

Exodus 20:1-3  
2011  
Matthew 6:24

Worship Only God

June 26,

“I am the Lord your God...You shall have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:2-3).  
“No one can serve two masters ...You cannot server both God and Money” (Matt. 6:24).

At the primary children room of the down stair at Bentleyville Church, I often notice the poster of the Ten Commandments for Children posted on the cabinet file. It starts:  
Worship only God. Do not make idols to worship. Do not use God’s name in a bad way. Keep the Sabbath day holy. Treat your parents with respect. Do not murder. Be faithful to your husband or wife. Do not steal. Do not tell lies about others. Do not want what someone else has (Exodus 20:1-19, adapted). Isn’t that nice?

Can you imagine what would happen if children learn those words and grow up? Can you imagine what our society would be different if people are reminded of those basic words teaching the relationship with God, parents, neighbor, and possession? Can you imagine how blessed people are, making a better society?

A father was approached by his small son who told him proudly, “I know what the Bible means!” His father smiled and replied, “What do you mean, you ‘know’ what the Bible means? The son replied, “I do know!” “Okay,” said his father. “What does the Bible mean?”

“That’s easy, Daddy ...” the young boy replied excitedly, “It starts for **\*Basic Information Before Leaving Earth.**”

The Bible places the Ten Commandments into the center of it – its core: **Basic Information living on Earth.** Nevertheless, we often forget as well as break those commandments consciously or unconsciously.

There was a very gracious lady who was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. “Is there anything breakable in here?” asked the postal clerk. “Only the Ten Commandments!!” answered the lady.

**Facts on the Commandments:**

- The Ten Commandments are given *twice*, once at Sinai (Exod. 20) and again when Moses recalls and addresses to them as the people prepare to go into the land (Deut.5).
- The Commandments are given by the Lord *directly* to the people (“face to face,” Deut 5:4).
- They are the *first* piece of legal material and *separated* from the statutes and ordinances that follow.
- The Commandments are written by the *finger of God* on *stone*, to make clear their source and endurance (Exod. 31:18; Deut. 4:13)
- They are placed in the Ark of the Covenant, the Lord’s dwelling place in the midst of the people (Deut. 10:5).

### **Many gods vs. Only God**

In the ancient world, people made their own gods and worshiped them. For example, Hindus in India named 330 million gods; Shinto, which is an indigenous spirituality of Japan and the Japanese people, has 8 million gods. Whenever a child is born in Japan, parents bring their kid to a local Shinto shrine to list a kid's name; when they are grown up, they want to get marry at a Christian church; when they die, they want to have a Buddhist funeral.

Before giving the Ten Commandments, God says this: "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, where you were slaves." God is reminding them that not only did he create them, but he redeemed them. He gave them life –eternal life through Jesus, and he gave them freedom from sin. That's the relationship that God had with Israel, and it is the relationship he has with us. We are his because he created us. ("Thank You, God!") And we are His because he bought us out of slavery to sin. He created us and He redeemed us. And that relationship is the basis for the commands that God gave to Israel. God led the people of Israel out of Egypt; He led them through the desert. And the commandments are another way that God leads his people, by giving them words to live by.

### **Worship God at Your Center**

What does it mean to worship only God? We are living in a world filled with different types of idol worship. This secular and materialistic world in which we are living creates many small gods and blocks us to worship God: drugs, alcohol, sex, money, and so on. We surround ourselves with idols that block our vision of what it means to know the self, to grow, and to see the glory of God in the most inglorious places.

"You shall have no other gods before me" is the first and the foundational relationship of which we need to remind all the time and every day: Do I put God over any things – possessions, money, and wealth? Or am I controlled by those things beyond God? We need to set our relationship with God again and again each day.

The Good News translates this verse like this: "Worship no god but me." The words demands that God's people worship, love, and serve only the one, true God. With this first commandment, God makes it clear that His people are to have an exclusive relationship with Him. Even though most translations read, "You shall have no other gods before me." That doesn't mean, "You can worship all the gods you want, I just want to be your favorite." No. God is saying, "Worship ONLY me. I am to be your ONLY God."

God desires for us to reset the relationship with Him each day? Are you going to have Him control your life, or are you going to be controlled by things? What about cast your life upon God, worshipping Him first? Then God will take care of you for you are a precious child of God. Amen.

"To have a God in this way is a total and complete trust and commitment" (19). "The call of the First Commandment: to follow the Lord your God, to fear the Lord, to keep the commandments, to obey the Lord, to serve the Lord, and to cling to the Lord" (21).

**Note:**

**Worship only God. Do not make idols to worship. Do not use God's name in a bad way.**

**Keep the Sabbath day holy. Treat your parents with respect. Do not murder. Be faithful to your husband or wife. Do not steal. Do not tell lies about others. Do not want what someone else has (Exodus 20:1-19, adapted).**