

# NO OTHER GODS

## BORN TO GROW THE TEN COMMANDMENTS STUDY 2

The Born to Grow series of leaflets is designed to give you a good basic understanding of what it is to be a Christian and how to live a powerful and effective Christian Life.

It consists of six sets:

<b>Foundations</b>	<b>6 leaflets</b>
<b>First Principles</b>	<b>7 leaflets</b>
<b>Kingdom Living</b>	<b>8 leaflets</b>
<b>Apostle's Doctrine</b>	<b>12 leaflets</b>
<b>Ten Commandments</b>	<b>11 leaflets</b>
<b>Gifts of the Holy Spirit</b>	<b>10 leaflets</b>

## THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

### Exodus 20:3

*You shall have no other gods before Me.*

The first commandment deals directly with putting God first. This is for several reasons. Firstly God is our creator. He quite properly owns us. Secondly, through the work of Jesus, He has redeemed us. He has purchased us back from eternal death. Thirdly, the whole focus of His plan for us centres on His love for us and His desire for us to serve Him out of a heart of love and devotion. Fourthly, obedience and faith are founded upon a relationship with Him.

## RELEASE FROM BONDAGE

### Exodus 20:2

*I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*

This verse in Scripture is stated together with the command to put God first in our lives.

In this we see the principle, revealed by God Himself, that he understands, that we can only obey him insofar as we are released from bondage. He knew that the nation of Israel was not able to obey Him because of their struggles to cope with life as they found it. They were focussed on survival in this world rather than on the eternal victory that could have been theirs.

We also see in this Scripture the revelation of Himself as Lord and Saviour. God knew that Israel could not help itself or ever attain to His standards. He therefore set about working on their hearts and life circumstances to give them the ability to obey.

**GOD NOT ONLY REQUIRES OBEDIENCE,  
HE ALSO PROVIDES THE LIBERTY TO OBEY!**

## THE EXAMPLE OF ISRAEL

The principle that release from bondage is necessary before there can be obedience, is best illustrated when we consider the fact that God delivered Israel from bondage in Egypt before He gave them the commandments.

### God's Compassion For Israel

#### **Exodus 3:7**

*And the LORD said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows."*

#### **Exodus 6:6-9**

*Therefore say to the children of Israel:*

***I am the LORD;  
I will bring you out  
from under the burdens of the Egyptians,  
I will rescue you from their bondage,  
and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm  
and with great judgments.  
7 I will take you as My people,  
and I will be your God.***

*Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 'And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the LORD.'"*

*9 So Moses spoke thus to the children of Israel; but they did not heed Moses, because of **anguish of spirit and cruel bondage**.*

God's loving response to Israel's condition was one of compassion and mercy. He set about revealing and proving Himself to be a God of promise and purpose for their lives. Israel, like us, could not respond to these promises because of their "anguish of spirit and cruel bondage".

Israel had been in Egypt for more than four hundred years, much of this time under the yoke of cruel slavery and without any progressive revelation of God. As a result of this they had become a self-centred, defensive and suspicious people. They knew little of the principles of right and wrong.

They did not understand or seek after true spiritual foundations for their lives. They sought only for short term gratification of their lusts and desires. That is, for their perceived needs. They had no hope or vision for long term fulfilment. They were devoid of any sense of purpose, dignity or identity as God's people.

***GOD'S MOST FORMIDABLE TASK  
WAS TO CONVINCe THEM  
OF HIS LOVE FOR THEM  
(LET ALONE TRANSFORM THEM!)***

**GOD'S COVENANT WITH ISRAEL**

The seven "I wills" (quoted above) are the promises of the covenant God made with Israel concerning their deliverance and fulfilment. It was after their deliverance from Egypt that the commandments, necessary for Israel's fulfilment, were revealed.

For this promised fulfilment to take place, Israel had to be made mature in the knowledge of God. Being made mature in the knowledge of God takes place through a process of growth in which the mind and heart are transformed (Romans 12:2, Hebrews 8:10). The commandments showed Israel the need for this change of mind and heart by revealing the sin in their lives.

The effect of the first commandment, therefore, was to reveal to Israel that they could not put God first. God knew that this was so and knew it was because of their bondage of heart. This is why the promise of deliverance is tied to this commandment.

## **Bondage And The Believer**

### **Colossians 1:12-13**

*...giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. 13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,*

As with Israel, so God has provided for Christians today a supernatural deliverance from bondage so that we can obey this commandment and put God first in our lives.

## **THE NEW COVENANT**

Unlike Israel (who did not have the example of Israel, 1 Corinthians 10:11) the Church has both the precedent of Israel from which to learn and the power of Jesus from which to live.

The way in which this power is made available to us is through the new covenant.

### **Hebrews 8:10**

*For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD:*

*I will put My laws in their mind  
and write them on their hearts;  
and I will be their God,  
and they shall be My people.*

Through this covenant relationship God has purposed to work in us a release from bondage of mind and heart. In doing this, He is setting us free to obey the first commandment and put Him first in our lives.

## **The Principles of the Commandment**

### **1 Corinthians 8:6**

*Yet for us there is one God,  
the Father,  
from whom are all things and for whom we exist,  
and one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
through whom are all things and through whom we exist.*

This Scripture provides a very real and practical means by which we might be able to exercise obedience to this commandment. It points to four principles related to putting God first. These are acknowledging His Fatherhood over our lives, accepting and submitting to His purpose for us, worshipping and acknowledging Jesus as our Lord and identifying with Him as He works in us.

### **The Fatherhood of God**

As our Father, God is the source of our life. He is also therefore the provider for, protector of and the source of love and acceptance in our lives. Obedience to the first commandment means looking to Him, and Him alone for all of these things. This results in our finding a true sense of identity and belonging. (Ephesians 1:3-6). In this, all things are seen as being from God. (Romans 11:36).

### **Our Purpose in God**

Our lives only have meaning as we relate to our Father God's intentions for our lives (Ephesians 1:3-6). This causes us to acknowledge His wisdom for our live decisions. (Proverbs 2:1-9).

Obedience in this means submitting to Gods absolute authority over our lives and putting God's call and purposes first in our lives. It also means seeking God for the ways in which this call and purpose will be outworked. Then all things are unto the Glory of God (Romans 11:36). Jesus related to our Father God in this way.

### **John 5:19-20**

*Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. 20 "For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.*

## **The Lordship of Jesus**

For Christians (unlike Israel) to whom the divinity of Christ is revealed, this commandment bears reference to Jesus. Obedience in this means that we acknowledge that the Father has given to Jesus, and to Jesus alone, supreme authority and that we submit to him in his Lordship. Jesus is the Lord of Lords.

Obedience to this commandment requires, therefore, that the claims of every other religion and philosophy must be subordinated to Jesus. Jesus is not just a Christ. He is the only Christ. He has no equal. He is not just a great man on the path of human development. He is not just a great prophet amongst other great prophets. He is not a manifestation or avatar amongst others of some divine being or principle. Jesus must be worshipped as the only begotten and divine son of the only God. He must be acknowledged as the one who is now Lord over all Creation and Saviour to those who call on him by name.

### **Philippians 2:10-11**

*... that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

### **Identification with Jesus**

Jesus, the Son of God, is also our brother. Through the gift of life He has given us we can obey our Father and share in the inheritance. Obedience means that we identify in every way with Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. In this we are acknowledging our utter dependence upon His life within us to perfectly please our Father.

### **Colossians 3:1-4**

*If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.*