

Choose God Always

Scripture: Exodus 20:1-3
(09-13-26 Pastor Tony Hao)

The God of the Bible is not simply interested in being recognized as a strong and mighty deity. That would not have been a controversial claim in the ancient world. Lots of peoples had lots of impressive gods and goddesses. What was controversial, and what set the Israelites apart from the other nations, was that their God demanded to be worshiped alone, as the only God, to the exclusion of all others.

We must not misunderstand the phrase “no other gods before me.” The first commandment is not suggesting that there are, in fact, other gods. There’s a view called henotheism, which says there are many gods, but you must give your god first place. That’s not what the first commandment is about. The Mosaic covenant clearly presumes monotheism. No other gods should be worshiped because in reality there are no gods but Yahweh.

We’re quite happy to have God in our lives, just so long as he fills only a part of our lives. We all want a Trivial Pursuit God, a manageable deity to round out our lives and fill in one piece of the pie. But he has no interest in being one important person among many. God cannot be worshiped rightly if he is worshiped alongside any other. There can be no and in our relationship with God. We love and worship him above all others because he alone is God.

John Calvin argues that we owe God four things: adoration (praise), trust (count on), invocation (call on), and thanksgiving. We can use these same four points to help us determine not just what we say we believe but the nature of God in our lives.

GROWING DEEPER (Reflection & Application)

"Hear o Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." Deu 6:4-5

1. Why do you think God’s revelation emphasizes that He is “one”?
2. What do you think it means to love God in the way prescribed in Deu 6:5?
3. What is one way you can show this kind of love for God?