



Exodus 20:1-6

# WORSHIPING GOD ALONE

*Every man needs a god. There is no man who has not, somewhere in his heart, in his life, in the essentials of his being, a shrine in which is a deity whom he worships... The very composition of human life, the mystery of man's being, demands a center of worship as a necessity of existence. All life is worship. There may be a false god at the center of the life; but every activity of being, all the energy of life, the devotion of powers—these things are all worship. The question is whether the life and powers of man are devoted to the worship of the true God or to that of a false one. There is a center, a motive, a reason, a shrine, a deity somewhere—something which man worships. It has been said that when man dethrones God, he deifies and worships himself. There are men today of whom it may be said that they worship themselves with all their heart and with all their strength and with all their mind, and themselves only do they serve. In every case, man demands a god, a king, a lawgiver—one who arranges the program, utters the commandments, and demands obedience.*  
—G. Campbell Morgan (1863-1945)

The Ten Commandments reveal God's rational, righteous, redeeming character. They also summarize the foundational principles for ethics and for life. Knowing the right way to live begins with knowing God.

- A Relationship to God—Heart (20:3-6)
  - B Relationship to God—Words (20:7)
  - C Relationship to God—Deeds (20:8-11)
  - D Relationship to Family—Heart, Words, Deeds (20:12)
  - C Relationship to Others—Deeds (20:13-15)
  - B Relationship to Others—Words (20:16)
- A Relationship to Others—Heart (20:17)

## WHAT ARE THE FIRST TWO COMMANDMENTS?

*You shall have no other gods before Me. (20:3)*  
*You shall not make for yourself an idol... (20:4-6)*

- Do not worship false \_\_\_\_\_ or false \_\_\_\_\_.
- Worship God \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Worship God \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Worship God in \_\_\_\_\_ and in \_\_\_\_\_.
- *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. (Deut. 6:5; cf. Mark 12:30)*

*The commandments are addressed to each Israelite individually.*

—John I. Durham

*Whenever a society forsakes the idea that we live in the presence of God and that we are accountable to him for our actions, evil deeds multiply. —Wayne Grudem*

**Before Me.** Hebrew, *al-panim*, “at, to, before, or against the face.”

*You change the world, not by the idea of power, but by the power of ideas. —Rabbi Jonathan Sacks*

*The world has never before known a godlessness as organized, militarized, and tenaciously malevolent as that practiced by Marxism.*

*Within the philosophical system of Marx and Lenin, and at the heart of their psychology, hatred of God is the principal driving force.*

—Alexander Solzhenitsyn

*The God of the Jews was to exist in the Word and through the Word, an unprecedented conception requiring the highest order of abstract thinking. —Neil Postman*

## WHY ARE THESE THE FIRST TWO COMMANDMENTS?

### 1. I must acknowledge God as the \_\_\_\_\_ of all reality.

*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge... (Prov. 1:7)*

*The beginning of wisdom is to fear the Lord, and acknowledging the Holy One is understanding. (Prov. 9:10, NET)*

*For in Him we live and move and have our being... (Acts 17:28a)*

### 2. I must worship God as the \_\_\_\_\_ of my own life.

*Although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. (Romans 1:21-23)*

### 3. I must worship God as He truly is and not reduce Him down to an image or object that I can create and \_\_\_\_\_.

*God is spirit and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. (John 4:24)*

*They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator.... (Romans 1:25)*

### 4. I must acknowledge that what I worship will \_\_\_\_\_ me, those around me, and the generations after me.

*Their idols are silver and gold,  
The work of men's hands.  
They have mouths, but they do not speak;  
Eyes they have, but they do not see...  
Those who make them are like them;  
So is everyone who trusts in them. (Psalm 115:4-5, 8)*

### 5. I must understand God's passionate \_\_\_\_\_ for me.

*Do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? (James 4:5, NIV)*

*What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.*

—A. W. Tozer

*There is no such thing as atheism... no such thing as not worshipping. Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship.*

—David Foster Wallace

*A man cannot live without worshipping something. He cannot bear the burden of himself. And that goes for every man. So that if a man rejects God, he will have to worship an idol that is made of wood, gold, or ideas. So those who think they don't need God are really just idol worshipers, and that's what we should call them.*

—Fyodor Dostoevsky

*To represent an invisible God in any material and tangible form whatsoever is by definition to distort the divine reality.* —Nahum Sarna

*Idolatry is taken seriously because of its ability to corrupt successive generations.* —Douglas Stuart

*The purpose of all idolatry is to manipulate the idol for our own benefit. This means that we don't want to be ruled by idols. Instead, we want to use them.* —Ed Welch

*Whatever your heart clings to and confides in, that is really your God.* —Martin Luther (1483-1546)

*You become what you behold.* —William Blake (1757-1827)

*What we focus on comes to control our thoughts, our actions, indeed, our very lives. Whatever we focus upon actually wires our neurons.*

—Kare Anderson