

Walking with Jesus Through Sinai:
 Seeking Moral Clarity in an Age of Chaos with the 10 Commandments
 CPC Adult Sunday Studies Fall 2024
 4 - Preface and First Commandment

Holy Love & Adoration: Worshipping the One True God

Remember the Preface!

Exod. 20.2 - "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."

Location, Location, Location! Keeping the 10 Commandments in Context

1. ***Who God is*** - remember *how* they are being delivered; that is, to Moses on Mt. Sinai, which is too holy for the people to even touch. This is all still about the revelation of the holy God to the people he calls to himself in love.
2. ***What God has already done***
 1. What would happen to our perception of the 10C, if we forget the preface and imagine them as merely "moral values" or rules divorced from the biblical context?
 2. Instead, we receive these as if God is saying, "You are mine, here is what that should look like."
 1. Remembering Ps. 119 and its synonyms for "law", we should hear "commandments" differently as well. They are referred to as 10 "words", which doesn't diminish the fact that that they're commanded, but shows that they are revelations of God.
 2. Mt. Sinai begins with this wonderful statement from the Lord - "*You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. 5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; 6 and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.*" (Exod. 19.4-6)

The First Commandment: "*You shall have no other gods before me.*" (Exod. 20.3)
Literally, "There shall not be for you other gods before me, or besides me, or in my presence/face."

1. *The Scandal of Monotheism*

1. Utterly countercultural in their culture and world
2. Before the global spread of the 3 "Abrahamic religions", it was very rare outside of elite philosophers

2. *The Universal Demand*

1. Being first convinced of the **truth** of who God is and what He deserves, we ought then to move to **full universal impact** of what that means.
 1. Jesus in Matt. 22, summarizing the Law - "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*"
 2. WLC 104 - "The **duties required** in the first commandment are, the knowing and acknowledging of God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly, by thinking, meditating, remembering, highly esteeming, honoring, adoring, choosing, loving, desiring, fearing of him; believing him; trusting, hoping, delighting, rejoicing in him; being zealous for him; calling upon him, giving all praise and thanks, and yielding all obedience and submission to him with the whole man; being careful in all things to please him, and sorrowful when in anything he is offended; and walking humbly with him."
 1. It's easy to move to all the ways we *don't* do this, which we'll discuss next week, but let's try to see this first as a beautiful and high ideal of how we *can* live.

3. **"Only true God and our God"**

1. He has no competitor
2. Objectively and subjectively ("our"), this is true - it is owned and apprehended personally

4. **"Worship and glorify Him accordingly"**

1. "Our relation to God is the supreme and all-important fact of our lives. If we regard our relation to God as a side issue or minor detail of our lives, we have not even begun to take the first commandment seriously. This [commandment] means not merely an emotional attitude toward God, but an all-inclusive practical devotion to God that leads us to honor and obey him in every element, sphere, and relationship of our life. Everything in our life must be determined by our love to God. Thus there can be nothing in our life separate from our religion. We

may not draw a bounty line and mark of any sphere or area of life and say that in that area our relation to God does not count. Whatsoever we do, we must do all to the glory of God. The man who thinks he can carry on his business life, or his political life, or his social life, without God is to that extent an irreligious person. . . . The consistent Christian will realize that his religion is the ruling principle of all his life, and that there is nothing in life which can be isolated from his relation to God." - Vos (*The Westminster Larger Catechism: A Commentary*, 260)

1. **Thoughts** - "by thinking, meditating, remembering, highly esteeming, honoring"
 2. **Affections** - "adoring, choosing, loving, desiring, fearing of him... being careful in all things to please him, and sorrowful when in anything he is offended"
 3. **Trusts and hopes** - "believing him; trusting, hoping, delighting, rejoicing in him; being zealous for him; calling upon him"
 4. **Praises** - "giving all praise and thanks, and yielding all obedience and submission to him with the whole man"
 5. **Relations** - "and walking humbly with him."
5. **"Before me"** - remembering that it is all in God's sight. Worship is always personal.
1. **Martyn LLOYD-Jones** - "If you want to know anything about God and to be blessed by Him, then you do not start by speaking about Him, nor by thinking what you want to think about what God ought to be like or about what God ought to do. You just stop in silence, and you wait, and you listen, and you adore, and you look up. 'The mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken.' Have you ever realized who God is? Everything in connection with religion is about Him. Christ came into the world and died. Why? To bring us to God. It is all about God. It is not some comfortable feeling that you and I have to strive for; it is not having your body healed or a thousand and one other things. The whole object of Christ and His death upon the cross, His burials and His resurrection is to bring us to God. And the ultimate test of our profession of the Christian faith is our thoughts about God, our attitude in His presence, our reverence and godly fear because our God

is a consuming fire." ("Dead Religion" sermon in *Seeking the Face of God*, 36)

3. *The Big Picture of Law & Love*

1. **The Law Condemns** - This should feel overwhelming and impossible!
 1. Jesus is the only one who truly treated God "accordingly"
2. **The Law Instructs** - It's a desirable ideal on how to live
 1. Remember Ps. 119!
3. **The Law Invites Us To Real Love**
 1. What if we saw this as a wonderful and gracious invitation to live precisely for what we were created, which is to be in communion with God?

Next week we'll look at the major implication of the First Commandment - Blessed are the poor in spirit and the pure in heart.