

The Ten Commandments: The 1st Commandment

You shall have no other gods.

What does this mean?

We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

When Jesus was asked what the Greatest Commandment was, quoting Deuteronomy 6:5, He said, *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37)*. He went on to say, quoting **Leviticus 19:18**, *“And a second is like it; You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 22:39–40)*. The Greatest Commandment summarizes the First Table of the Ten Commandments, while the Second summarizes the Second Table of the Ten Commandments.

But another way to look at it is that the First Commandment is the basis for all the other commandments. The explanation for the First Commandment is that we are to fear, love, and trust in God above all things. The other nine commandments tell us how we do that. If we fail at this Commandment, we fail at all of them. And because of our sin nature, we cannot keep this Commandment. So, we fall short in all the Law.

Thanks be to God that there is One who was able to keep all the Commandments perfectly. And not only that, in dying on the cross, He paid the price for our shortcomings and keeps the Law for us, since we cannot. But God calls us to love Him because He created us to love Him.

Sin has taken away that love and made us enemies with God. When Christ forgives us, He puts that love back into our hearts, giving us the desire to love God and keep His Commandments, not out of a sense of duty or “oughtness”, but out of love. Now, because we still have our sin nature, we don’t always get it right. But when we fall, Jesus comes in His love and picks us up and puts us back on the right path.

But we must admit, life goes so much better when we remember to fear, love, and trust in God above all things.