

## **NO OTHER gods**

*From the series – Exodus, story of the TEN*

*Exodus 20:3*

### **SUMMARY...**

Commandment #1 is foundational... first in importance as well as in order. Our ability to honor and obey commandment #1 will impact our ability to honor the remaining nine. While simple and straightforward – ‘no other gods but me’, simple and straightforward does not come without any questions. Three specific questions help us understand the heart behind the One giving the command:

1. Are there actually other gods?
2. Is God a megalomaniac?
3. What right does God have to demand that we are with Him and Him alone?

By seeking to answer each question, we will see with fresh eyes how this command of ‘exclusivity’ is the most loving command that God could give to us.

### **A FEW QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER...**

1. Read Exodus 20:3 – Why does God command that we have no other god but Him if no other gods actually exist? Consider who this command was given to – the people of Israel who are a few months removed from 400+ years of being in the most polytheistic country, Egypt. How had the many ‘false gods/goddess’ of Egypt begun to influence and impact the people of God? Spend time reflecting on Ezekiel 20:5-8 to better help you understand the impact Egypt was having on Israel. How does our present culture influence you, your opinions or behaviors?
2. Commandment #1 is call to exclusivity – God and God alone. Behind our struggle with exclusivity is our love for AND. We want God AND we want \_\_\_\_\_ (you fill in the blank). What are the AND’s in your life?
3. Why is commandment #1 a reflection of God’s love for us and not a demand coming from a cosmic megalomaniac?
4. Read Exodus 20:1-2 – how do these two verses help us understand the right God has to call us to an exclusive relationship with Him?
5. What are the ‘false gods’ in your life? Here are five questions to help you identify them:
  - a. What disappoints you?
  - b. What do you complain about most?
  - c. What do you make financial sacrifices for?
  - d. What worries you the most?

e. What (or who) is your place of sanctuary/refuge?

As you wrestle through these questions, what 'false god(s)' do you see you have? More than identifying them, are you willing to say good-bye to them for good?

What is one practical thing you can do this week to turn away from the 'false gods' in your life so that Jesus can shape all of who you are?

### **BIBLICAL TEXTS CITED...**

"You must not have any other god but me."

*Exodus 20:3 (NLT)*

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

*Genesis 1:1 (NLT)*

Give them this message from the Sovereign Lord: "When I chose Israel—when I revealed myself to the descendants of Jacob in Egypt—I took a solemn oath that I, the Lord, would be their God. I took a solemn oath that day that I would bring them out of Egypt to a land I had discovered and explored for them—a good land, a land flowing with milk and honey, the best of all lands anywhere. Then I said to them, 'Each of you, get rid of the vile images you are so obsessed with. Do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt, for I am the LORD your God.' "But they rebelled against me and would not listen. They did not get rid of the vile images they were obsessed with, or forsake the idols of Egypt."

*Ezekiel 20:5-8 (NLT)*

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."

*Matthew 5:17 (ESV)*

"For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ, and through him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross."

*Colossians 1:19-20 (NLT)*

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