

INTRODUCTION

The first commandment is in the singular, so we understand that it applies to every single one of us individually.

The first commandment teaches us that the object of our worship is to be the one true God, and Him only.

The first commandment forbids the sin of worshipping anything else but God. At the same time, it requires each of us to worship God.

The first commandment includes the phrase “before me,” which helps us know that it applies not only to our outward worship, which is seen by men, but to our inward worship, which is seen by God.

In the first commandment, God requires us to worship Him not as we might imagine Him to be, or might wish for Him to be, but as He truly is, as he has revealed Himself to be, as to His being, His perfections, His word, His providence, His salvation, and His judgment.

The first commandment leaves us no hope of being judged righteous in the sight of God based on our own goodness or righteousness. Instead, it sends us to Jesus Christ the righteous, that we may be found righteous in Him, through faith in Him.

So much we already have considered together the past two sessions. Today we consider what it is to give God his due, and how the first commandment forbids us giving to any creature what is due unto God only.

TEXT

Exodus 20:2-3 I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

BODY

I. God's Due

- A. Because of who God is as the one, the only divine being; and because of how He has created us and everything else there is; and because of what He does in providing us all we need for life in this world; and because of what He has done to save us by the sacrifice Jesus Christ made on the cross, and by the change the Holy Spirit makes in our hearts; and because of the eternal blessings He has promised us that are yet to come in the future, God is due all our love. It is our duty toward Him to love Him with all our love: Mark 12:30 ...thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength...
- B. All our love is His due; it is our duty to give all our love to Him; it is His right to receive it from us.
- C. But of what does that love consist, that is God's due?
 - 1. Faith; trust; confidence; hope; depending on Him
 - 2. Invocation; calling on His name; praying to Him
 - 3. Gratitude; thanksgiving; thanking Him
 - 4. Fear; reverence; awe; honoring Him
 - 5. Obedience; zeal; serving Him
 - 6. Submission; being content with His providence
 - 7. Repentance; turning back to Him
 - 8. Joy; rejoicing and delighting in Him
 - 9. Knowledge; learning of Him; meditating on Him
 - 10. Veneration; acknowledging of His divine perfections; praising Him

II. Idolatry

- A. Idol - whatever receives from us what is due only to God
 - 1. possibly something essentially evil; possibly something essentially good
 - 2. possibly something made to be an idol; possibly something not made to be an idol, which we use as an idol
- B. Idolatry - taking what is due only to God, and giving it to someone or something else
 - 1. internal
 - a) Hopkins: when in our minds and affections we honour and venerate that as God, which indeed is not so, but is either a creature...or a fiction
 - b) the matter of the first commandment
 - 2. external
 - a) Hopkins: when we express the inward veneration of our souls, by outward acts of adoration
 - b) - the matter of the second commandment
- C. Idolatrous
- D. Idolater
- E. Adam and Eve committed this sin when they ate the forbidden fruit. God rightly counts us as having committed it with Adam, in him.
- F. Every one of us has committed this sin countless times in this life, before ever he realized it.

III. Our Due

- A. I have been talking about what God is due from us; but what are we due from God? We are due His wrath.
- B. Almost every one of us human beings is due God's wrath. I say "almost" because there is one man who is not due God's wrath: Jesus Christ the righteous!
- C. Not being due any of God's wrath Himself, Jesus Christ took the wrath of God upon Himself when He was crucified. He did that on behalf of sinners who were due the wrath of God.
- D. What is Jesus Christ the righteous due from God?
 - 1. complete approval
 - 2. all possible rewards
 - 3. all honor; a seat on the throne of heaven
 - 4. the inheritance of all good things
- E. God has ordained that any one of us who believes in Jesus Christ will be counted as being due what He is due rather than what we are due.

CONCLUSION

Turn, then, from all your idolatry! Repent of your sin, returning to God with all your heart. Trust yourself to Jesus Christ, that you may escape the wrath of God and enjoy with Jesus Christ all the rewards that are His due.

Then strive with zeal to know what is God's due, and to render it to Him more and more through the rest of your life---not trying to be saved by your good works, but rejoicing to be saved through Christ's good works, and looking to follow in His steps, learning to obey all God's commands as He has done.

Roel - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Psalm 29:2

Jeremiah - Scripture Reading - Psalm 119:65-72

Thad - Congregational Prayer

Allison - Prelude

Allison - Trinity 719 "A Shelter in the Time of Storm" - Andrew lead

Audrey - Trinity 408 "In Thy Wrath and Hot Displeasure"

Journey - Trinity 188 "There Is a Fountain" - Alex lead

IDOLATRY

Idol

- When you should be giving something to God, but you instead give it to anything else, you are using that thing as an idol.
- When you take what is due the Creator, and give it instead to any creature, you have used that creature as an idol.

Idolatry

Idolator

Durham:

Idolatry may be distinguished into Idolatry against the first Commandment, when worship is not directed to the right, but to the wrong object, and Idolatry against the second Commandment, which violates the prescribed manner [JRY: means] of worshipping God.

Hopkins:

Idolatry, therefore, is a sin more common among us than we imagine: for as many ignorant persons as there are, so many idolaters there are; who, though they fall not down before stocks and stones, yet form such uncouth ideas and strange images of God in their minds, that no more represent his infinite perfections and excellencies, than those dumb idols that the heathens worship.

And, as an idol is twofold; one, Internal, in the fiction and imagination of the mind; another, External and visible, either the work of men's hands as statues and images, or else the work of God's hands as the sun, moon, and stars, or any other creature: so there is a twofold idolatry; -the one, Internal, when in our minds and affections we honour and venerate that as God, which indeed is not so, but is either a creature of the True God, or a fiction of a deluded fancy;

-the other, External, which we are then guilty of, when we express the inward veneration of our souls, by outward acts of adoration. As, for instance: whosoever shall believe the consecrated bread in the Sacrament to be transubstantiated and changed into the true and proper body of Jesus Christ, and, upon this belief, shall in his mind revere and honour it as his God, as the Papists do, he is guilty of Internal Idolatry: but if, to this internal veneration, he add any external rites of worship, as prostration, invocation, &c. he is then likewise guilty of External Idolatry

HIS DUE

Invocation - calling on Him in prayer

Ascription of divine attributes

Larger Catechism:

What are the sins forbidden in the first commandment?

...the omission or neglect of anything due to him...

Q. 189. What doth the preface of the Lord's prayer teach us?

A. The preface of the Lord's prayer (contained in these words, Our Father which art in heaven) teacheth us, when we pray, to draw near to God with confidence of his fatherly goodness, and our interest therein; with reverence, and all other childlike dispositions, heavenly affections, and due apprehensions of his sovereign power, majesty, and gracious condescension: as also, to pray with and for others.

Durham:

The third way it's violated (considering the breach of this commandment strictly) is by attributing that which is due to God, and properly belong to him, to beings; such as trusting in them, calling on them through prayer, considering them Omnipotent, Omniscient, or believing that they have the influence or power to guide the world. Some attribute these abilities to Stars, to the Heavens, to Fortune, to Saints, to Angels, even to Devils. This is properly Idolatry. And because it is the chief objective of this Commandment, and we are expressly commanded to keep ourselves from Idols (1 John 5), we shall dwell a bit on this.

An idol is something excessively esteemed, and Idolatry is the transferring of God's due, outwardly or inwardly, to what is not God, whether we consider it as God or not.

Even things that are intrinsically minor can sometimes gain undue importance and thus become idols.

More broadly, this commandment is broken in three ways, as has been previously stated

1. By detracting from God that which is His due. Any contempt of Him, disobedience to Him, or harm to His infinite attributes, such as denying His omnipotence, omniscience, infinity, or providence to any degree, are violations of this Commandment. God is wronged when He does not receive in all ways what is rightfully His.

2. By attributing to God what does not align with His absolute perfection, purity, and holiness, such as claiming He can do wrong, change, not keep His promises, or not govern the world wisely. Suggesting He has any physical form or can be comprehended also infringes upon this Commandment.
3. When what is due to God, such as faith, hope, love, and fear, is given to creatures, whether literally to idols, or to humans, saints, angels, ordinances (like the sacraments), stars, herbs, gold, physicians, etc. This occurs when too much importance is placed on these entities or when anything not suitable to them is ascribed to them. As a result, practices such as witchcraft, charming, covetousness, judicial astrology, etc., are rebuked, as they draw people's hearts away from the living God.

In Doctrine: This occurs when individuals uphold beliefs that dishonor God or attribute His due to creations, and then proceed to teach these beliefs, as in Matthew 5:33-38.

All heretics who deny the divinity of any of the Persons, such as Sabellians, who perceive only one Person; Arians, who see Christ as a created God; Photinians, who see Him as purely human; and all those who propose a plurality of Gods, or diminish the divine attributes, or attribute God's due to saints in worship or invocation. Furthermore, anyone who contradicts any truth or upholds any error is included here, as they thereby implicate God and His Word, and wrong Him who owns no such thing. This category could also include all those who are ignorant of God.

All profane individuals, whether they are atheists in heart or in practice. Those who are disobedient are essentially denying God and not giving Him His due, which is obedience, regardless of their verbal profession about Him.

And, as these hold him forth to be worshipped as such, so, when that is slighted or neglected, it cannot but infer great guilt; especially, when **his due is not given** by such as we are, to such as he is, it maketh us exceedingly guilty...

Hopkins:

...a due love of God...

...the Invocation of the Name of God in our Prayers and Praises... If we have recourse only to our own power or policy to accomplish our designs; and, when they succeed, ascribe the success of them only to our own wisdom and conduct; we make these, our idols, and give them the honour which is due unto God only.

...that God, to whom this homage of our souls, and all our affection and veneration is due...

...when he takes no care to do service to his great Lord and Master, to whom it is infinitely more due!

It is the former of these two kinds of Idolatry, which is here prohibited in this First Commandment: Thou shalt have no other Gods before me; that is, thou shalt not give unto

anything, either in heaven or earth, that inward heart-worship of affiance, love, fear, veneration, and dependance, which is due only to the True God, the Lord Jehovah.

Whosoever doth ascribe or render to any creature that which is proper and due only unto God, he is an idolater, and guilty of the transgression of this First Commandment.

-explicit, when we do avow the attributes of the divine nature to be in those things, which are not capable of them; as those, who hold the body of Christ, to be omnipresent:
-implicit, when we render unto any creature that inward worship, esteem, and affection, which is due only unto the infinite perfections of the Deity.

Whosoever chiefly and supremely loves any creature, is an idolater; because our chiefest love is due only unto God.

Whosoever puts his trust and confidence in any creature more than in God, is guilty of this inward heart-idolatry.

He is an idolater, and a very gross one, who sets up any creature in his heart, whether saint or angel, to pray unto it, and to betake himself unto that vain refuge in his straits and necessities. For invocation properly belongs to God alone...prayer and adoration suppose the object of it to be omnipresent and omnipotent, omnipresent to hear, and omnipotent to save, or else they are in vain

Watson:

...the sin of idolatry, which is giving that glory to an image---which is due to God.

[Second Commandment] Image worship must needs be very impious and blasphemous, because it is giving the religious worship to the creature, which is due to God only...the worship of the body is due to God, as well as the worship of the heart...to give the adoration to a creature which belongs to God only...Is 42:8

[Third Commandment] ...so should we speak of God with the sacred reverence that is due to the infinite majesty of heaven.

[Fourth Commandment] ...The Sabbath-day is my due...

[Sixth Commandment]

[with reference to the Fourth] Therefore, after morning sacrifice, to spend the other part of the Sabbath in vanity and pleasure, is spiritual theft. It robs God of his due...

He who uses false weights and measures, steals from others what is their due.

[Part IV: The Way of Salvation; The Wrath of God]

Wrath is that which belongs to us as we are sinners; it is due to us as just wages, which are paid.

The stupidity of sinners is reprov'd, who are no more affected with the curse and wrath of God, which is due to them...Is 44:19

OUR DUE

Larger Catechism:

Q. 153. What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us by reason of the transgression of the law?

A. That we may escape the wrath and curse of God due to us by reason of the transgression of the law, he requireth of us repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, and the diligent use of the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of his mediation.

Watson:

What does God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us for our sin?

Malachi 1:6-14 "A son honors his father, And a servant his master. If then I am the Father, Where is My honor? And if I am a Master, Where is My reverence? Says the LORD of hosts To you priests who despise My name. Yet you say, 'In what way have we despised Your name?' 7 "You offer defiled food on My altar, But say, 'In what way have we defiled You?' By saying, 'The table of the LORD is contemptible.' 8 And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, Is it not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, Is it not evil? Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably?" Says the LORD of hosts. 9 "But now entreat God's favor, That He may be gracious to us. While this is being done by your hands, Will He accept you favorably?" Says the LORD of hosts. 10 "Who is there even among you who would shut the doors, So that you would not kindle fire on My altar in vain? I have no pleasure in you," Says the LORD of hosts, "Nor will I accept an offering from your hands. 11 For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name shall be great among the Gentiles; In every place incense shall be offered to My name, And a pure offering; For My name shall be great among the nations," Says the LORD of hosts. 12 "But you profane it, In that you say, 'The table of the LORD is defiled; And its fruit, its food, is contemptible.' 13 You also say, 'Oh, what a weariness!' And you sneer at it," Says the LORD of hosts. "And you bring the stolen, the lame, and the sick; Thus you bring an offering! Should I accept this from your hand?" Says the LORD. 14 "But cursed be the deceiver Who has in his flock a male, And takes a vow, But sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished-- For I am a great King," Says the LORD of hosts, "And My name is to be feared among the nations.

1 John 1:8-9 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Durham:

That it sheweth who is the right Object of worship, and directeth men thereto.

That it regulateth mens internal worshipping of God, and calleth for that; whereas the second commandment supposeth both these, and directeth as to the *manner* of worshipping the true God in externals, and regulateth these.

It requireth the right knowledge of God; for there can be no true worship given to him, there can be no right thought or conception of him, or faith in him, till he be known: He must be known to be one God in essence, Deut 6:4 and three persons, 1 John 5:7...attributes...special works...as his works of creation, providence, redemption...the covenant of grace...the Mediator, and his offices.

It requireth from us a suitable acknowledging of God in all these properties...believed and trusted in

That the commandment requireth all these, and in the highest and most perfect degree.

We may look upon the breach of this commandment more largely, as God is any way wronged in that which is his due; or more strictly, as it relateth to that which is more properly idolatry.

Being more largely considered, it is broken two ways:

1. When what is proper and essential to God is denied to him in effect, or practically; as when he is not accounted eternal, omnipotent, one blessed God in three persons
2. ...when any thing unbecoming the holy majesty of God is attributed unto him; as, that he changeth...

(considering the breach of this commandment strictly) is by attributing that which is due to God...to creatures; as trusting in them, calling on them by prayer...believing that they have influence or power to guide the world, which some do attribute to stars, to the heavens, to fortune, to saints, to angels, yea, to devils; this is properly idolatry.

An idol is something excessively esteemed of, and idolatry is the transferring of God's due, outwardly or inwardly, to what is not God, whether we esteem it God or not.

There are five things that are incontrovertibly due to God, to wit,

1. estimation and honour above all
2. love with all the heart - 1 John 2:15; Col 3:5; Eph 5:5; 1 Sam 2:24-29 compared with Abraham, who withheld not his only son
3. confidence and trust - to wit, excessively
4. fear and reverence
5. service and obedience - you cannot serve two masters; Gal 1:10; what men are most excessively taken up with, and most careful to fulfil and accomplish; what it is for which they will take most pains that they may attain; what getteth most of their time and labour; what...overaweth them most, so that they cannot resist it, tho' it thrust by duties to God

the world

the belly Philippians 3:19 ... gluttons, drunkards

a man's self...honour...applause...his own will, opinion

when it indisposeth for these [worship of God in praying, reading, hearing, etc] so that, when we are praying or hearing, the heart is carried away after creatures, and the mind is taken up with some other thing than God; as Ezek 33:3

Is 30:22

Luke 14:8

1 Cor 10:5-15

More generally, it is broken three ways, as hath been said already:

1st, By derogating from God that which is his due; so all contempt of him, disobedience to him, wronging his infinite attributes, as if he were not Omnipotent, Omniscient, Infinite, etc, denying of his providence in less or more, are breaches of this commandment. Thus, he is wronged, when he getteth not every way that which is his due.

2dly, By attributing to God what is not consistent with his absolute perfection, purity and holiness; as, that he doth or can do wrong, change, not keep his promises, or not guide the world wisely; that he hath any bodily shape, or may be comprehended.

3dly, When, what is due to God, as faith, hope, love, fear, etc. is given to creatures, whether to idols literally, or to men, to saints, angels, ordinances (ast he sacraments), stars, herbs, gold, physicians, etc. when too much weight is laid on them, or any thing, not agreeing to them, is ascribed to them; by which witchcraft, charming, covetousness, judicial astrology, etc. are reproved, as drawing the hearts of men away from the living God.

Thomas Vincent

<https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/sdg/vincent/The%20Shorter%20Catechism%20Explained%20-%20Thomas%20Vincent.pdf>

Durham

<https://www.monergism.com/you-shall-have-no-other-gods-me>

<https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=tyU3AAAAMAAJ&pg=GBS.PA48>

Watson

<https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/sdg/watson/The%20Ten%20Commandments%20-%20Thomas%20Watson.pdf>

Hopkins

<https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/sdg/hopkins/Exposition%20of%20the%20Ten%20Commandme%20-%20Ezekiel%20Hopkins.pdf>

