can't wait to get the religious. The, the religious exercises out of the way so that we could do the stuff that we like instead. You get people who refer to just the eating time and the

chit chat as if that's fellowship. Forgetting that worshiping together through Christ in heaven, is the fellowship capital of the Lord's day.

With all of the other. Fellowship is also to be worshipful because it's the Lord's day. And so, They get the religious exercise out of the way early they get up early. The next day for 6:00 all for their burnt offerings all for their peace offerings. And then this is this is what Paul quotes.

And he's stringing together ways that the The wilderness generation. Which fell and was destroyed was to be an example for them.

It says. 1 Corinthians 10. Now, these things became our examples to the intent that we should not be like them after evil things, as they also lost it, and do not become like them as were some of them as it is written. The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.

And then he proceeds immediately to not let us commit sexual immorality as some of them did and one day 23,000 fell. So he goes on To the incident incident, with the motorbike women. The Midian. Bella King of Moabite women. In verse 8. So this is it from Exodus 32 when he talks about being idolaters, he says, the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.

Well, Why is it surprising? If they're observance, of Christ is self-indulgent. That their whole life would then become self-indulgent. That once had been given the lip service and the formal the formal do. The outward form of honor to the Lord, Jesus, the day, wouldn't for them. Really be about The food.

Especially if you're Middle Eastern. Or the entertainments. Especially if you belong to the American cult of. Football, which uses primarily dance?

Or it's really about the presence, isn't it? Kids. Because even those of you who learned to say it's about Jesus and maybe the Lord's delivered you from this, You don't spend. The months, you know, you don't start three days after the day saying, I cannot wait until we get to worship God again.

If you did, well, praise God. You only have four days left. But you're already next year for this day. Can I have this? Or maybe you've learned not to verbalize it to mom and dad three days after But you're thinking to yourself the whole year long, This is what I hope I get.

And then you you grow another 16 minutes and oh now this is what I hope I get. And whatever 16 minutes, you happen to be in the time that Mom and Dad are figuring it, you end up getting that The people sat down. To eat drink. And rose up to play.

That's because only the power of God can restrain sin. And the only way we can have God is in the ways that God has given us to have him. This was the point in Colossians 2. When God who had given them the tabernacle and the ceremonial system that they had had As shadows appointed forward to Christ.

Took them away. Why? Because he had now given them Christ, Christ himself, had come. And, The worship of God and the knowledge of God in Christ actually came through one, who was in heaven, not one who was on earth anymore. And so, he had replaced. I'm much more tangible expression of a religion that was still supposed to be by faith.

With one that was invisible. And so he says, Colossians 2. So let no one judge you and food or and drink, or regarding a festival, or a new moon, or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to

come, but the substance is of Christ. Okay. So, the things that they were adding to Had even as their substance then.

Christ. And now Christ the substance is coming. He takes away the shadow. Let no one cheat. You of your reward taking delight in false humility. And the worship of angels intruding into those things, which he has not. Seen vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind. Whenever we add anything to the worship that god has commanded.

We are vainly puffed, up in our fleshly minds. Thinking that we have access to heaven itself. And some other way, then what God has prescribed. Not holding fast to the head. That is Jesus. From whom all the body nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from god.

Therefore, if you died with christ from the basic principles of the world, why As the living in the world. Do you subject yourself to regulations? Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle. Which all concern things which parish with the using. According to the commandments and doctrines of men.

These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed Religion. False humility and neglect to the body. But are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh. Sometimes they're self-imposed religion with false humility and neglect to the body. Sometimes they're self-imposed religion. By adding something more, sensible, more more, perceptible more tangible.

To the worship by faith of the invisible. God. The worship that is through our savior, who is now invisible. To us. And the apostle says, That has no power. Against the indulgence of your flesh. So, don't be surprised. If in a church culture in which We worship the way we want the worship.

The way that pleases us, we had all sorts of things that feel and look more meaningful. God takes away incense, we had incense, God takes away candles, we add candles, God takes away decorations, we decorate, the room. Got takes away priests. We had. Priests got takes away sacrifices. We have a mass.

God takes away special buildings. We say. Oh, our building is special.

Don't be surprised. If we add to the worship of God, that, which is from us, and not from him, and then we find ourselves Unable to control. Or fleshly appetites. Unable to control our tongue. Unable to control the lust of the eyes. Unable to control. The desires. The disproportionate desires even after.

Good things. Is this in Colossians? You have Christ who is the substance of the divine religion. And instead. Are following self-imposed editions. Which have no power against the flesh. I mean, If I can come and reshape the worship of god to, please me. Is there anything in my life that I can't decide to reshape.

For in which to live for my pleasure.

No, when you add to the worship that God has given you, you lose everything. It's shocking, isn't it the language that you uses in verse 7? When you add anything, you lose everything. You always said to Moses, go get down for your people who you have brought up out of the land of Egypt.

This is the god who says my people Whom I have brought up out of the land of Egypt. But they want to have him. Visibly. They lost Moses. So they thought or couldn't see him for a while. And so, they wanted to come up with a different way of having God.

Well, Moses was not really the way that they had God. He was appointed by God, but God had given them himself. And when you and I Want something that is easier for us to perceive. What we're saying is God, as he has given himself is not good enough for me.

I want God as I would have him. Give himself to me.

And so, even the way he talks, basically says, They want a god, they can see. They want to be the people of a god. They can see fine. They're your people now. They're not mine anymore. They want to be saved. Delivered out of Egypt by a god. They can see fine.

Maybe saved out of Egypt by that cat. Not saved by me anymore.

We cannot add to the gospel. We cannot add to Christ. All of us know this, you know, it of course, if you're a believer because that was part of your coming to faith. Is when you said only Christ and nothing else. Christ, all of my righteousness Christ, all of my atonement Christ, all of my hope, all of my power, all of my life.

And many of us have spent years decades walking with Christ learning this lesson in our sanctification, haven't we? That even in the things that he's given us to do. We're unable to do those things. It must be the grace of Christ. Applied to us by the power of the spirit.

That actually grows us in goblinness. And all the other self-help junk. Is worthless to try. Because I haven't been given by the Christ whose power. It actually takes to sanctify someone.

You had anything you lose. Everything. Because now you're walking in your own way. Why does he say verse 7? They're your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt. Well, because they're not walking in God's ways, for say they have turned aside quickly. Out of the way, which I commanded them.

They're still at the bottom of the mountain. They're still waiting to receive orders. They just added a feast while they wait. But God refers to adding that feast. As turning aside quickly out of the way, which I've commanded them, they have made themselves a molded calf and worshiped, it and sacrifice to it.

And said this is your gato Israel that you brought out of the land of Egypt.

They may use the name Yahweh. But they don't have Yahweh himself. His name, they used.

We're going to do more but we've run long. God has actually saved us. And he has actually come in the person of the sun as a man. Who having obeyed having bled having bought us has taken his seat at the right hand of the majesty on high. And it is.

Whom we have. When we worship God and the simple way that he has given, And if we add anything, We threaten ourselves. We put ourselves in danger. Of losing everything. Man, let's pray.

Lord, have we thank you that you the living God have given yourself to men that The way, all of this ends is with the glorious, pronouncement. The dwelling place of god is with men. But there is no need for for a temple. Because you will be in that place.

We thank you that. Your son. Our savior. The Lord Jesus. Sits with. The scar evidences of our redemption. On the throne of glory. And we pray with God that you would give us the help of your spirit to stir up our faith. Because we are weak and we are foolish.

And being unable to perceive him like we wish we could. We are in constant danger of adding. To the purity and the simplicity of what you have given us. When that can't help our faith at all. Anyway. And so help us. We pray, we believe. Help our unbelief. We ask through Jesus.

Amen.