

TEN: THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

Sermon One-Pager | Scripture Focus: Exodus 20:1–3

MAIN IDEA: *God gives the First Commandment not to force compliance, but to invite us into an exclusive, intimate covenant of freedom where He is the center of every sphere of our lives.*

1. CORE TAKEAWAY

- The First Commandment is not a rigid rule or a ranking system; it is a wedding vow calling us into an undivided, transformative relationship with a God who rescues us first.

2. KEY OUTLINE & SCRIPTURES

• Point 1: Freedom Precedes the Covenant (*Exodus 20:1–2*)

Key Insight: Unlike ancient Near Eastern kings who demanded obedience before offering rescue, God breaks our chains first. The Ten Commandments are not the price of admission for freedom; they are the blueprint for how free people live.

Application: Rest in God's grace knowing He doesn't require you to earn His love; He offers rescue first, inviting you to live out of that freedom.

• Point 2: Presence over Priority (*Exodus 20:3*)

Key Insight: "Before me" literally means "in my presence" or "before my face." God isn't asking to be #1 on a ranked list alongside other priorities; like a spouse in a marriage, He demands exclusive devotion centered in every area of life.

Application: Examine your heart for "side-rivals"—modern idols like control, approval, or comfort—and move God from a slot on your schedule to the center of your life.

• Point 3: The Deception of Idols (Control & Containment) (*Romans 1:22–25*)

Key Insight: Idols offer transactional control (pay tribute to get an outcome) and containment (keeping God boxed into Sunday mornings). However, trading intimate trust for a manageable substitute ultimately leads back into slavery.

Application: Stop treating faith like a transactional convenience—taking off your "wedding ring" when you want control and putting it back on only when you need comfort.

3. REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In what practical ways do we tend to rank God as "#1" rather than allowing Him to be present in every sphere of our lives?
2. Which subtle "side-rival" (the idol of control, approval, or comfort) are you most tempted to bring to the table alongside God?
3. What is one area of your life where you are keeping God "contained" rather than surrendering complete control to Him?