

The Golden Calf

Exodus 32:1-24 (optional: Exodus 34:1-5, 27-28)

Teacher Preparation

Read background materials from the Dole *Bible Study Notes*: <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/dbsn-2-12-the-golden-calf.pdf>

Introduction

Welcome the kids and ask them how they're doing.

Read and Discuss

1. Before doing today's reading, review the story of the Exodus.
 - Why were the Children of Israel in the wilderness? (returning to Canaan after being slaves in Egypt.) What did the Lord give them on Mt. Sinai? (the Ten Commandments) What made these rules different from other rules? (the Lord's rules, as opposed to people's rules) In what form did they get these rules? (2 stone tablets) Who wrote the words on the stone? (they were written by the finger of God himself) How many of the Ten Commandments can you remember?
2. Read *Exodus 32: 1-24* (optional: *Ex. 34: 1-5; 27-28*) Which commandment did the Children of Israel break? What did Moses do when he found out what they had done? It's interesting how we say that the Children of Israel "broke a commandment", and Moses "broke the commandments", but we don't mean that they did the same thing, do we? What was the punishment for the Children of Israel? (drinking the water with the ground-up/ashes of the golden calf in it)
3. Moses went up Mt. Sinai to get the Ten Commandments, but did you know that he went up several more times to receive more instructions from the Lord—like how to build the ark and the tabernacle. This time he was gone for longer—do you remember how long he was gone? (40 days)--and the Children of Israel worried that he might not come back. So they made an idol to worship like the ones they had seen in Egypt. We are tempted to think they were foolish, but let's think about this. How many times has an adult told you something that you've quickly forgotten, or stopped wanting to obey? How many times do we prefer to believe things that we can see and touch more than something that someone has told us is true? For instance, which do you believe: that candy is bad for you, or that something that tastes that good must **be** good? Or, how about the commandment to "honour you mother and your father". When you hear it, you know it's true, but what about when they tell you not to do stuff, or nag you about what you should be doing: which feels more right in the moment, quietly obeying them, or saying something rude? The children of Israel weren't just people who lived a long time ago, they are people that the Lord used to demonstrate things we **all** do and can learn from.
4. When was the last time you were tempted to worship an idol instead of the Lord? Probably never, right? But the first commandment really means that we need to make the Lord the **most** important thing in our lives—more important than anything else. Can you honestly say that the Lord is the most important thing in **your** life? What sort of things do we make more important than the Lord? How do we let these things get in the way of us loving the Lord?

Project

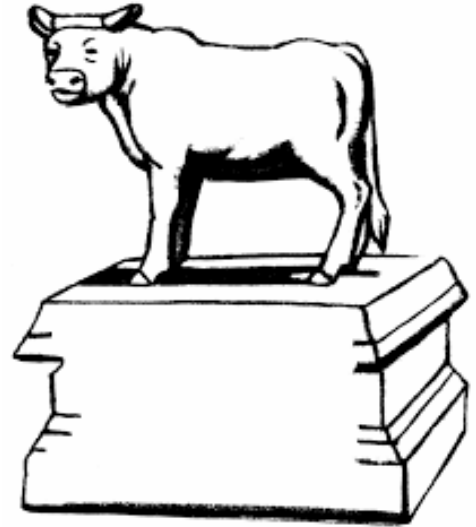
- Give each student a “False Gods” worksheet. Help them to fill out as many false gods as they can. Briefly discuss tactics for getting past these barriers to the Lord.
- If there is time to fill, have them do a word search.

Supplies

- Copy of the Word
- Print out (or be able to show the pictures on a device) a selection of these pictures illustrating the story from:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_calf#/media/File:Worshiping_the_golden_calf.jpg
<https://www.jw.org/en/library/books/bible-stories/3/golden-calf/>
<http://www.believetrust.com/bible/exodus-32-the-golden-calf/>
- Copy of the “False Gods” worksheet for each student
- Printout of wordsearch for each student: <https://biblepathwayadventures.com/activities/golden-calf/>
- Pencils and/or pens

False Gods

Make a list of “other gods” or “false gods”, adding to those listed below. Identify as many as you can think of, whether they apply to you or not. Then go back and identify those that do apply to you personally. What can you do to stop letting these things get in-between you and the Lord?



anger	sugar	control	self-pity
perfectionism	impatience		

My own personal false god: _____

What I can do to knock it down: _____
