

Sermon Series: The Decalogue

Sermon title: "The 1st Commandment"

Scripture Reading: Exodus 20:1-17

Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church

May 1, 2022

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Well, have you ever heard a parent say to a child, "*The Bible says we are to share.*"

We are to share our toys with other kids or share our food or money or anything with others.

It's a way to love other people.

Sharing is good.

But there are plenty of things that we don't share and to do so would be not good.

We don't share what other people tell us in confidence.

We don't share our used face mask with others.

We don't share the answers to the test with our classmates.

We don't share liquids, usually.

We don't share our spouse with other people.

There is one thing in the Bible that God says he doesn't share.

God is jealous and selfish in some sense.

You know what God doesn't share?

His glory.

"I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols." **Isaiah 42:8**

This is what God blatantly says in the First Commandment which we will study today;
"You shall have no other gods before me."

He doesn't share worship with anyone.
Why not?

Let's pray.

We will be studying the 10 Commandments for the next 10 weeks or so.

As we begin this series, I'd like to give some introductory information and answer some questions that you might have.

The 10 Commandments are the foundational moral law for the Bible itself and many Judeo-Christian Civilizations were built on them.

And most civilizations have some variation of them in their laws and even in their hearts.

When I was a boy in the USA, the 10 Commandments were posted in our school and government offices etc. Not necessarily the case now.

The Structure of the 10 Commandments:

The first 4 commandments are laws dealing directly with our relationship to God.

The next 6 commandments are laws dealing with how we relate to other people.

I'll dive in more to the commandments as we go through each one of them.

One question we need to address right off is this:

**Are the 10 Commandments still binding today?
Do we still have to obey them?**

These moral laws from the Old Testament are mentioned in the New Testament as well....so we can't cast them aside.

[Chart]

So, the 10 Commandments are good.

They are for us today.

We should obey them.

The Context of the 10 Commandments:

The Hebrew people were slaves in Egypt, where they worshipped Egyptian gods.

Joshua 24:14 tells us they did., "**14** "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."

God powerfully delivered them from slavery and bondage when he sent 10 plagues on Egypt....10 plagues that corresponded nicely to the gods of Egypt.

They've come out of Egypt, slavery and idolatry to know the God of Abraham, Issac and Jacob. It's in this context that God gives them these Commandments.

Today, we are looking at **the 1st Commandment.**

We are going to walk through **Exodus 20:1-3.**

And God spoke all these words, saying,

2 "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

3 "You shall have no other gods before me.

What we first see about the 10 Commandments is this INTRO.....

What is God or who is HE?

We are introduced to God in the first sentence of the Bible.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning...**God** created the heavens and the earth.

New City Catechism 2 told us...

God is the creator and sustainer of everyone and everything. He is eternal, infinite, and unchangeable in his power and perfection, goodness and glory, wisdom, justice, and truth. Nothing happens except through him and by his will.

The 10 Commandments were given by God the creator himself.

Spoken by God himself.

That alone makes them supremely important.

If God is speaking. We should be listening.

Next we see specifically what he has done....**2** "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

He has earned the right to be heard, not just because he is the Creator but because he has personally delivered the Hebrews out of slavery.

He has saved them by his powerful works and called them to himself.

Now, the Command....

3 "You shall have no other gods before me.

God won't share glory or worship.

What does it mean when God says to have "no other gods BEFORE me"?

Does it mean he needs to be in the top spot?

Top of the list?

It literally means, "*before my face*" in Hebrew.

"Setting up a false deity is like insulting God to his face." **Philip Ryken**

Everything we do we do before the face of God because God sees everything and knows everything.

So, what God is saying here is 'You must worship me only. Don't ever worship any other gods.'

Now we have something here we need to address.

How can God command us to have 'no other gods before' him when in fact, the Bible is very clear that there are no other gods?

He is one of a kind. The only one.

When you are the only one....if people ask you what your name is...you can just say, "I AM".

"I am the only one."

The Bible is very clear that he alone is God and there are no other gods.

Deuteronomy 4:34-38

33 Did any people ever hear the voice of a god speaking out of the midst of the fire, as you have heard, and still live? **34** Or has any god ever attempted to go and take a nation for himself from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, by wonders, and by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by great deeds of terror, all of which the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? **35** To you it was shown, that you might know that the Lord is God; **there is no other besides him.** **36** Out of heaven he let you hear his voice, that he might discipline you. And on earth he let you see his great fire, and you heard his words out of the midst of the fire. **37** And because he loved your fathers and chose their offspring after them and brought you out of Egypt with his own presence,

by his great power, **38** driving out before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in, to give you their land for an inheritance, as it is this day, **39** know therefore today, and lay it to your heart, that the Lord is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; **there is no other.**

Isaiah 45:5-6

5 I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me, 6 that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the Lord, and there is no other.

Isaiah 45:22

Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth!
For I am God, and there is no other.

Isaiah 46:9

For I am God and there is no other; I am God and there is none like me.

But now...all around the world there are other gods.
[2 slides of idols]

How do we reconcile this? Paul helps us in the NT.

1 Corinthians 8:4-6

We know that an idol has no real existence, and that there is no God but one. For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many ‘gods’ and many ‘lords’—yet for us there is one God, the Father from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

1 Corinthians 10

Food offered to idols [is] anything? No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God.

So, if we want to sum up what God says in the 1st Commandment, what he’s really saying is this:

“Worship me only. Don’t worship other gods..which are demons.”

So across the whole world where people don’t worship the one true God, they are being led astray by demons, although the demons may be masquerading as some stone or wood idol.

APPLICATION

How do people break this 1st Commandment?

Atheism - "There is no God."

Animism - "There are many gods in many places
and in many things."

Apathy - "If there is a God, it just doesn't matter
to me."

Is it possible that you are guilty of breaking the 1st
Commandment? We are all guilty.

"To trust in any thing more than God, is to make it a
god." **Thomas Watson**

Who is the most important person in your life?

Are YOU God?

We've all elevate ourselves to the place of God at
some point in our lives. So, we are guilty or treason.
Guilty of breaking the 1st Commandment.

What hope is there for us then?

Our hope is in God's grace to save us, like he saved the
Hebrews out of Egypt.

They were physical slaves. We are all spiritual slaves.
They were in bondage to the Egyptians.
We are in bondage to our sinful desires.

God set them free by his power.
God can set us free by his power.

How does he do that?

He sent Jesus to die for our sins and set us free.
Free to worship him and not worship other things or
even ourselves.

What are you most devoted to?

What do you love most?

Are there any other gods that you are bowing down
to?

Worship him alone through Jesus Christ.

You want to know God? That's easy.

Get to know Jesus Christ.