



Outward Group Discussion Guide

January 18, 2026 (Salem)

SUMMARY

This sermon explores the first commandment—"You shall have no other gods before me"—emphasizing that God's love for His people is inseparable from His commandments. The message challenges the modern tendency to simply add God to our already-full lives rather than surrendering everything to Him. God saved Israel before asking anything of them, just as Jesus went to the cross before we could earn His love. The sermon confronts the subtle idols we create—career, money, time, phones, control—that compete for God's rightful place as our highest priority. God's jealousy is presented not as sinful but as protective love, a "thunderclap" waking us to make Him first. The preacher emphasizes that we cannot obey God to earn His love; rather, we obey because He already loves us. Understanding this first commandment transforms how we love our neighbors and share the gospel, as we recognize that only through relationship with the one true God can we live truly holy and purposeful lives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What areas of your life reveal that you might be trying to 'add God' to your existing plans rather than surrendering everything to Him as the center?
2. When trouble or unexpected news hits your life, where do you instinctively turn first before turning to God, and what does that reveal about your priorities?
3. How does understanding that God saved the Israelites before giving them the commandments change your perspective on obedience and God's expectations of you?
4. In what ways might our culture's polytheistic tendencies (worshiping money, career, control, phones) mirror the challenges the Israelites faced in Egypt?
5. What 'Hootie J' moments have you experienced where you attributed success or security to something other than God, even if you knew it was foolish?
6. How can God's jealousy be understood as protective love rather than sinful envy, and how

does this change your view of His discipline in your life?

7. What does it practically look like to ensure God is not just your only priority, but your top priority with nothing between you and Him?
8. As a parent or influential figure, what spiritual tone are you setting for the next generation, and how does that align with God's everlasting covenant?
9. How does the truth that 'we obey because He loves us, not so that He will love us' transform your motivation for following God's commandments?
10. In what specific ways can understanding Jesus as the fulfillment of the law empower you to love your neighbor and share the gospel with someone the world considers unlovable?