

The Ten Words – No Other Gods Exodus 20:2-3

INTRODUCTION

A. W. Tozer, in his book, *The Knowledge of the Holy* writes: *“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. The history of mankind will probably show that no people has ever risen above its religion, and man’s spiritual history will positively demonstrate that no religion has ever been greater than its idea of God. Worship is pure or base as the worshiper entertains high or low thoughts of God. For this reason, the gravest question before the Church is always God Himself, and the most portentous fact about any man is not what he at a given time may say or do, but what he in his deep heart conceives God to be like. We tend by a secret law of the soul to move toward our mental image of God. This is true not only of the individual Christian, but of the company of Christians that composes the Church. Always the most revealing thing about the Church is her idea of God.”* (Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, p. 1) He’s right! Written in 1978, his words ring true today! Keep these words in mind as we continue our study of the Ten Commandments or 10 Words.

Please turn in your Bible to **Exodus 20:2-3**. Moses and the Israelites lived in a polytheistic world, a world where most cultures believed in many gods. **They looked at the powers of nature and attributed individual powers to individual gods, such as storm gods, sun gods, earth gods, crop gods, etc.**

The Israelites had left Egypt and were on their way to the Promised Land of Canaan. God warned the Israelites about Canaan. He warned them about the competition they would find there for the loyalty of their hearts. We read in **Deuteronomy 11:16**: *“Take care lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them”* God also warned the Israelites not to intermarry with the people of Canaan. (**Deuteronomy 7:3**) Why not? Not because of racial reasons, but because God knew that these mixed marriages would drag the people of Israel into the worship of other gods.

This was a choice the people of Israel had to face again and again. When they had successfully entered Canaan

under Joshua’s leadership, Joshua issued the challenge that still stands **today**: *“Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt and serve the Lord. And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”* Later on the prophet Elijah would challenge the **people**: *“And Elijah came near to all the people and said, “How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.” And the people did not answer him a word.”* This was the world in which the Israelites lived, and this was the world in which God first issued the first commandment: *“You shall have no other gods before me.”*

Let’s get to the command and let’s divide it in two parts...

I. “You _____ other gods” (Exodus 20:3a)

The first part of the commandment that specifies *“no other gods,”* Now, keep in mind that the ‘you’ is singular. This means that the words this command applies to each individual. It is spoken to each person as if by name. Each one of us is personally accountable to God.

This word or command makes the following claims on our lives:

A. Commands _____ in God

Now, what does it mean when God says, *“You shall have no other gods”*? It means first of all that we are commanded to believe in God.

The first commandment, therefore...

1. Condemns _____

In commanding belief in God, the first commandment also...

2. Condemns _____

This word or command not only claims that we should believe in God but also...

B. Commands belief in _____ God

When God says, “*You shall have no other gods*,” he not only commands belief in God. He also commands belief in one God.

And by doing so, this is turn...

1. Condemns _____

This belief in one God also...

2. Condemns _____

By commanding belief in one God, the first commandment condemns both polytheism and pantheism. And it also...

C. Commands belief in the one _____ God

**1. Belief in the God who _____
Himself to Israel as Lord**

**2. Belief in the God who _____
Himself in the New Testament as Father,
Son and Holy Spirit**

This word or command not only claims that we should believe in God but in one God in one true God, therefore, this word or command...

D. _____ worship of false gods

You shall no other gods...the second part of the command...

**II. “You shall have no other gods _____”
(Exodus 20:3b)**

These two words “*before me*” are an essential part of the commandment and convey two ideas:

A. _____

B. _____

This meant to the Hebrews and to us that God...

1. Forbids _____

2. Cautions against _____ affections

3. Cautions against _____ motives

CONCLUSION

What can we take with us this morning?

What Does the First Commandment Demand of Us?

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____