



**Educate
+ Engage**



THE WAY
OUT



Nothing Else.

OVERVIEW

When we think about serving other gods, we usually picture people in the Bible bowing down to statues made of gold, wood, or stone. That seems strange to us now. We are not building golden calves today. But we are still tempted to make gods of our own.

The truth is, anything you put in God's place can become your god. It could be money. It could be popularity. It could be a relationship. It could even be your own version of God that you made up in your mind to suit what you want.

When we feel like God is taking too long or when we get desperate, we often try to make a shortcut by creating a god who will give us what we want right now. That is what the people of Israel did when they made the golden calf.

Scripture Passage

(See Exodus 32:1–35, KJV.)

EDUCATE

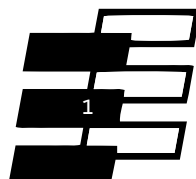
Point 1: When we get impatient, we start making our own gods.

(See Exodus 32:1–6.)

Moses was up on the mountain for a long time. The people of Israel got tired of waiting. They got scared. They got impatient. Instead of trusting God's timing, they demanded that Aaron make them a god they could see right now.

The golden calf was not a new idea. It was a copy of the false gods from other nations. Israel wanted what everyone else had. They wanted quick answers. They wanted a god who would move when they said so.

Why do you think it is so hard to wait on God's timing?



Lesson 4

Impatience can lead us to make bad decisions. When we do not want to wait on God, we start creating gods that we can control. We invent our own version of God who will let us do what we want.

Aaron gave in. He built the golden calf. But he tried to make it sound okay by calling it "The Lord." He tried to dress it up to make it seem right. But it was a lie.

Have you ever seen someone try to make something wrong sound right just to feel better about it?

The people jumped in fast. They started partying. They called it worship, but they were really just doing whatever they wanted.

When you make your own god, you can make your own rules. That is why people are tempted to create gods in their own image.

Point 2: You cannot change who God is.

(See Exodus 32:7–24.)

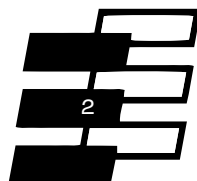
God was not happy. He told Moses that the people had already turned away. They were stubborn. They wanted to go their own way.

When Moses came down the mountain and saw what was happening, he knew this was not just a little mistake. This was a big deal. The people had traded the real God for something fake because they did not want to wait.

Why is it dangerous to try to make God fit what we want instead of following who He really is?

Moses was angry. Aaron tried to make excuses. He even told Moses that the golden calf just popped out of the fire on its own. That was not true. Aaron had made it on purpose.

People still make up false gods today. Sometimes people say things like, "My God would never say this is wrong" or "My God would never expect me to do that." But we do not get to change who God is. The only real picture of God is found in His Word.



Lesson 4

When we try to create our own version of God, we are not really worshiping Him anymore. We are just serving something we made up.

Why do people try to make God fit their own ideas instead of following what the Bible says.

Point 3: You have to choose sides.

(See Exodus 32:25–35.)

When Moses saw what was happening, he made a clear call. He asked, “Who is on the Lord’s side?” Only the tribe of Levi stepped up.

Sometimes we have to decide if we are going to stand with God or stand with the crowd. The Levites chose to stand for God, even when it cost them something. God later honored their decision by making them the tribe of priests.

Why is it sometimes hard to stand with God when everyone else is going the other way?

Moses told the people they had committed a great sin. He did not water it down. He did not call it a mistake. He called it what it was. He went back up the mountain to pray for them and to ask God to forgive them.

God forgave, but He still sent a punishment to remind them that sin always has consequences.

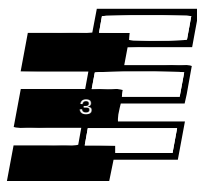
Even when we are forgiven, some choices can still leave scars. When we try to make a god in our own image, we end up hurting ourselves and others.

God is patient. God is kind. God is loving. But we cannot replace Him with something fake. God wants us to trust Him and wait on Him, even when it feels hard.

Closing

It can be tempting to build our own gods when we feel desperate, impatient, or scared. But our job is not to create God in our image. Our job is to follow the God who has already shown us who He is in His Word.

God is not going to be what we want Him to be. He is who He says He is.



ENGAGE

Let's pray together. Ask God to help you stay committed to the truth about who He is. Ask Him to help you trust His timing. If you have been creating your own version of God to fit what you want, ask God to help you come back to who He really is.

God's way is always the right way. He will always give you the way out.

