

Dear Church Family,

I look forward to worshipping with you at the park this coming Sunday. This one of my favorite days of the year, worshipping outside in the fresh air and listening to nature as we come together to praise our God. Singing, joining together in communion and listening to God's word in the park remind us that worshipping God may and should happen anywhere and everywhere.

Last week I spoke out of Deuteronomy 6:5 on how we are to love our God with all of our heart and with all of our soul and with all of our strength. This seems like such a daunting task! with all that we are, we are to love God.

For me this poses a question: who do I truly see God as? Creator, of course. Master of the universe, without question. Yet, sometimes when I look at God in the Old Testament with human eyes, He seems too big. He was God before the beginning of time, and He will continue being God at the end of time. With my limitations, how do I love God with all my heart and with all my soul and with all my strength? We cannot rely on our own heart, soul and strength. We must rely on Him. God empowers us to know a greater love—His love, heart and strength.

So that brings me to where I would like us to go in scripture today. I reminded us last week to remember the Ten Commandments that God gave His people. At just the right time, He spoke to the people, giving them His laws of life. If they followed the commandments, they (and we) would be living the life they were created for. Blessings for obedience, curses for turning away.

So, let's look together at the first commandment in the book of Exodus.

Exodus 20

20 *And God spoke all these words:*

² *"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.*

³ *"You shall have no other gods before Me.*

We have to remember that the Israelites came from a country that had multiple gods and would be going into countries with the same religious

practices. After 400 years of slavery, the Israelites would be somewhat comfortable with this. In fact, when they left Egypt, many took idols from their masters with them.

Through Moses, God commanded the Israelites to lay all other gods aside and worship only Him. How freeing this must have been, having only one God to serve, to sacrifice to and to be responsible to. One God to love and one God to love us back.

We too have been freed from the slavery of sin. We are reminded throughout the New Testament of God's grace and mercy. In the Old Testament the people could not imagine a God that would sacrifice of Himself for His people. And yet the prophets told of the Messiah over and over again to prepare their hearts for just that. God sacrificing His son for us, to redeem us for His glory.

I invite you to join me as we examine the Ten Commandments and the love of God as He desires an eternal relationship with us.

Kingdom work and Kingdom people shall become our focus as we grow together.

See you in the park!

Your Brother in Christ,

Archie