

HC Q&A94-95 – Proper Worship: Requires Faith in the One True God

Brethren in Christ: Today you will hear God speak to you regarding his 1st command. But keep 2 things in mind as you hear explanations concerning all God's 10 laws. **1. God wants you to obey the intention (意图) of the law, not just the letter (字句).** The letter kills, but the spirit gives life. The letter is narrow, but the Spirit (精意) is extremely broad. **2. As you hear God's laws explained,** look to **see your sin and your need for Jesus,** consider **how you can apply the law in your life** and learn **to utilize this law in the civil realm.** These are the 3 purposes of the law.

Our headings are:

Prescriptions (训令, 指示) of the Law

Prohibitions (禁令) of the Law.

Our goals are: That because you were created and re-created in Jesus Christ, you will **acknowledge that God is the only God of heaven and earth,** and that you will **trust and worship him.**

94 Q. WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE IN THE FIRST COMMANDMENT?

A. That I, **not wanting to endanger my very salvation,** avoid and shun (远避) all idolatry (偶像崇拜), magic, superstitious rites (迷信仪式), and prayer to saints (圣徒) or to other creatures. That I **sincerely acknowledge** the only true God, **trust him alone, look to him for every good thing** humbly and patiently, **love him, fear him, and honor him with all my heart.** In short, that I give up anything rather than go against his will in any way.

Prescriptions of the Law

1. This command requires you to sincerely acknowledge this one true God – Jehovah, with your mouth.

You will confess that all other gods are liars and fakes (假神), but Jehovah God is real.

Deuteronomy 26:17 "Today you have proclaimed the LORD to be your God, and that you will walk in His ways and keep His statutes (典章), His commandments, and His judgments, and that you will obey His voice.

2. This command requires that you trust in Jehovah God, the one and only true God.

a. You have to have reasons to trust him. Look at how this trust is expressed by Jeremiah: God is your Re-Creator covenant God, and God is your Creator... your Savior and your Source.

Jeremiah 14:22 Are there any among the idols of the nations that can cause rain? Or can the heavens give showers? Are You not He, O LORD our God? Therefore we will wait for You, Since You have made all these.

b. Your trust in him should be so strong that you would be willing to give up everything rather than go against his will.

You must be willing to give up your most treasured body part or your parents, or a job, or an ungodly relationship...if either were necessary. In other words, **trusting God is a lot more than talk.**

Matthew 5: 29 "If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out (挖出来) and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. Matthew 10:37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38 "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.

c. Since God in whom you trust is the only true God, those who don't trust in Jehovah have a fake god. Allah (阿拉) is not the God of the Bible, though Muslims argue that. Buddha (佛) is not God. Buddha didn't even claim to be God, but was made to be like a God by his followers. Krishna is not God. Siva is not God. Hear the words of the Bible:

Isaiah 43:10 "You are My witnesses," says the LORD, "And My servant whom I have chosen, That you may know and believe Me, And understand that I am He. **Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me. 11 I, even I, am the LORD, And besides Me there is no savior.**

d. Since there is only one true God in whom you are to trust, you are warned not to indulge in syncretism (不同宗教信仰或哲学主张的汇合, 类并) – trying to harmonize true faith with false religions.

Jeremiah 17:5 Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the LORD. 6 For he shall be like a shrub (灌木) in the desert, And shall not see when good comes, But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, In a salt land which is not inhabited. 7 "Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, And whose hope is the LORD.

2. Trusting in the Jehovah requires faith...by which you are renewed (被更新的) Only a heart renewed by faith trusts in the Lord.

a. That faith that you then have will make you will look to him for all things good and patiently wait for his timing.

You will look and wait in anticipation as a maid (侍女) looks to her mistress (主母).

b. That faith that you have will then make you love him, something you are commanded to do.

Matthew 22:37 – 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 means you have to learn how to love God by studying him. Because of sin you don't know how to properly love. You need to train yourself. Love is summarized in obedience (顺服) . **If you do not obey this command you are under a death sentence for eternity (永恒) .**

c. That faith in the only true God, you will make you fear him. This fear is an action...

1Peter 1:17 - And if you call on the Father, who without partiality (偏颇, 不公正) judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear:

d. That faith in the one only true God in whom you trust will make you honor and worship him.

Malachi 1:6 "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?"

Matthew 4:10 Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"

Psalms 29:2 Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

Love, honor, fear, and honor must be done with all your heart, not just with your actions.

f. That faith in the only true God, you will make you ask him to give you what is good for you to do his work.

Psalm 104: 27 These all wait for You, That You may give them their food in due season. 28 What You give them they gather in; You open Your hand, they are filled with good.

James 1:17 - Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above...

But this looking to God is not to demand good things, but it is a desire for good things with humility (谦卑) .

1Peter 5:5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." 6

Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

Knowing that God is the one and only God, you **will not try to make a deal with God**, but take what comes from his hand... whether you like it or not. (You will not say: "Lord, if you help me pass my exams I will go to church more!")

Prohibition of the Law

1. You must not have any other god before God's face – which is idolatry.

The word "you" is in the singular, to point you to the fact that this law is personally directed. No one is exempted (被豁免) .

95 Q. WHAT IS IDOLATRY?

A. Idolatry is having or inventing something in which one trusts in place of or alongside of the only true God, who has revealed himself in his Word.

Egyptians were known for having at least 10 famous gods matching the 10 plagues (灾祸) God put on Egypt. As Israel was leaving Egypt, God wanted this to be foremost in their minds so they wouldn't follow the example of the idolatrous Egyptians.

3. What are examples of idolatry?

a. Being superstitious (迷信的) is idolatry. If you believe that things like the stars, four-leaf clovers(三叶草) , charms or black cats on Friday the 13th can affect what happens to you, you are idolatrous. Either you have a weak faith or no faith at all.

b. Polytheism (多神论) is not religious, but idolatrous. Believing that all religions and gods are more or less the same is wrong. No good man would say to his wife: "I love you, but I love another woman also."

1Chronicles 16:26 For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the LORD made the heavens.

c. Pride is idolatry. If you have an exaggerated view of yourself, thinking you are strong and able enough to do everything for yourself, that is idolatry.

d. Covetousness (贪婪) is idolatry. When you making a god of money or possessions, like the rich young man in Matthew 19, you are guilty of idolatry.

Ephesians 5:5 For this you know, that no fornicator (通奸者) , unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

e. Knowledge can become a god if you think that knowledge can secure your future.

f. Making men (instead of God) lord of your consciences (良心) is to make idols of men.

g. Being lukewarm (不冷不热的) is idolatry of yourself, since God demands wholehearted devotion (奉献) .

h. Acting presumptuously (自以为是的, 冒失的) as the Devil urged Jesus to jump off the temple to force God to send his angels to catch him – that was idolatry.

i. Giving glory to any creature or person that belongs to God is idolatry. All good things come from God and he should get the credit. (Learn to say: I thank God for you!)

j. Praying to dead people or angels is idolatry. So Roman Catholics are idolaters.

Revelation 22:8-9 ... And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. 9 Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."

You can only pray through Jesus Christ. Every other prayer goes to deaf ears and is a sin. God will bring judgment on those who try to think they can pray in any other way or to any other God.

k. Sensuality (好色, 淫荡) ... that which makes a god of your body, is idolatry.

Philippians 3:18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame...

l. Civility (礼仪), morality (道德主义), and neutrality (中立主义) are North American idolatry. Politeness-doing things orderly can become a substitute for God. Civility can become god to families raising children.

m. Duty can become idolatrous - like Abraham who saw his duty to his starving family, but forgot to trust in Jehovah God, or like Elimelech who ran from Bethlehem to Moab for food and not believing that God could provide a feast in the desert.

n. Children can become gods if they determine what is right or wrong for you...like if you will come to worship. I've heard people say: I want to come to worship, but my child doesn't want to.

o. Praising fortune (时运, 命运), fortune telling (算命), and witchcraft (巫术) are idolatry. Some say: "You really have good luck." Fate is your god if you do this. Reading horoscopes (占星术) is idolatry.

Deuteronomy 18:9-12 "When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations (可憎恶的事) of those nations. 10 "There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer (占卜的), or one who interprets omens (观兆的) or a sorcerer (用法术的), 11 "or one who conjures spells (行迷术的), or a medium (交鬼的), or a spiritist (行巫术的), or one who calls up the dead (过阴的, 召唤死人的) .

p. You can make wealth into an idol if you love it like the rich young ruler.

Conclusion:

God requires faith, faith that results in love and obedience. God forbids lack of faith in him that results in idolatry and then hell.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Don't make a god of your body, your wealth, your knowledge, your job, your duties, your children, or your nationality 国籍, for they too will be destroyed. Instead, **trust, love, and honor Jehovah** God with all your heart for he is the one true God of heaven and earth and the one who saves you through faith in his Son.

2. You will face many pressures today at school, at work, or among family and friends to treat all gods as the same or replace God with something else. Jehovah will destroy every other god. So hold your ground in the one true God. Be willing to say to those who pressure you to minimize or replace God: "Without trusting in Jehovah God of the Bible you are as good as dead and damned to eternal destruction."

3. Show them the salvation they could have in Jesus, the only means by which they could worship Jehovah! Show them the salvation you have!

Finally, I challenge you like Joshua did the Israelites: There is no God but Jehovah. Will you serve him? You have to choose. Everything else in this world fails, but Jehovah never fails. But if you shun him...his anger is as great as his love...and who can save you then?