

## The Ten Commandments

Commandment #1: "You shall have no other gods before Me." Exodus 20:3

### 1. A tone setting commandment

- a. It is important to note that the force of the ten commandments are predicated upon their source
- b. I have been given many commandments in my life that I neglected because the person who gave me the exhortation was either unqualified or lacked authority to dictate directions to me!
- c. If the ten commandments were given by my weird neighbor or even a religious scholar, they would have very little binding authority in my life
- d. However, these Commandments were given by God as we see in today's study
- e. It is God who speaks and this God defines Himself as Preeminent
- f. In this commandment we learn:
  - i. God is over all other "gods"
  - ii. God is to be obeyed
  - iii. God is to be worshipped (implied by the term "god" which denotes a deity that receives praise)

### 2. A common misconception

- a. While it is true that there are atheists and polytheists (people who believe in multiple, designated "gods") in our world, the simple truth is that many people in our sliver of the world would probably confess to having one God
- b. Many people you meet today would say that they are believers in God but their lives show that they do not heed this first command
  - i. While most folks aren't worshipping a carved image, their lives are characterized by allegiance to and affection for something other than the Lord
  - ii. We see this in the way we spend our time... what does your time management say about what you worship?
  - iii. We see this in the way we spend our resources... what does your bank account say about what you worship?
    1. Jesus made it clear that we cannot serve two masters and, in this case, the contrast He was drawing was between serving the Lord or serving money
  - iv. We see our true "gods" by examining what consumes our thoughts... we are made to think about what we most love and what we most love we will inevitably worship

- c. In all these things, we may confess God but our hearts and actions scream otherwise
  - d. Divided allegiances are disloyalties
    - i. Deyoung points out that the real problem is not having God as one of our deities but having a God that is our ONLY object of worship: “The fault with God’s people has always been that little *and*. The Lord is fine, but we want the Lord and Baal, the Lord and Asherah (another false god), the Lord and money, the Lord and social responsibility”
  - e. The truth is that these other gods are constantly vying for our affinity and those things which take our affinity are the object of our worship
3. A Christological conclusion
- a. Some people might be a bit confused here... isn’t Exodus 20:3 talking about God the Father?
  - b. We would rightly argue that God the Father is certainly in view, but this would not preclude Christians (followers of Christ) from heeding this command
  - c. In John 10:30 Jesus said, “I and the Father are one...”
    - i. If you have seen the glory of Jesus, you have seen the glory of God
    - ii. If you follow Jesus, you are following God
    - iii. If you love Jesus, you love God
    - iv. If you worship Jesus, you worship God
  - d. This means that Christian obedience to the first commandment is fulfilled in worship and adoration of Christ