

The Ten Commandments, The Laws Governing Man's Duty to God (Part 4):

Commandment One Concerns God's Being—Never Believe in False Gods, Exodus 20:3

2. God also makes a **second demand** of man: “**You shall have no other gods before me**” (Exodus 20:3). The words “**before me**” (*alpamaya*) means literally *before my face, against my face, in hostility toward me, in my presence, in my sight*.

It means that man.....

- a. is to set no god *before* the **LORD** God.
- b. is to set no god *beside* the **LORD** God.
- c. is to set no god *in the presence* of the **LORD** God.
- d. is to set no god *in the face* of the **LORD** God.

The great **nineteenth century commentator George Bush** makes several excellent statements that tell us exactly what the first commandment means:

- a. “[**Creating idols**] may be done mentally as well as manually. There may be idolatry without idols.”
- b. “[**This commandment**] forbids the making of any other objects [as gods] whether persons or things, real or imaginary.”
- c. “[**Our**] supreme regard, reverence, esteem, affection, and obedience [**is due**] God alone.”
- d. “God is the fountain of happiness, and no intelligent being can be happy but through him...[**consequently**] whoever seeks for supreme happiness in the creature instead of the Creator is guilty of a violation of this command.”

If we set up anything that is a **rival interest** in our **hearts** and **minds**, anything that **absorbs the love** and **service** which belong only to the true God, then that thing becomes another god.

Whatever the heart clings to, that becomes our god.

Consequently.....

- a. the **proud man** who **idolizes himself** makes himself a god.
- b. the **ambitious man** who pays homage to popular applause makes his ambition and the praise of men his god.
- c. the **covetous person** who craves money and things makes a god out of money and things.
- d. the **greedy person** who hoards possessions makes possessions his god.
- e. the **immoral person** who craves sex makes sex his god.
- f. the **glutton** who craves food makes eating his god.

Sunday School-Ten Commandments (1) Exodus 20:3

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- g. the **doting lover**—whether husband, wife, mother or father—who sets his supreme affection on the person loved instead of upon God makes that person his god.

3. God also makes a **third demand** of us: man is to know and acknowledge the only true and living God. There is one true and living God—the **LORD God Himself**.

- a. God declares that people who think there is no God are wrong (**atheists**). **I AM the LORD God**, the true and living God. *Atheists* may deny God, and *agnostics* may question if God really exists, but God is forceful in His declaration.

Exodus 20:2 (NASB)

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

Psalms 14:1 (NASB)

¹ **The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."** They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; There is no one who does good.

- b. No other object and no other being are ever to be set up as a so-called 'god.'

Taking ideas or objects and beings and calling them God is forbidden, absolutely forbidden.

1. The **LORD Himself (Jehovah, Yahweh)** emphatically declares:

Isaiah 42:8 (NASB)

⁸ **I am the Lord, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images.**

2. The great apostle Paul declared:

1 Corinthians 8:5-6 (NASB)

⁵ **For even if there are so-called [many] gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords,**
⁶ **yet for us there is *but* one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we *exist* for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we *exist* through Him.**

We make a god out of anything that we **esteem** or **love**, **fear** or **serve** more than God. Again, whatever the heart clings to, that is a person's god. It may be oneself. Frankly, many people focus upon pleasing and satisfying themselves. They live by their **own values** and are **concerned primarily** with their **own feelings**, **comfort**, **desires**, and **pleasures**. They simply live like **they want** and **do their own thing**. They have exalted themselves to be their own god.