

The Ten: No Other Gods

Dr. John Carmichael

[Exo 20:1-3 NASB95] 1 Then God spoke all these words, saying, 2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 3 "You shall have no other gods before Me.

- Sex, money, power, video games... and the like. Idols are not always made of wood and stone.
- The Ten Commandments were given by God to His people as a foundation for holy living.
- We are going to see the authority and the goodness of God in the Ten.
- Notes:
 - Israel picked up a polytheistic (many gods) mindset from Egypt.
 - Other gods: No other real gods (1 Cor. 8:4). "Gods" or "gods" were creations of their own deception that were manipulated by demons. (Gal. 4:8)
 - Before Me: In addition to Me OR Against Me.
- Even in the New Testament, Jesus affirmed the greatest commandment: to love the Lord with all our heart (Matthew 22:37).
- In a world filled with distractions and competing priorities, it is crucial for Christians to ensure that nothing takes God's rightful place in our lives.

What does the first command mean to us today?

Here are four vital truths that the first commandment means for us today.

I. THE COMMAND TO WORSHIP GOD ALONE

- a. Exodus 20:3 – "You shall have no other gods before Me."
- b. [Deu 6:14-15 NASB95] 14 "You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you, 15 for the LORD your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise, the anger of the LORD your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth.
- c. God's command is clear: He alone is to be worshipped.
- d. Anything that we put before God—money, success, relationships—can become an idol.
- e. Solomon: Turned away from God long before he ever bowed down in front of any idols. Beginning: did not seek gold, power, or wives, only God's wisdom. Ending: Took longer to build his house (13 yrs 1 Kings 7:1) than God's (7 yrs 1 Kings 6:38b). Power - built an army of horses from Egypt (1 Kings 10:26-29) when God said no (Deut. 17:16). Had numerous godless wives (1 Kings 11:1-3).
- f. Jesus reinforced this truth in Matthew 4:10, rebuking Satan by saying, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."
- g. New Testament Christians: We must examine our lives and remove anything that competes with God for our devotion.

II. IDOLATRY IS NOT JUST PHYSICAL BUT SPIRITUAL

- a. [Col 3:5 NASB95] 5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.
- b. [1Jo 5:21 NASB95] 21 Little children, guard yourselves from idols.
- c. Idolatry is not just bowing to a statue—it is anything that takes God's place in our hearts.
- d. Greed, pride, materialism, or even our own desires can become idols.
- e. Jesus said in Matthew 6:24, "No man can serve two masters..." reminding us that we must choose God over worldly affections.

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- f. Two tests of idolatry in our lives. (Dr. Ryken, Written In Stone)
 - i. Who do you love?
 - 1. Origen (3rd century) – “What each one honors before all else, what before all things he admires and loves, this for him is God.”
 - 2. What do you desire? What do you think about? Spend money? Get excited about? Object of your affection?
 - ii. Who do you trust?
 - 1. Martin Luther – “Whatever thy heart clings to and relies upon, that is properly thy God.” AND Puritan Thomas Watson, “To trust in any thing more than God, is to make it a god.”
 - 2. When you are lonely, angry, tired – drugs, alcohol, sex, gaming, work, government, medicine. (Amnon, Tamar, hated her afterward, 2 Sam. 13) (King Asa, physicians instead of the Lord, 2 Chron. 16:12)
 - 3. God can use things, but He is the source.
- g. The idols do not work. They will leave you no better.
- h. Are there things do you love and trust other more than God?

III. JESUS CHRIST FULFILLED THIS COMMANDMENT PERFECTLY

- a. [Jhn 14:6 NASB95] 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.
- b. [Act 4:12 NASB95] 12 "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."
- c. Many religions and philosophies claim to lead to God, but only Jesus is the true way.
- d. When we worship anything other than Jesus Christ, we drift from the truth.
- e. The apostles boldly preached that salvation is in Christ alone.
- f. New Testament Christians: We must stand firm in our faith and proclaim Jesus as the only way to eternal life.

IV. THE GOODNESS OF GOD: HE DESIRES OUR BEST

- a. [Jas 1:17 NASB95] 17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.
- b. [Psa 84:11 NASB95] 11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly.
- c. God commands us to worship Him alone, not because He needs us, but because He knows what is best for us.
- d. When we put Him first, He blesses us with His presence, provision, and protection.
- e. Jesus promised in [Mat 6:33 NASB95] 33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
- f. New Testament Christians: Trusting in God alone leads to a life of peace, joy, and divine provision.

- **When we put God first in our lives we worship Him, loving Him and trusting Him instead of useless idols but allowing Him give us good things through Jesus Christ.**