



No Other Gods Before Me

Deuteronomy 5:1-10

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Overview: The Ten Commandments are among the most familiar and least understood texts in the Old Testament. They were given to Israel after their deliverance from Egypt, indicating that grace is the basis for belonging to the Lord while obedience to God's law flows from that relationship. They were designed to highlight the character of God in individual and societal living but were not designed to produce such character apart from spiritually renewed hearts. They were external measures by which righteousness could be displayed but required more than external obedience in order to be fulfilled. They were written using recurring negations but were intended to point to positive living. Our approach to the Ten Commandments, then, must combine law with grace, justice with love, and holiness with happiness.

01. Because God is the only God, worshipping other gods is instantly futile and ultimately unfulfilling. Let us pray for hearts that are singular in devotion.

02. Because God is greater than we can imagine, reducing God to our level is inaccurate and insulting. Let us pray for minds that are free from misconception.

03. Because God is holy beyond compare, speaking lightly about God is empty and irreverent. Let us pray for mouths that honor God in our conversation.

I HAVE SET THE LAND BEFORE YOU

1. In what ways do you find the Ten Commandments are misunderstood by non-Christians? In what ways do Christians misunderstand the Ten Commandments? How would you describe the purpose of the Ten Commandments in a single sentence?

2. What is the significance of the sequence in giving the Ten Commandments to Israel after God delivered them from Egypt? How does Galatians 3 shed light on how the law leads us to our knowledge of sin and need for a Savior?

3. In what ways can we be guilty of breaking the commandments internally without breaking them externally? See Matthew 5:21-30 for further insight. How does breaking one commandment make us guilty of breaking all the commandments? See James 2:10 for further insight.

4. How do the first three commandments inform the application of the remaining commandments? Can we assume morality in society without also assuming that God exists and He holds us accountable for our actions?

5. In what ways are we guilty of worshipping other gods without formally embracing polytheism? In what ways are we guilty of idolatry without actually carving images of God? In what ways are we guilty of taking God's name in vain without attaching curses to His name? What promise of grace do we have in light of our failure to keep the commandments? See 2 Corinthians 5:21 for further insight.

For Further Reading: J. I. Packer, *Keeping the Ten Commandments* (Crossway, 2008)

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