

The One Good God

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Culture insights from a bathroom vanity:

Overwhelming choice and no direction

Question: When was a time you were overwhelmed by many choices? Frustrated by the lack of choice? Which was more frustrating?

Our culture holds choice as a high value and instructions are optional.

Exodus 20:1-3

The first commandment seems out of step with our times.

God doesn't want to be #1. He wants to be the only one.

Question: What is the difference between being number one and the only one? Give an example.

Deep immersion in culture always impacts your worldview. Egyptian worldview had many moody gods who didn't like people. The sun god, the ocean god, ... This is the understanding that people had in which God states this first command.

Monotheism: there is One God.

Not only the Bible's first command, it's the Bible first thought. Genesis 1:1

Implication: If there is really only one God who created everything, how does this give Him exclusive authority to tell you how to live your life?

Polytheism: there are many gods

In the ancient world, there was no real link between spiritual beliefs and moral practices. Religion was all about appeasing the gods.

Atheism: there is no god.

Being a good person is however you or society chooses to define it.

Many of us are confessing monotheists but:

Practical polytheist: when you play by different rules in different parts of your lives.

Practical atheist: when we sing with Elsa from Frozen - "... no right, no wrong, no rules for me. I'm free!"

Question: Is there an example in your life where you have been unintentionally functioning as a practical polytheist or atheist?

Tim Keller "Whatever is the object of your meaning and satisfaction ultimately controls you."

Something is always your god. The only freedom we have is to choose what or who we worship.

David Foster Wallace "... choosing to worship anything but a spiritual thing will eat you alive."

Questions: What have you seen worshipped that ends up "eating you alive"? What is the one truth that brings the most clarity to the first commandment?

Matthew 11:28-30

