

"The First Commandment"

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BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I gave a presentation titled "The First Commandment." Following are some of the scriptures that I read.

Grace and expectations

Exodus 20:2—"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."

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

Gods of Egypt

Exodus 12:12—"For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord."

Gods of the nations

Exodus 18:10-11—"And Jethro said, 'Blessed be the Lord, who has delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh, and who has delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. Now I know that the Lord is greater than all the gods; for in the very thing in which they behaved proudly, He was above them.' "

Deuteronomy 12:29-31—"When the Lord your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land, take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.' You shall not worship the Lord your God in that way; for every abomination to the Lord which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods."

God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

There are many scriptures that mention the promises that God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Following are a few.

- Genesis 12:1-3—God made a promise to Abram.
- Genesis 17:1-14—God made a covenant with Abraham.
- Genesis 22:15-18—God repeated His promise to Abraham.
- Genesis 26:2-5—God repeated His promise to Isaac.
- Genesis 28:10-15—God repeated His promise to Jacob.
- Exodus 3:1-6—God identified Himself to Moses as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- John 8:56-58—Christ reminded the crowd about Exodus 3:6.

God of the living

After the Pharisees and Herodians challenged the Son of God (Matthew 22:15-22), the Sadducees took their turn (verses 23-33). In His rebuttal, He made a powerful statement in Matthew 22:31-32.

Matthew 22:31-32—"But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

Great Commandments

Whenever people seek to live by the First Commandment, I recommend that they consider the two Great Commandments mentioned by the Son of God.

Matthew 22:36-40—" 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?' Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."