

## Ten Timeless Words: The First Commandment

80 % of all Americans claim to believe in 10 Comm's > Few can Name Any  
Talk Show HOST Asked Audience to Name ONE of 10 Commandments LONG  
PAUSE > finally one man said: *"God helps those who help themselves?"*

1. **"You shall have no other gods before me."**
2. *"You shall not make for yourself an idol..."*
3. **"You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God..."**
4. *"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy..."*
5. **"Honor your father and your mother..."**
6. *"You shall not murder."*
7. **"You shall not commit adultery."**
8. *"You shall not steal."*
9. **"You shall not give false testimony..."**
10. *"You shall not covet..."*

Bible Teachers Refer to TWO TABLES of LAW – 1<sup>st</sup> to God / 2<sup>nd</sup> to man

1 - 4 PRIMARY Relationship to GOD // 5 - 10 Relate to OTHER PEOPLE

God spoke all these words: "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. *You shall have no other gods before me.*

Exodus 20.1-3

1. Our God

2. other gods

3. Only God

1. Our God

a. Redeemer > Law given to ALREADY SAVED, PURCHASED from Slavery

v. 2 who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery

NT > PLACE of Salvation = CROSS // OT > Place of Salvation = RED SEA

The Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. *That day the LORD saved Israel* from the hands of the Egyptians...when the Israelites saw the great power the LORD displayed against the Egyptians, *the people feared the LORD and put their trust in him* and in Moses his servant. Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD: "I will sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea. The LORD is my strength and my song; *he has become my salvation.*"  
Exodus 14.28-15.2

3 Months Later > 2 Million Rescued Hebrews > Met with God at Mt. Sinai (map)  
Met their SAVIOR GOD > Not to BE SAVED > HOW to Live as HIS PEOPLE

'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'  
Exodus 19.3-6

NO OTHER GOD >> ONLY GOD who CAN SAVE

CRACKED World's Greatest EMPIRE: Drowned Pharaoh > SLAVES FREE

TRAGIC > SAVED have SHORT MEMORIES > FORGET & FORSAKE God  
As MOSES was GETTING LAWS on SINAI > People looking for Another god  
1000 Yrs Later > COVENANT NATION threatened by BABYLON > other gods  
Let your astrologers come forward, those stargazers who make predictions month by month, *let them save you from what is coming upon you.* Surely they are like stubble; the fire will burn them up. *They cannot even save themselves* from the power of the flame...Each of them goes on in his error; there is *not one that can save you.*  
Isaiah 47.13-15

Most Major Newspapers in WORLD > DAILY Astrology Predictions

MANY Americans NOT LEAVE HOME without Reading Day's GUIDANCE

OUR GOD > REDEEMER Old & New Covenant > ONLY GOD who can SAVE

...to *the only God our Savior* be glory, majesty, power and authority, through *Jesus Christ our Lord*, before all ages, now and forevermore! Jude 25

b. Ruler v. 2 I am the LORD your God

ISRAEL > Slavery 400 years in Egypt > SET FREE to Serve New MASTER

Have a God? Allegiance, Glory, Greatness, Sacrifice, Worship, Service

HEAR SERMON > Real Fire and Brimstone > GOD is Preacher from Mt. Sinai

PEOPLE GATHERED in FEAR and TREMBLING > Sermon NEVER Forget!

UNILATERAL Covenant > GOD DICTATES the Terms > NO Negotiations

LORD > Hebrew = "YAHWEH" > Personal Name >> KJV translit. Jehovah

NEW INTIMACY > God calls them NOT to RULES but to RELATIONSHIP

“I am the LORD. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them...I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. *I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God.*” Exodus 6.2-7

It would be monstrous for us to want to withdraw from His rule when we cannot exist apart from Him. John Calvin

Does a person refuse the air he breathes?

We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one. For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"), yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. 1 Corinthians 8.4-6

## 2. other gods

a. Look > We CANNOT SEE Your God?!

Why do the nations say, "Where is their God?"...

Psalm 115.2

Source of EMBARRASSMENT > Pagan Nations could SHOW THEIR GODS!

Visit their SHRINES > MARVEL at STATUES > Bow Down to IMAGES

Bring Pre-Christian Friends to ZGC > "I DID Not See Anything!"

Hebrews – Spirit of God Deep inside Tent – Only 1 Man Entered – Once a Year!

The LORD spoke to you out of the fire. *You heard the sound of words but saw no form; there was only a voice.* He declared to you his covenant, the Ten Commandments, which he commanded you to follow and then wrote them on two stone tablets. Deuteronomy 4.12-14

EVEN with ALL AUDIO-VISUAL WONDERS of SINAI > NOT ENOUGH!!

When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him." Exodus 32.1

ONE of MOST SARCASTIC CHAPTERS IN THE BIBLE – Isaiah 44

The carpenter... cut down cedars...It is man's fuel for burning; some of it he takes and warms himself, he kindles a fire and bakes bread. But he also fashions a god and worships it; he makes an idol and bows down to it. Half of the wood he burns in the fire; over it he prepares his meal, he roasts his meat and eats his fill. He also warms himself and says, "Ah! I am warm; I see the fire." From the rest *he makes a god, his idol;* he bows down to it and worships. He prays to it and says, "*Save me; you are my god.*" Isaiah 44.13-17

SAME Wood that WARMS HIM > SAME WOOD that he WORSHIPS!

FEEL CONFIDENT > SEE Something > Amulet, Talisman, Cross, Icon, Symbol

KZ 2 Main Religions – Islam & Orthodox HOLY SPACE, SACRED PLACES

Many SHOCKED > Christian Fellowship in a Disco Club > UNHOLY SPACE!

Not sure how Chinese TEMPLE Worshipper feels PRAYING in GINKO HALL?

We live by faith, not by sight.

2 Corinthians 5.7

Jesus: "For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

Matthew 18.20

b. League > Moderns MANY SPIRITUAL OPTIONS > Buffet of BELIEFS

MODERN World > 1st Comm. "Everyone should have at least one God"

The GOD Question? > Multiple Choice > Prefer BOTH / AND NOT Either / Or

*They worshiped the LORD, but they also served their own gods in accordance with the customs of the nations from which they had been brought. 2 Kings 17.33*

2 RELIGIOUS ABSOLUTES of 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY > Relativism and Pluralism

Relativism: There is No Absolute Truth.

Pluralism: Only way you can Live in Harmony in a Society with

Different Beliefs is to Acknowledge there is No Ultimate Truth.

MODERN MAN > "I am learning from GREAT TEACHERS of RELIGION"

NOW I'm 'kind of into' Native American Spirituality, COOL! WHAT TRIBE??

HARMONY with World & Gov't when ALL RELIGIONS are Seen as SAME

Relativism and Pluralism > NOTHING NEW > Even Practiced in Ancient Judah

Where then are the gods you made for yourselves? *Let them come if they can save you when you are in trouble!* For you have as many gods as you have towns,  
O Judah.  
Jeremiah 2.28

Spoke Creed 'LORD OUR GOD IS ONE' > but IDOLS were LIMITLESS

Society calls it TOLERANCE > God calls them TRAITORS to Him and Word

c. Likeable > the gods we INVENT are OUR FRIENDS

NEVER HEAR > "Once I mixed together elements of Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, and Navajo spirituality I suddenly heard my new god telling me that everything I had once thought was wrong, that I had to change my life, reform my ways, or face eternal consequences!"

Neale Donald Walsch > author of “*Conversations with God*” > Lapsed Catholic  
 5 Divorces > Troubled Career > Until decided to Share a Cappuccino with God  
 Swap Jokes w/ God > Folksy Chit-Chat with God

DISCOVERED: God likes him just the way he is > WHY Best Seller!

NEW SPIRITUALITY Rejects DIFFICULT Demands of Traditional Religion  
 NOT WANT Path to Divine w/ Requirements >> Buddhist meditation, learn  
 Jewish Torah, memorize Arabic of Koran, or Pick Up Cross and Follow Jesus

Don't want God to say we're *not* OK > or ONLY Way to Salvation is thru Jesus

Modern Spirituality INVENTED > a god who Requires Nothing of Anybody

Doctoral Seminar about God in Seminary > Prof read BIBLICAL Descriptions  
 Bill responded politely but firmly, that he liked to think of God rather differently.

For several minutes Bill painted a picture for us of a friendly deity. He liked to  
 think of God as being wise, but not meddling, compassionate but never  
 overpowering, ever so resourceful but never interrupting. This, said Bill in  
 conclusion, is how he liked to think about God.

PROF replied, thank you Bill for telling us so much about yourself, but we are  
 here today to study about God.

40 Years of Ministry > Jeremiah called WEEPING Prophet > WHY J. WEPT?

OTHER Prophets in Judah > SELF-APPOINTED > ONLY GOOD NEWS

‘Don't Worry about Babylon...Idols? Not SO Bad...High Places?...well, OK’

WEPT > People BLINDLY Followed FALSE Prophets Ignored Word of God

From the least to the greatest, all are greedy for gain; prophets and priests alike,  
 all practice deceit. They dress the wound of my people as though it were not  
 serious. "Peace, peace," they say, when there is no peace. Jeremiah 8.10-12

#### d. Lies - Many Modern Day Violations of 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment

- Atheism - Denying God's Existence > ULTIMATE LIE

God's Existence cannot be DENIED > EVIDENCE in Us and OUR WORLD

The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good. Psalm 14.1

- Idolatry - Idols made with our HANDS, in our HEADS, or HEARTS

Ascribe glory due GOD to Humans, Stars, Angels > World Cup Teams > Idolatry

American Christians > picture God as an American > Republican

Feminists tout "the God with breasts"

Blair 3 pt. Outline

"My idea of God is not a divine idea. It has to be shattered time after time. God shatters it. God is the great iconoclast. Could we not say that this shattering is one of the marks of God's presence? Most are offended by iconoclasm. Blessed are they who are not." C.S. Lewis

The God of the Bible resists neat formulations or easy packaging.

I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols. Isaiah 42.8

- Generic Deities – Calling God by Names WE Invent

God of the Congress on Religion > God of Inter-Faith Prayer Breakfasts

‘HIGHER POWER’ of the Alcoholics Anonymous / 3<sup>rd</sup> Comm NAME in VAIN

‘Man UPSTAIRS’ / ‘The BIG GUY’ / Name Not in BIBLE > INSULT to GOD

Church > Encouraged when Polls show Nearly everybody believes in God!!

Generic Deity > Not God of Bible > HUMAN IMAGINATION > POWERLESS

Meetings are held > Generic Prayers offered to an unnamed Spirit in the Sky

We DARE NOT Offend > Declaring our Lord's name, deeds and character.

## US MILITARY CHAPLAINS > TOLD NO LONGER Pray JESUS NAME

If your God is not the God of the Bible, then your God is simply not God at all.  
Koehler and Durand

- Grumbling > Done by Many Christians > Denying The Sovereignty of God

Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the LORD ...The rabble with them began to crave other food, and again the Israelites started wailing and said, "If only we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost--also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic. But now we have lost our appetite; we never see anything but this manna!"... The LORD heard you when you wailed, "If only we had meat to eat! We were better off in Egypt!"  
Numbers 11.1-18

God's Sovereignty is Exhaustive and Nothing is Outside of His Jurisdiction.

### e. Loyalties > Your GOD is that which RECEIVES HIGHEST LOYALTY

It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.  
Psalm 118.8

Little girl lost TOOTH – PUT Under Pillow - NO Money Next Morning

Told Father > He REPLIED "Don't tell me you still believe in the tooth fairy"

MAY BE NOT, BUT I STILL BELIEVE IN MONEY

Our God is the thing, or the person, which we think most precious, for whom we would make the greatest sacrifice, and who moves our heart with the warmest love. He is the person, or thing, that if lost would leave us desolate. Alan Redpath

NOT as CLEVER as WE THINK > Cannot FOCUS on Many Things AT ONCE

No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.  
Matthew 6.24

HIGHEST ALLEGIANCE? > GREATEST SACRIFICE? > for Many SEX!

Sacrifices for the god of Sex? Integrity, Reputation, Families, Homes, Marriage,

Unborn Children > Abortion > Health and Life Itself > AIDS Virus

For us to keep the 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment is to see all things from His point of view and do nothing without reference to Him; to put Him first in thought, word and deed: in business and leisure; in friendships and career; in the use of money, time and talents; at work and at home. John Stott

### 3. Only God

a. Covenant > INVITED into RELATIONSHIP > KNOW HIM

Israel related to God // Wife to Husband > Covenant of Marriage at Mt. Sinai

Grateful > Moved to Obedience > God NOT Distant Uncaring Deity

God's Commands like UMBRELLA > Up: Shields from Rain

LEAVE IT at Home > LOOSE It – like most my Umbrellas > Bound to get Wet

Constant Process of Putting God First in ALL AREAS OF LIFE

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, *continue to live in Him*, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught Colossians 2.6,7

Commitment UNPLEASANT to OUR EARS > NEGATIVE Impression of GOD

Want a GOD that is NICE, NOT THREATENING, COMPLIANT to our Wishes

When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance and said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die." Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. *God has come to test you*, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning." The people remained at a distance, while *Moses approached the thick darkness where God was*. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Tell the Israelites this: 'You have seen for yourselves that I have spoken to you from heaven...*Wherever I cause my name to be honored, I will come to you and bless you.*'"  
Exodus 20.18-25

God DANGEROUS – Not DOMESTICATED > Inviting, Embracing, Blessing

DANGEROUS Today if you DARE Challenge > Sacred Cows of 21<sup>st</sup> Century

CHALLENGE Wisdom of PLURALISM, RELATIVISM, FREE SEX

Weeping of Jeremiah > Be COMMON EXPERIENCE of Sincere Believers

Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe.  
Proverbs 29.25

Greg > down block from a family w/ an in-ground swimming pool in back yard

Never gone swimming in their Pool > Barely knew People

High Wooden Fence enclosed Pool

Dark Night Neighbors away > Greg & Girlfriend scaled Fence to go for a Swim

Greg > Climbed Ladder > Girlfriend still Changing > Leapt off Diving Board

Unfortunately SO DARK Greg could NOT SEE > POOL had NO WATER

Dive Ended with Sickening Crunch of Bones

Greg Paralyzed from Neck Down for Rest of Life > Greg Ignored Fence

KEEP OUT Meant > WORD OF LIFE > Saw as Hinderance to THEIR FUN

b. Contentment > We Want > WHEN NOT SATISFIED with What WE HAVE

Where you set your heart and put your trust is your God...A God is where we expect all good and where we take refuge in distress...to have a God is nothing else than to trust and believe Him from the whole heart... Let us, then, learn well the First Commandment... it is of chief importance...where the heart is rightly disposed toward God and this commandment is observed, all the others follow.

Martin Luther

MOSES WARNS PEPSI Generation > Young People entering Promise Land: When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery... You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today. Deuteronomy 8.10-19

1<sup>st</sup> Comm > Would NEVER be BROKEN > If Heart CONTENT in LORD

ONLY Person who NEVER BROKE > 1<sup>ST</sup> Comm > LORD JESUS CHRIST  
 FOUND Contentment in DOING Will and Work of Father

So the law was put in charge *to lead us to Christ* that we might be justified by  
 faith  
 Galatians 3.24

LAW > Point us to Christ >

1. TO CROSS > We BROKEN Law > He is ONLY HOPE of SALVATION

HE OBEYED Perfectly and HE DIED to TAKE our PUNISHMENT

2. TO RESURRECTION > Risen Jesus is our Hope of POWER and PATTERN

PSALMIST > PROPHETIC, ULTIMATE Contentment and Joy of Messiah

NO One Can Say these Words MORE APPROPRIATELY than JESUS

I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your  
 counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory. Whom have I in heaven but  
 you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may  
 fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Psalm 73.23-26

RISEN Jesus > Write them on OUR HEARTS > No other God Beside Him