



THE TEN COMMANDMENTS: NO OTHER GODS

October 25, 2026

Main Scripture: Exodus 20:1–3

Big Idea: God's words are not a burden meant to restrict our freedom; they are His wisdom for life, teaching us how to live and flourish in the freedom He has given us.

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS FREEDOM?

Laws can sometimes feel strange or restrictive, but good laws help create safety, order, and flourishing.

Israel had spent 400 years in slavery in Egypt before God rescued them and brought them into the wilderness.

God gave the Ten Commandments not to put Israel back into bondage, but to teach them how to live in their newfound freedom.

Key Truth: God's commands are not simply rules to follow; they are His wisdom for life.

The Ten Commandments are an invitation to live the way God designed us to live.

Read: Exodus 20:1–3; Deuteronomy 4:1

1. SALVATION COMES BEFORE GOD'S COMMANDS

Exodus 20:2–3

"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me."

Before God gives Israel a command, He reminds them of what He has already done: He rescued them.

Israel did not earn their freedom through obedience. God saved them first, then taught them how to live in that freedom.

The same is true of the gospel. Jesus died and rose again to rescue us from sin and death.

We do not obey God to earn His love or salvation. We respond to His grace by learning to live the way He has called us to live.

Key Truth: God saves us first, then teaches us how to live as saved people.

We do not need to act saved to get saved.

God's commands do not earn us access to His love; they help us experience the fullness of life He offers.

Ignoring God's wisdom can lead us back into patterns of bondage, even after we have experienced His freedom.

Key Takeaway: Obedience is not how we earn God's grace. It is how we learn to live in the freedom His grace provides.

2. GIVE ALL YOUR ALLEGIANCE TO GOD

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

God calls His people to give Him their complete loyalty and devotion.

The phrase "before me" can mean placing something in front of God, instead of Him, or in opposition to Him.

God is not one option among many. He alone is God, and He calls us to trust Him above everything else.

Read: Isaiah 44:6, 8

What becomes a god in our lives?

Worship is not limited to religious practices. We worship through what receives our deepest devotion, loyalty, sacrifice, and trust.

Common things that can compete with God include:

Money, success, and power.

Relationships, family, and children.

Our jobs, possessions, and reputation.

Anything we believe we cannot live without or that gives us our sense of worth and security.

These things are not necessarily bad. Many are gifts from God. But good things can become “god things” when they take God's place.

Ask yourself:

- What receives most of my time, attention, and energy?
- What am I unwilling to surrender to God?
- Where do I place my security and identity?
- What competes with my affection and obedience to Jesus?

The answer is not to reject every good thing in life. It is to put God first, recognizing Him as the source of every good gift.

Key Takeaway: When God is first, we can enjoy His blessings without becoming controlled by them.

3. GOD IS MOST FULLY KNOWN IN JESUS

John 8:31–34

“Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” — John 8:32

Jesus spoke these words to people who already believed in Him.

He called them to continue in His teaching because following Him leads to truth and freedom.

Jesus explained that everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Bondage is not limited to physical slavery; sin can also trap, damage, and dehumanize us.

Jesus came to set us free and teach us how to live in that freedom.

Jesus is the centre of our freedom.

False gods demand sacrifices from us in exchange for their supposed blessings.

We can sacrifice our relationships, integrity, health, and peace in pursuit of success, approval, money, or power.

Jesus turns this pattern upside down. He gave His life so that we could be free.

Key Truth: Jesus does not simply rescue us from bondage; He teaches us how to live in freedom.

The first commandment is foundational to all the others. When God holds first place in our lives, His wisdom shapes how we live, love, work, and relate to others.

Key Takeaway: To follow Jesus is to give Him our allegiance and trust His words to lead us into life.

CONCLUSION: WHO OR WHAT HAS FIRST PLACE?

Invite the Holy Spirit to help you honestly examine your heart.

1. Have I viewed God's commands as a burden rather than an invitation to freedom?

Freedom is not simply doing whatever we want. True freedom means learning to live according to God's wisdom and design.

2. What have I placed before God?

Is something obscuring my view of Him, replacing Him, or competing with Him for my affection and allegiance?

3. Have I fully given my allegiance to Jesus?

Jesus is Lord. No other gods, no other masters, and no other loyalties should take His place.

Final Reminder: God's Word is an invitation to life. He has rescued us through Jesus, and He calls us to follow Him into the freedom He provides.

PRACTICE OF THE WEEK

Take time this week to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal anything competing with God for first place in your life.

Recognize it: Identify something receiving more of your trust, attention, or devotion than it should.

Surrender it: Bring it honestly before God and ask Him to help you put it in its proper place.

Choose Jesus: Take one practical step that reflects your allegiance to Him and His Word.

My response this week:

What is one thing I need to surrender or reorder so that God has first place in my life?

SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Freedom and obedience: The sermon describes God's commands as an invitation to freedom rather than a burden. Why can obedience sometimes feel restrictive, even when we trust God? How might our perspective change when we see His commands as wisdom intended for our flourishing?

2. Grace before obedience: Israel was rescued before receiving the Ten Commandments. How does this shape the way we understand the relationship between God's grace and our obedience? What is the difference between following Jesus to earn His approval and following Him because we have already received His grace?

3. Good things becoming “god things”: The sermon reminds us that even good gifts—such as relationships, family, work, or success—can take God's place. How can we recognize when something good has become too central in our lives? Why might this be difficult to notice in ourselves?

4. Allegiance in everyday life: We may not worship physical idols, but we can still give our deepest loyalty to other things. What are some subtle ways that money, approval, comfort, achievement, or relationships can compete with Jesus in our culture? How can we pursue these things in a healthy way without making them ultimate?

5. Living in freedom: Jesus teaches that continuing in His Word leads to truth and freedom (John 8:31–34). Why might following Jesus sometimes require us to surrender something we want? Can you think of a time when trusting God's way brought freedom, even if it was difficult at first?

6. Personal response: If you invited the Holy Spirit to show you what currently competes with God for first place, what might He bring to your attention? What is one practical step you could take this week to realign your priorities with Jesus's?