THE ONE AND ONLY

 **DATE: 1/21/2018 am**

**TEXT: Exodus 20:1-3**

**INTRODUCTION**

There is a phrase used when introducing someone to emphasize that they are famous and uniquely talented

That phrase is … “The One and Only”

Well, when it comes to the 1st Commandment, it tells us that God is to be “The One and Only”

**Ill.** A man purchased a statue of Jesus at an auction and placed it on his desk in the den. A few days later his wife moved the statue to a table in the living room. The man was taking it back to the den when his little girl asked, *“Where are you going to put God now Daddy?”*

In the First of the 10 Commandments we are told where God wants to be

**v. 3 - *“Thou shalt have no other gods before Me”***

God is saying that He, and He alone, is to have First Place in our life

**Psalm 86:10 – *“For Thou art great, and doest wondrous things: Thou art God alone”***

**1.** God **Desires** First place in our life

He longs for us to allow Him, to sit upon the throne of our heart

He’s Lord, but He wants us to personally make Him Lord

He asks us to give Him the Preeminence

He’s not to be one of many, but the One and Only

**2.** He **Deserves** First Place in our life

Because of whom He is and what He has done,

He Deservesnothing less

To give Him anything less is to show Him our ingratitude and our lack of love for Him

I have to admit, I have a hard time with people who have little regard for God and who He is

And finally, as we consider this 1st Commandment we will see that …

**3.** God **Demands** First Place in our life

He will not share the throne of our heart

He will not play second fiddle

He will not accept just being Prominent

He asks and Demands the Preeminence in our life

In our first study we laid a foundation for our study of the 10 Commandments by looking at them as a Whole

In this study, I want to begin looking at the 10 Commandments one by one

As we saw in our first study, keeping the Commandments is the beginning to a Prefect life

Solomon said in **Eccl. 12:13 - *“Fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is whole duty of man”***

The beginning to a Perfect Life is Fearing God and Keeping His Commandments

Therefore, it’s well worth our while to look at the 10 Commandments individually

So let’s look at the 1st Commandment and this thought …

**“THE ONE AND ONLY”**

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First, let’s look at …

**I. THE “REALITY” OF GOD**

In the opening vs. of **Exodus 20** we read … ***“And God …”***

In those two words we are brought face to face with the Reality of God

These words Declare that there is a God! He exists!

Not only does God Exist, but He has Revealed His Existence

In the preface to the 1st Commandment we hear God saying - ***“I am the LORD thy God”***

We hear God speaking and Revealing Himself!

He is not content just to Exist though

He Exists and wants to make it known that He does

He made this same statement in **Genesis 1:1 –**

***“In the beginning God …”***

He doesn’t tell us why or how He Exist, just that He does

When we look at the Reality of God that is Declared in the 1st Commandment, we see …

**A. The Fact of God’s ‘Existence’**

The Bible says in **Psalm 14:1** and **53:1 -** ***“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God”***

The word ***“fool”*** literally means *Stupid*

It’s used to speak of someone that is Wicked

The Bible declares that a person who Denies the Existence of God is both Stupid and Wicked

That’s pretty harsh, but that’s what the Bible says

**Ill.** I love the story of the Quaker and the Rationalist that were discussing the existence of God. The Rationalist was explaining that he did not believe in the existence of God because he could not believe in something he had never seen.

The Quaker asked, *“Hast thou ever seen Paris, France?”* He replied, *“No, but others have, and that leads to my belief that there is such a place.”* *“Ah,”* said the Quaker, *“I think I now see what thou art saying. May I ask thee if thou hast seen thy brains?”* The Rationalist sharply answered, *“Of course not.”* The Quaker then asked, *“Hast thou ever met anyone who has seen thy brains?”* Again, the answer was no. With a smile on his face the Quaker asked one final question, *“Dost thou reckon that thou hast any brains?”*

The person who Denies the Existence of God is Denying a Fundamental Truth (Called the 1st Truth)

Notice carefully that this Denial comes from the Heart

***“The fool as said in his heart”***

Atheism is a problem of the Heart, not the Head

It’s not that he *can’t*, but that he *won’t …* believe

Matter-of-fact if you look again at the first part of the verse you will see that the words ***“there is”*** are in italic

(Meaning they were place their by the translator to make the verse understandable in the English)

Now if we will just drop them for a minute and reread the verse

It reads like this – ***“The fool hath said in his heart, No God!***” (The emphasis is mind)

Every person that has ever been born, is born with a Predisposition toward the reality of God

Have you ever met a child that did not believe in God or was difficult to teach about the existence of God?

No, for we are all born Predisposed to the reality

People all over the world believe in a Supreme Being

We are Not born with a Predisposition Not to believe in the reality of God

It is the other way around, just the opposite

What happens is that at some stage in life, a person personally makes the decision that they will not accept the fact that there is a God

The atheist sticks their finger in the face of the believer and shouts - *“Prove to me there’s a God”*

The real problem is not for a believer to prove there is a God, but for the atheist to prove there is No God

God Exists and the Evidence is everywhere

Atheism is a choice that is made to Deny that Evidence

**Ill.** A Believer was asked, *“How do you know there’s a God?”* He answered, *“How do I know whether a man or deer walked pass my house last night?”* Of course, he was referring to the footprints that either a man or deer would leave. Just like we know who left the prints in the snow… The footprints of God are found throughout creation and history. To say there is no God is to purposefully and willfully turn our eyes from those footprints.

As God said, it’s a Stupid and Wicked Denial of the Evidence

**The Fact of God’s ‘Existence’**

**B. The Fact of God’s ‘Exclusiveness’**

The 1st Commandment not only answers Atheism,

But it also answers Polytheism …

The belief that there many gods

In the Book of Deuteronomy, in preparation for the children of Israel’s entrance into the Promised land …

Moses reminded them of the 10 Commandments

He encouraged and instructed them to keep them …

Faithfully and Continually

As he did, he declared in **Deuteronomy 6:4 *- “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord”***

There is not only a God, but He is the only God

God is not Plural, He is Singular

There are Not many gods, There is only one God

He is not the chairman of the board of gods

He not only is God, He is the only God there is

The children of Israel had earlier been delivered from Egypt

**1.** Egypt was one of the most polytheistic nations in history

They boasted of over 2,000 gods and goddesses

For example, the Nile River was believed to be of heavenly origin, and was worshipped

When Moses smote the Nile, turning its water into blood, God was showing that He was the only God

**2.** The Greeks had a god for just about everything you could imagine; ranging from the goddess of fertility, corn, grain, and harvest; to the god of war

Speaking of the 1st Commandment in **Mark 12:29**

Jesus answered a scribe this way

***“The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one LORD”*** (Quoting **Deut. 6:4**)

Jesus was affirming that there is a God and He is the only God!

Men may Doubt and Deny His existence, yet He Exists

Furthermore, He is the only God there is!

It’s not a case of Him being the greatest of the gods

He is God alone!

Secondly, as we cont. to look at the 1st Commandment

We not only see **THE “REALITY” OF GOD**

But we also see …

**II. THE “REVEALING” OF GOD**

The 1st Commandment not only Declares God’s Existence,

But it also Describes How He has Revealed Himself to man

 We read in **Exodus 20: 2 -** ***“I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage”***

God Prefaces the 1st Commandment with a Description of how He Delivered the children of Israel from Egyptian Bondage

In this, we are reminded of …

**A. The ‘Purpose of God’s Activity’**

When God called Moses to go and lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, He said in **Exodus 6:7 -**

***“And I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians”***

- God was doing more than bringing them out of Egypt

- More than, Delivering them from their enemies

- More than, Getting them out of a bad situation

*He was bringing them unto Himself*

- He wanted to bring them into a relationship with Him,

- He wanted them to know Him in a personal way

- He wanted to Be God unto them

*The ultimate purpose behind all God does is to bring men to Himself that they might know Him*

**Psalm 121:4** says that God neither ***“slumbers nor sleeps”***

He is always active / He is ever at work, previous

Behind all that God does is the Great Purpose of Redeeming men and women from the bondage of our sins and bringing us to Himself

*The Purpose of God’s Activity is to be our God and to make Himself known to us in a personal way*

- When God saved us, it was not just to keep us from burning forever in hell

- Neither was it just so we could enjoy the glories of heaven throughout eternity

These are only Benefits of being saved

He saved us so we could have a Relationship with Him;

A Relationship whereby He could be God in our life,

… and make Himself known to us

**The ‘Purpose of God’s Activity’**

Furthermore, we see in the Deliverance of the children of Israel also …

**B. The ‘Power of God’s Ability’**

God Reminded Israel of how he had brought them out of Egyptian bondage

The Marvelous, Mighty and Miraculous deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt …

Still stands as a Historical and Eternal Testimony that God is able to Deliver and Redeem

- There was no Pharaoh that could stop Him

- There are no armies that could slow Him

- There are no Red Seas that could stump Him

He is God, and therefore, able to Redeem

Ill. A lad was sitting on a park bench with one hand resting on an open Bible. He was loudly praising God. *"Hallelujah! Hallelujah! God is great!"* he yelled without worrying whether anyone heard him. Shortly after, a man came along who had recently completed some studies at a local university. Feeling himself very enlightened in the ways of truth and very eager to show this enlightenment, he asked the boy about the source of his joy. *"Hey"* asked the boy in return with a bright laugh, *"Don't you have any idea what God is able to do? I just read that God opened up the Red Sea and led the whole nation of Israel right through the middle."* The enlightened man laughed lightly, sat down next to the boy and began to try to open his eyes to the "realities" of the miracles of the Bible. *"That can all be very easily explained. Modern scholarship has shown that the Red Sea in that area was only 10-inches deep at that time. It was no problem for the Israelites to wade across."*

The boy was stumped. His eyes wandered from the man back to the Bible lying on his lap. Content that he had enlightened this poor, naive young person to the finer points of scientific insight, he turned to go his way. Scarcely had he taken two steps when the boy began to rejoice and praise God even louder than before. The man returned to ask the reason for this resumed jubilation. *"Wow!"* exclaimed the boy happily, *"God is greater than I thought! Not only did He lead the whole nation of Israel through the Red Sea, He topped it off by drowning the whole Egyptian army in 10-inches of water!"*

Not only does God Exists, but God has Unlimited Ability

The Deliverance of the children of Israel is but one example of His Ability

We cannot Deny His Existence and should not Doubt His Ability

As God’s people, we can say with the utmost assurance,

God is, and He is a God Great and Glorious in Power and Ability

**The ‘Purpose of God’s Activity’**

**The ‘Power of God’s Ability’**

**THE “REALITY” OF GOD**

**THE “REVEALING” OF GOD**

 The third truth we see in the 1st Commandment is ..

**III. THE “RIVALS” OF GOD**

In the 1st of the 10 Commandments God says –

**v. 3 - *“Thou shalt have no other gods before Me”***

God is saying - *“I will not compete with anyone for your devotion”*

There are not going to be any rivalries

He is the only God, and should be the only God of our life

He is the only one; therefore, He should be number one

The phrase ***“before Me”*** means *above me, over me, against me, or between me*

There is to be no god that is above or over God in our life

There is to be no god between us and the One and Only God

The 1st Commandment speaks to us of …

**A. The god’s that are to be ‘Dethroned’**

When we think of gods, we often think of the false gods that have been worshipped by non-Christians

We tend to have mental images of someone bowing before some statute that has been carved out of stone or wood

Like the children of Israel making a golden calf

What we often fail to realize is that a god is not necessarily something we get on our knees before and pay homage

Someone might say - *“This commandment doesn’t really have relevance in my life for I believe there is only one God and that is the God of the Bible”*

However, it’s possible that there are god’s in our lives that are Rivals to the place God Desires

Rivals are anything or anyone that competes against God

Someone said - *“Whatever you make the most of is your god”*

Someone else said - *“Idolatry is anything that relegates God into the background”*

Anything that is more important in our life than God Himself, is a god!

Let me give you a few that you might not have really thought about

**1. Possessions** can be gods in our life

Some of our gods are chrome-plated

Others involved bucket-seats, high powered engines, large estates, the stock-market, the latest fashions, large screens, phones, antiques, gardens etc.

The principal false god today is our standard of living

We are so concerned with material possessions that we forget they are the gift of God …

… and that there is something more important

**2. Pleasure** can be a god in our life

Paul warned in **II Timothy 3:4** - that people would become ***“lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God”***

Golf, Hunting, fishing, softball, camping, etc. …

Can occupy our heart in such a way as to come before God

If we put anything before what God has commanded in His Word

Then it has become a god

**3. Projects** can be a god in our life

I am often amused at the things people get wrapped up in

I remember a story about this fellow that was going around the country telling people that Jesus would never drive a SUV

There is nothing wrong with getting involved in causes someone strongly believes in, but what often happens, these projects become the thing for which we live

They end up consuming us

For Example - Politics, Little League sports, even our jobs can become a god in our life

Even …

**4.** **People** can be a god in our life

Jesus said in **Matt. 10:37 - *“He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me”***

Parents can make a child a god, and grandparents can make a grandchild a god

A teenager can make a blue-eyed boy or a brown-eyed blonde a god

If there is anyone that means more to us than God,

That person is holding a place in our heart they do not deserve

I could also mention Popularity, Prominence, and a score of other things, but I think you get the point

A god does not necessarily have to be some stone or wooden statue

Anything that takes priority over what God has told us to do and is more important to us than God, is a god

God said, ***“Thou shalt have no other gods before Me”***

These gods are to be Dethroned

Is there something that keeps you from being faithful to God’s house? That’s a god

Is there something that you do or are doing that does not allow you time to serve God? That’s a god

Is there something or someone you love more than anything else in your life - even God?

Then we have gods that are occupying a place in our life that only God should have

**Those god’s need to be ‘Dethroned’**

**B. The God Who is to be ‘Enthroned’**

If God is the One and Only God; then,

He is to be the One and Only God in our life

The command in **Matt. 6:33** is - ***“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness”***

I don’t see that today in the lives of Professing believers

God is to be Pursued and Placed first in our life

Anything less … is disobedience to the 1st Commandment

Is God first in your life?

Is He more important than anyone or anything else?

Do you love Him more than anything or anyone else?

Your Priorities will tell you that

The first commandment says to us –

***“Thou shalt have no other gods before Me”***

Are you interested in living a Prefect life?

It starts with God being The One and Only

**INVITATION**