

1st Commandment

GraspingGod.com: Bible Study Lesson 5.01

The 1st Commandment Bible Verses:

God spoke all these words, saying, "*You shall have no other gods before me.*" Exodus 20:1,3 NHEB.

Preliminary Bible Study Questions:

- 1) What is the First Commandment?
- 2) Why does the First Commandment exist?
- 3) How do you obey this Commandment?

The Lord God directly spoke and personally wrote the First Commandment (Exodus 32:16). Like nothing else, this law must be taken seriously by us.

This law is eternal and will permanently guard the entire being of God. Even after the first creation passes away the 1st commandment will guard God's being from his creatures.

The beautiful thing about heaven is that there will be no sin. The reason why is because our sinful nature will be removed and we'll be present with Jesus Christ, perfectly restrained from breaking God's laws.

That's the BIG picture, so let's now begin breaking down the 1st commandment. Keep in mind, though, that God's Law is a single unit. If you break one commandment, you're guilty of all (James 2:10).

The 1st Commandment

The 1st commandment, "*You shall have no other gods before me,*" has good reason to exist, and very good reason for being the FIRST Commandment. Let's look at the reasons why.

Before God there was nothing. There was God, and nothing else. Thoughts of a created universe circulated in his mind, though. Plans for a universe bustling with creatures filled his imagination.

Creation week finally happened. Through his Son and Spirit God spoke all of creation into existence (Genesis 1) *ex nihilo*. Without God, there is nothing; because of him, all things and all creatures exist.

God owns everything, including every creature. He is the Master Creator. He is due all respect from his creation, and undying adoration from all angels and people.

Inanimate things, aka inorganic matter, don't have responsibilities, but certain creatures do. Animals and plants will not be held accountable to God, either. **Both angels and people are**

responsible moral agents.

Further, God observes all things from heaven. God sees and knows everything a person thinks, says, and does (Psalm 121:1-8). Every thought, belief, word, activity, and deed you do is catalogued by God. You will be rewarded for what is good, while being culpable for what you do wrong.

God is greatly displeased when a human places anyone or anything in a higher regard than him. Foolishly placing something prominently before him provokes his wrath. He tells us, "*Their sorrows shall be multiplied who give gifts to another god.*" Psalm 16:4.

What is the First Commandment? **You shall hold and cherish no other being or thing above God Almighty.**

We are commanded to love God with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength (Luke 10:27). Placing another god higher than him, the One True God, will stoke his fierce, fiery anger and justify his wrath. God is the Almighty One and He demands attention. Period.

1st Commandment Duties

The duties each of us have to God, based on the 1st Commandment, are plentiful.

We are to worship him through our thought life. Our thought life includes meditation, reminiscing, and thoughts on and about God and his word. The Bible is God's gift to us so we know what and how to think of him and all of life. It is absolute truth, and it's meant to fill the thoughts, memories, and plans of our minds.

You cannot fulfill this command without a belief that the Bible is the sole inerrant, infallible source for knowledge of God. Nothing else in our universe can over-ride the absolute truth of the Bible. The Bible is the story of God, creation, man, sin, and God's plan of redemption for all humankind.

We as individuals are responsible to read, study, know, apply, and teach the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Nothing is more important to us. Nothing. Anything less than our total devotion to God's word tramples on the 1st Commandment.

Our thoughts of God should esteem him highly in all regards. We should adore him, honor him, love him, and desire him. Reading the Scriptures should ignite a desire for him and his mercy. Our thoughts of him should include a reverent fear of his entire holy being, his awesome presence, and his divine justice.

We should contemplate his amazing grace, which rescues us from destruction. We should bow before him in full repentance of our sinful nature and our individual sins. Each of us should fully trust him, by faith, and place the care of our eternal spirit, soul, and body in his powerful but loving hands.

Our responsibilities include delighting in him while adoring his magnificent power and majesty. Thoughts and dreams of him, based on our personal Bible study, should fill our minds during meditation. Prayers full of praise and thanksgiving should always spring from our hearts, exiting our lips heavenward.

A humble heart of submission to God and his word is demanded. Obedience to God's word must be our goal, starting with attitude, and ending with our thoughts, beliefs, words, and activities. Our obedience should please us, because it pleases him. Our disobedience should offend and disappoint us, because it offends and disappoints God.

Let's discuss our responsibilities to the 1st commandment further, but from another angle.

1st Commandment Prohibitions

As a creature, you are not allowed to challenge God. He will smite you sooner or later. Challenging God's sovereignty is the failure to submit to his reign over creation. This breaks God's 1st commandment.

Challenging God refers to rebelliously placing something or someone over his authority. The challenging activity lowers God to the universe and uplifts something or someone over him.

The Bible calls us to examine our own spiritual life (1 Corinthians 11:28). We examine our spiritual life by holding up our thoughts, beliefs, words, deeds, and activities to the principles and commands written in God's Bible.

The following list of potential "other gods" is partial, but covers many of the people and things we place above the One True Almighty God. With each of these potential other gods, keep in mind that in and of themselves they are not wrong. But, they become wrong for us when we place greater importance on them than on God.

Ask yourself these questions as you work through the list: Do I spend a greater amount of my personal time thinking about this thing, talking about this thing, and doing this, than I do with God and his Bible?

Partial list of potential "other gods" with which you may break the 1st commandment:

- Your self. Pride in your social status, looks, accomplishments, personality, belongings, abilities, skills, goodness, *etc.*
- Your money. Money gives you security and the ability to purchase things to please, comfort, and entertain you.
- Your house and yard. Ultimate security and very large things in which to take personal pride.
- Your clothes, belongings, and cars. Gotta fill up that house and garage with stuff, right?
- Your job. Your passion can be your job and the trappings of professional success.
- Your belly and the food with which you stuff it full.
- Your booze and drugs. Hedonism is running rampant around the world.

- Your spouse. Obsession with the trappings of married life.
- Your kids. We easily fall into the trap of living our lives through them.
- Your friends. Living life to party and hang out with your buddies. Again, this is hedonism.
- Your favorite lust targets. The opposite sex, and in some cases the same sex.
- Your television. Wasting life by watching your favorite Hollywood shows.
- Your sports teams. Sports heroes, teams, and championships. That's the ticket! Not.
- Your favorite actors and musicians. L-U-S-T.
- Your hobbies. Why be productive for God's Kingdom when you can waste time by wasting time? Keep in mind that being productive with earthly endeavors can be fine, unless they're propped up above God.
- Your pets. Odd, but yes, people hold up their dogs and cats like little gods.
- Your Bible. Ever heard of the KJV Only crowd? The KJV is good, but enough is enough.
- Your Church. Please don't turn your local church into a synagogue of Satan by making it a social club (Revelation 3:9).
- Your position at Church. Proud leaders in church ruin God's intent for the local body of believers. Stop thinking highly of your pompous self.
- Your pastor. You can easily think he is sinless and the best person in the world. Don't do that to your pastor.
- Your personal library. The obsessive collection of great written works can become an idol.

The following false idols and false religions are also forbidden by the 1st Commandment. Why? Because they all, and many more like them, directly oppose the Bible in various degrees of unbelief. Remember that when Scripture is opposed a challenge is placed against God's sovereignty. Ignoring God's will, which is found only in the Bible, breaks the 1st commandment.

None of the following gods ever wrote anything approaching the Ten Commandments because they're unworthy, unable, and forbidden by the One True God.

List of false idols and religious statues that oppose God: Anything in created nature (ex. people, planets, stars, animals, trees, mountains, rivers, *etc.*); Buddha; Mohammed/Allah; Mary; Saints; Krishna; political leaders; and finally, the devil (who is actually the mastermind behind all of these other false idols).

Partial list of false religions & false philosophies: atheism; agnosticism; angelology, astrology; darwinism; humanism; secularism; liberal protestantism (*i.e.* liberal Baptists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Methodists, Episcopalians, *etc.* who fail to believe in God's word as the ultimate, holy authority directly given by God); Roman Catholicism; Islam, nationalism; animism; wycca, aka witchcraft; paganism; Buddhism; Hinduism; Shintoism, New Age spirituality (Shirley Maclain, Oprah, *etc.*); Mormonism; Jehovah Witnesses; Scientology; Christian Science; marxism; communism; the list goes on and on.

Partial list of false "holy" books, which people place above, or even alongside the Bible: *Book of Mormon*; *The Watchtower* (Jehovah Witnesses); *Origin of the Species*; *The Analects & Five Classics* (Confucianism); *Bhagavad Gita*, *Upanishads*, and *Veda* (Hinduism); *Qu'ran* (Islam);

Talmud (Judaism); and the *Tao-te-ching: The Way and Its Power* (Taoism). That's a small sample of books people place above the Bible which breaks the First Commandment.

Anyone willfully ignorant of the Bible will be found in one of the above categories. A human being who chooses ignorance of God and his Word will have NO EXCUSE on Judgment Day, where each person will be judged by Christ and his Word (Mark 8:38). God's word, The Holy Bible, can be found basically anywhere, so pick one up and read, believing it with an open heart. **God despises willful stupidity.**

God says, "*This is my Son, learn from Him!*" Take it to heart. Jesus says, "*I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man comes to the Father but through me*" John 14:6. He gave people brains, and expects us to use them wisely.

Obeying the 1st Commandment

You, me, or no human could ever fulfill this command, "*You shall have no other gods before Me.*" That's troubling, isn't it?!

Adam and Eve blew our one opportunity to follow God perfectly. All of us since then have been born with a fallen, sinful nature, separated from God (Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:20).

Here's the Good News. God had a plan for us to reunite with Him. The plan has been carried out, reaching its pinnacle when Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose to heaven.

People needed someone to live perfectly and become the human sacrifice for our sins - all of them. God demanded a perfect human sacrifice to appease his wrath.

God sent his Son to come to earth to fulfill this commandment, *i.e.* all of his commandments. Jesus did that perfectly and fully. He was then sacrificed on the cross and later rose from the dead. Jesus obeyed the First Commandment. You haven't and never will fulfill it because of your sinful nature (Romans 3:23).

Fortunately, because of God's beautiful, amazing grace a plan of redemption was fulfilled. He loves you, even though you're born bad and commit sins against God (Romans 3:21-22). He does, however, demand a response from you, and holds you accountable for obeying it (Romans 10:9-11).

Your Fruit of the Spirit Response to the 1st Commandment:

Jesus was asked about the most important commandment, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus said to him, "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*" *This is the great and first commandment*" (Matthew 22:36-38).

Jesus' response sums up not only the 1st commandment, but also the first four commandments. His answer also gives foundational motivation to follow all of God's Law. A person must love

God completely, faithfully, and eternally. Everything else pales in comparison to what our love towards God should be.

God demands a response from you where you come to him in faith and repentance. Let's talk about what those critical things mean.

This is how you come to him by faith: You fall on your knees before Him. You place ALL things behind him in importance. You place God high above ALL things you cherish. He demands to be your One True God. You may even have to dig deep into your soul, and figure out what you've placed over him. Maybe it's your religion? Maybe it's your Mom? I don't know, but, God knows and he wants it removed from above him and placed below your love and affection for Him.

You must promise to love, honor, praise, and obey him. Start changing your attitude about him starting this very moment.

Next, you must repent before God, telling him you're sorry for humanity's original sin. Admit that humans sin against God by nature (Psalm 51:5). Confess your belief in what the Bible says about sin. Finally, admit and confess that you've lived a life full of sin. You've placed other people and other things above God and his Bible. You're guilty. Be honest, and pour out your heart to him - he's patiently waiting (James 4:8).

Repentance is a wonderful thing that gives you a second chance on keeping the 1st commandment.

Take God up on his incredible, graceful offer.

The moment God accepts your prayer for forgiveness, aka sinner's prayer, then an important event happens. This is critical to understand, so pay close attention.

Once God accepts your honest commitment to begin following him and the Bible, he places Jesus' perfect life on your personal account (2 Corinthians 5:21). That is an incredible transaction. God then sees you through Jesus' life. You become his adopted son or daughter, never to be cast away.

Here are just a few of the important things that happen for you upon your adoption into God's family:

You'll be forgiven for breaking the ten commandments, and ALL of God's laws. You'll meet God and his Son, by the power of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 2:20). You'll begin living an honorable life by heeding the Bible (Galatians 5:24). Finally, you will NOT stand before God at the dreadful Sinner's Judgment Day. You will be rewarded for the good things you did at the Bema Seat Judgment, and then you'll enter his heaven to live with Jesus Christ forever.

This activity is between you and God. You two must now work it out. Start repenting and believing, my friend. Then wait on God to answer your pleas (2 Corinthians 6:1-2).

Grasp This!

Bluntly, biblically, the fact is... you cannot possibly obey this 1st Commandment (Romans 7:22-25).

But, by agreeing with God's plan of redemption you can have Jesus' perfect obedience applied to your life. You must believe in God as the ONE & ONLY WAY, and you must repent for being a sinner. By fulfilling these things God will not hold you guilty for breaking the 1st commandment.

Once that amazing event happens, with you becoming saved by God, a change happens in your heart. You are granted the Holy Spirit, *which is God living in you*. He then supernaturally empowers you to love his commandments and to attempt to do your best to live by them (Romans 8:5-7).

You won't be perfect, but you'll try to be perfect, because you love your Father and his Son. You'll also begin hating sin. God now views you as holy and blameless, because his Son's perfect life is applied to you. This is such a beautiful love story, is it not? Start your walk with Jesus Christ as his disciple today.

Next Bible study lesson: 2nd Commandment #5.02.

First Commandment Bible Study Questions:

- 1) In what ways do I elevate myself above God, and thusly break the 1st commandment?
- 2) How and when do I confirm my state of being a natural born sinner?
- 3) Jehovah Witnesses say they're Christians who use the KJV Bible. So, why are they false believers?

More 1st Commandment Bible Verses:

This thing I commanded them, saying, 'Listen to my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.'
Jeremiah 7:23 NHEB.

Jesus said to them, *"You are from below. I am from above. You are of this world. I am not of this world. Therefore, I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I AM he, you will die in your sins."* John 8:23-24.

"Truly, truly, I tell you, he who hears my word, and believes him who sent me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life." John 5:24.

The rest of mankind, who were not killed with these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so that they would not worship demons, and the idols of gold, and of silver, and of brass, and of stone, and of wood; which can neither see, nor hear, nor walk. Revelation 9:20.

The 1st Commandment Prayer:

Dear Lord God Almighty, I fall before you in shame. I am so sorry for sinning against you.

Please, please accept my plea for forgiveness. I believe you, and I believe your word, the Bible. Thank you for sending the Son of God to become the Son of Man. He lived perfectly, because we're unable; and he died as a sacrifice, because we're unworthy. Your love is truly amazing, Lord. Please help me to please you with the rest of my life. O, Father, please accept my sinner's prayer. I love you and your Word. In Christ's name, Amen.

Read more: <http://www.graspinggod.com/1st-commandment.html#ixzz2HiuFonuD>

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