



Message Discussion Guide Week of September 10, 2023

Message: The 10 Commandments, Part 1: No Other God

Key Scriptures: [Exodus 20:1-3](#); [Matthew 19:16-22](#)

Preacher: Tom Parkinson

Message Highlights:

Our cars are parables for our lives. Just as our cars are complex and come with a manual, so also our lives are complex, and God gives the Bible as a manual.

The Ten Commandments give us guidelines for living according to God's design. They are blueprints for abundant life:

- Yet, the Ten Commandments are largely ignored by society. Only 14% of American adults can list all Ten Commandments.
- Even in the church, where the commandments were once taught to everyone, the Ten Commandments have fallen out of favor.

Ignoring the commandments is akin to ignoring the clear instructions of the manual when operating your car – it will not go well.

The Ten Commandments are not given until after God frees the Israelites from Egyptian slavery. Salvation is not the reward for obedience, rather it is the reason for it.

The First Commandment is unique in that while the others address behaviors, the first commandment addresses a particular relationship: our relationship with God.

There are three ways that we can obey the First Commandment:

1. Serve God alone – Our relationship with God is either/or, not both/and.
2. Reject all idols – an idol is anything that competes with God for our trust and loyalty.
3. Turn to Christ – We cannot know God apart from knowing Christ.

Who do you praise when life is good? Who do you trust when you need guidance and wisdom? Who do you call when you need help? Who do you thank for the blessings of life? If the answer is anything other than God, then you are standing on shaky ground.

Discussion Questions:

- 1.) Can you name all Ten Commandments? Did you learn the commandments when you were younger? Why do you think the commandments have fallen out of favor in public life and even in the church?
- 2.) What is the primary purpose of the Ten Commandments, especially knowing that none of us can obey them perfectly?
- 3.) Which of the Ten Commandments do you ignore and/or disobey the most frequently? Which do you believe our wider culture most often ignores?
- 4.) [Read Exodus 20:1-3](#)
 - a. Why does God deliver the Israelites from slavery before giving them the Ten Commandments?
 - b. Is the first commandment saying that other “gods” exist? If not, what does it mean when it references “gods?”
 - c. Consider the three ways we can follow the First Commandment that Pastor Tom shared. Which of those three do you struggle with the most? What could you do to address that struggle?
- 5.) What is the difference between having a both/and or either/or relationship with God? Why is it so important that our relationship with God be either/or?
- 6.) [Read Matthew 19:16-22](#)
 - a. What do these verses reveal about Jesus’ thinking about the Ten Commandments? Did Jesus value the Ten Commandments? What did he see as their purpose?
 - b. Which commandment is the rich young man breaking?
- 7.) Pastor Tom referenced some modern-day idols, such as money, possessions, position, pleasure, sex, sports, family, and career. Which of these idols have you been tempted to worship? Which are worshiped most frequently in our culture?
- 8.) What is your primary takeaway from this message?

Abundant Life Tip: The Ten Commandments are more than a list of rules to follow. They are blueprints for experiencing abundant life. We do well to carefully obey them, trusting in the grace of Christ when we fail (and we will!).