

## **Commandment #1 YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME**

**Exodus 20:1-3 "You shall have no other gods before me.**

**Psalms 115**

Today we began the series from Exodus on the 10 Commandments

A young pastor was greeting parishioners after preaching and a man walked by and said:

Pastor you are smarter than Einstein. The pastor very pleased said: Well thank you!

All week he thought about what the man had said.

He really didn't know what he meant.

So next Sunday the man was there again and he asked him.

What did you mean about being smarter than Einstein?

The man said: Well only 10 people in the world could understand Einstein,

But nobody could understand you.

Nobody can understand the mystery and depths of the living God.

But we can understand his love and word for us.

we want to look at the 10 commandments in the next ten weeks.

They will make a difference in your life,

They will give you a reference point for living.

a moral compass for an immoral world.

And something that will get down into the wounded soul

that is scared and stained and scuffed.

The first four commandments deal with loving God.

The last six deal with loving others.

**Our theme this fall is based on these ruled for living: LOVING GOD- LOVING OTHERS!**

### **COMMANDMENT ONE**

**Exodus 20:1-3 "You shall have no other gods before me.**

Its amazing to me how many false God are in this world

and what people will do for them.

I have heard more people tell me lately that I should not say

that the God I worship is the one and only true God.

Even thou America was founded on the believe in the one true God

It is not politically correct anymore.

**SLIDE -In India a woman was seen walking to the Yellow River.**

**In one hand she led a deformed, handicapped girl and the other a little boy.**

**A short time later, she came back with only the girl.**

The visitor asked someone nearby what happened to the boy.

Oh she threw him in the river as an offering to her god.

But why the boy, why not the deformed, handicapped girl?

Oh, we only offer our gods, our best!

Yes, but why not throw yourself in! What a false religion

Well its obvious that after Sept. 11, 2001,

SLIDE 4-We know that utterly irrational fanatical people in Iraq, and Afghanistan, Pakistan, in London,

SLIDE 5-Bangedash, Israel and in America, do throw themselves in, and blow themselves up as an act of devotion to their gods.

And yet I have Christians tell me that they just can't seem to find time to pray, read our Bibles, Tithe, or go to church and Sunday School, its just asking too much.

Yet we will serve the false God of Physical fitness.

Over ¼ of all Americans (70 million people) are involved in 5 to 20 hours

Of exercise and diet every week.

SLIDE -the chief executive of Allegheny Co., Pittsburgh

is a 63 year old guy named Roddy,

He can do 100 sit-ups, maybe you can too.

President Reagan at the age of 75 was still bench pressing 150.

But, how many Bible push ups can we do?

How many of the 10 commandments can you brenchpress?

When was the last time you leveled sin and Satan

With a roundhouse kick of authority in the Name of Jesus?

The time has come to Worship

the Right God,

the Right Way,

in the right place

at the right time.

With obedience to the right Commands.

Newsweek reported that only 49% of all Protestants

and 44% of all Roman Catholics

could name JUST four of the Ten Commandments.

How many could you have named?

#### **COMMANDMENT SLIDE—**

If we believe the ten Commandments are relevant for us today

We must know them to follow them.

If we desire to raise a generation of godly youth.

We must hide them in our hearts

Hang them on our walls

And Give voice to them in our daily living.

I have asked that the Ten Commandment be hung in every SS classroom.

We need to do our job at First UMC to teach out Children.

COMMANDMENT NUMBER ONE IS:

**YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME.**

**If at any other time in modern history we need to reaffirm this commandment today.**

## **I. GOD GAVE THIS COMMANDMENT TO US-- TO SHOW US HE LOVES US.**

And we are to love him first.

God said to Moses

**Exodus 3"7-8 I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I Have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. In deed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land.**

What we hear in that passage is that our God knows our suffering and hears our cry.

**Exodus 20:1 I am the Lord you God who brought you out of the land of Egypt. Out of the house of slavery;**

They had a living God who redeemed them AND loved them.

Nobody had to tell those people who had been

Beaten bruised, living in abject poverty in Egyptian slavery!!!! THAT GOD LOVED THEM AND HAD SAVED THEM.

You don't forget something like that:

But lets not make the same Mistakes the Pharisees made.

The law does not save us and.

Keeping the law does not save us.

Edmund Clowney of Westminster Seminary in Phil.

Says the whole idea of the Law as a way of salvation was a PERVERSION, of the Old Testament teaching.

The Pharisees were simply wrong,

the BIBLE NEVER PRESENTED THE 10 Commandments as a way of salvation;

this was a heresy both Jesus and Paul fought.

What was it that delivered the Israelites from Egypt?

### **SLIDE 13 Ex. 14-15 It was the blood of the Lamb.**

The angel of death was to pass over all Egypt and

Only those with the Blood of the Lamb on the door post were saved.

First born of all Egypt died.

But all Israel was spared.

And Pharaoh sent them out.

The 10 commandments didn't save them.

And they don't save us.

But they give provide us with a better way of living.

They come directly from God – What a communication on how to live.

God is the only true God above all the other gods of Egypt and the world..

Jeremiah says:

**Jeremiah 10:10 But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King. When he is angry, the earth trembles, the nations cannot endure his wrath. Vs. 11 Tell them this**

**“These gods, who did not make the heavens and the earth, will perish from the earth and from under the heaven.”**

**I. GOD GAVE THIS COMMANDMENT TO SHOW US HE LOVES US.**

**II. GOD GAVE THIS COMMANDMENT TO SHOW US HE PROTECT US.**

**Exodus 20:3 "You shall have no other gods before me.**

Harry Emerson Fosdick a liberal in his earlier years, wanted nothing to do with the Ten Commandments. “To hear him tell it, God came down to check out human happenings and then made up His ten-point program to wipe the smiles off our faces.”

But in his retirement he said this:

In my callow youth I reached the conclusion that we had so far spiritually progressed that we could center all attention on Paul’s positive ethic, “Love is the fulfilling of the law,” and that we need no longer stress the negative “Thou shalt nots.” I take it back. I know human life better. I wish those Ten Commandments could be blazoned in every market place, in every schoolhouse, in every church.

God is saying there are other gods out there  
That will harm you and destroy you.  
Don't waste your worship  
Don't waste your life on FALSE gods  
that beckon you but won't come through for you.

**Exodus 19:3-6 Tell the Israelites**

**You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagle’s wings and bought you to myself. Now therefore if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed the whole earth is mine, but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation.**

God is saying: I have paid dearly to rescue you.  
And if you want to really be free.  
Trust me.

And me alone and of all the gods of this world

**I will make a covenant with you and you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation.**

Ancient man worshiped many gods.  
gods of war, sex or gold.

Moon gods, sun gods, storm gods.

**Baal:** the water god, or wind and storm.

**Zeus:** was the god of power and autonomy

**Baucus** the god of gluttony the party God.

A huge statue of Baucus in the town  
with his head back and his eyes rolled up  
and a miller light in his hands:

**Aphrodite's:**the fertility Goddess of love, promiscuity and STD's

In Corinth today you can still see the ruins

Of the old temples with the rooms for the prostitutes.

**Ares:**the god of brutes, of posturing and gangs.

**Mammon.** was the God of material possession and money and things.

**Asthenia:** the goddess of education and degrees intellectuals and geeks.

**Sophia:** the goddess of the feminist wisdom and knowledge

Add to that all the cults of scientology,

Magdalena cults of Divinci code,

Jehovah witnesses,

Mormons,

And on our own Northern University campus this week.

They had a Smudging service, calling on the "spirit of sacred plants to ward off detrimental spirits"

In the middle of all this God is saying:

Don't let these other God pull you away.

They will leave you desolate and broken.

And that includes Buddha, Mohammad, and Alla,

Lenin, Marx or Mao, rock stars and rappers of today.

And don't worship yourself, fashion, or man's applause.

Because they will all let you down.

Worship the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob alone is able to deliver.

Worship the Father of Jesus.

Because He said If you have seen me you have seen the father.

## **GOD GAVE THIS COMMANDMENT TO SHOW US**

### **I. HE LOVES US.**

### **II. HE PROTECT US.**

### **III. HE PROVIDES FOR US.**

Ted Turner has declared the Ten Commandments obsolete, "We're living with outdated rules. and I bet nobody here even pays much attention to them because they're too old."

Ted is spouting the mentality of our society.

**God says: YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GOD'S BEFORE ME.**

When you get that one right all the rest of life falls into place.

**John Wooden in his book "They call me Coach" said:**

It has always been my philosophy to follow our game plan.

If we believe in it, we will wear the opposition down and we'll get to them.

If we break away from our style and play their style we're in trouble.

And if we let our emotions command the game rather than our reason,

we will not function effectively. I constantly caution our teams,

play your game. Just play your game.

Eventually, if you play, if you stick to your style, it will tell in the end.

This does not mean that we will always outscore our opponents. But it does ensure that we will not beat ourselves. They Call Me Coach, Word, 1972, p.111

**God's game plan for living was the 10 Commandments.**

**You get the first one right and you will never end up beating yourselves.**

God is no cosmic killjoy.

His purpose is deliverance not domination.

His Ten Commandments were not given to limit and destroy the freedom of His people.

Putting God first will focus us and center us.

**I took my two year old granddaughter to Storybook Land.**

We had a nice leisurely afternoon,

Plenty of time to enjoy the moment.

But I have noticed that little children have no focus.

And Katrina would look at one display and then the next

And stop at the little Bo peep lambs, then ran to climb on the three little kittens,

on to the three little pigs.

She almost ran around Story Book Land.

However she did stop and got hung up on the live chickens

And the little bandy roosters.

Are we adults any better when we run through life?

We trade cars every year.

move to a new house every 5 years.

Into a new marriage every 7

And the minute we get a job

Were looking for a new one.

Jumping from one sports event to the other.

From one mall store to the other,

Because we can't stop to focus.

God wants us to place him first in our lives.

So we can enjoy all the other life he gives.

When we trust him, and know him, and are confident that he is in control

Then all the heart disease,

And lumps in our breast,

That heart fibrillation,

The broken bones, car accident,

And unemployment,

And sickness,

And death of a loved one.

Will not beat us.

Will not hold us captive

But seen from a perspective of a God who cares about us.  
We are free to seek the alternatives thoughts, hopes, and dreams  
Because we trust in a living God  
Who is there and who cares about us.

**A Confirmation teacher was asking a nervous student to answer the Westminster Confession of Faith** question: "What is the chief end of man?" The answer being "To glorify God and enjoy Him forever." One youngster was so nervous he blurted out :  
"The chief end of man is to glorify God and annoy Him forever!"

Lets stop annoying God and step up to this first commandment  
as our priority and all the other hard choices will fall into place.

**Because when we trust God first in our lives**

**We know that** no storm can overtake us.

No **sickness** can keep us away.

No **slavery or addiction** can keep us down.

Because the living God we serve will have the final word for us.

So the first command is : You shall have no other gods before me.

That is God's continual summons to each of us.

Put God first in your life.

Keep your game plan.

Obey Gods word.

May God bless us as we learn to

LOVE GOD and LOVE OTHERS.