

2022.05.08 Evening Sermon in Exodus 20:3

click bit.ly/3w6Ubr2 to hear this sermon as preached (or scan QR code→)



Exodus 20:3 “You shall have no other gods before Me.”

Ultimate Purpose, Pleasure, Power, and Peace in God Alone, to His Praise Alone

Main idea: God alone must be our ultimate purpose, pleasure, power, and peace—to the praise of God alone.

Introduction: God has identified Himself as Yahweh, His people’s covenant God. Now His first commandment is “There must not be for you any other gods against My face”

1. **God Our Only Creator**
 - a. God alone as our ultimate purpose
 - b. God alone as our ultimate pleasure
2. **God Our Only Sustainer**
 - a. God alone as our ultimate power
 - b. God alone as our ultimate “principle”
3. **God Our Only Savior**
 - a. God alone as our ultimate peace from the guilt of sin
 - b. God alone as our ultimate peace from the power and presence of sin
4. **God Is Holy**
 - a. Doesn’t tolerate other gods like the “gods” of Egypt
 - b. Demands that we be holy like He is, with exclusive commitment to Him, like He has to Himself
5. **God Takes His People’s Actions Personally**

Conclusion: What competes for our purpose, pleasure, power, and principles? The God Who created and redeemed us commands us to have these all in Him.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Exodus 20 verse 3. These are God's words. You shall have No other gods before me.

So far the words of God, a to the 10 commandments. Begin the same way, man. It's one through three and Commandments. Six through 10 begin with a strong emphatic. Negative in the Hebrew. The word that negates goes first and then there is a verb and what's called the imperfect tense.

And it is the strongest way that the Hebrew prohibits. Something this itself already tells us how far we have fallen from our original creation in the image of God. If we were not sinners, Then we would not need His good commandments given to us in a negative form against that, which is in itself.

Inherently sinful. These commandments are not like the commandment not to eat from the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden that became wrong. Because God said, so These commandments prohibit those things, which are a violation of the character of God, and our conduct There ought to be grievous to us.

That 80% of them have to be given in the negative, it shows how sinful we are against is holiness is called himself. He's identified himself to us and the glorious passage that we had last week. God spoke. All his words saying I am Yahweh. Your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt out of the house of bondage.

And then he says, not may there be for you or there must not be for you any God's other ones against my face? That's very very literal a little bit more cleaned up but not too much that we don't lose the sense of it. There must not be for you.

Any other gods against my face? In other words he's just declared this glorious announcement of his name, this glorious description of the covenant, the binding of himself to us and binding of us to himself. I am

Yahweh, your God and this glorious redemption in which he has saved us out from under his wrath and our enemies mastery.

Brought you out of the land of Egypt out from under the wrath. That was coming upon them as it. Had come upon the ancient world and the time of Noah and God brought Noah out. And it had come upon Sodom and God was about to judge Sodom. He brought a lot out and then it had come upon Egypt.

And when God was about to bring about to judge Egypt, he had brought them out. And so he has declared this glorious redemption of them out from under both his own wrath, which was about to fall upon Egypt. And the bondage, the slavery to Egypt is important that that we recognize how God has declared himself to them.

Not just because it's useful to have review as introduction, which we often do, because we are such a scatter brain short memory to people and not picking on you. I'm describing all of us and we need the reminders. But in this case, the reminder is important because we need to understand what he's saying.

When he says there must not be for you any other gods, There must not be for you. Anyone else whom you treat as if they were Creator and sustainer. Like we heard about in the opening up and applying of his name Last week there must not be to you.

Any other gods with whom you consider yourself to be in binding, covenant, so that you belong to them. And they belong to you in a way that cannot be broken by anything else. You can pray for our Senate. We have been studying, I hope so. What we're supposed to have been doing for several years, the question of whether someone can take secret society, vows and Masonic in, in particular, but it doesn't matter which vows that are binding above all, and still be a Christian.

Of course, the answer is no, You should have no other gods before. Me cannot have anyone else or anything else be unto you what God alone has just finished describing himself as unto us in verse 2. So not have anyone or anything else be that? Which you think will bring you out from under the wrath of God and give you safety in the day of his wrath.

You must not have anything else or anyone else upon him, you depend to live deliver you, from all of your bondages and especially that greatest remaining bondage as the apostle describes. If you chapters from where we are in the midweek sermons, the bondage sin, therefore, God as our only Creator and God is our only sustainer.

And God is our only Savior and then as we consider the rest of the passage, we were up to. You shall have no other Gods. God is holy and God takes as people's actions personally. So God is our only Creator from him and through him and to him are all things.

Therefore to him, be all the glory forever. The reason your chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. Is He made you for Himself? You don't get to decide. We don't get to decide what our purpose is. You may have other callings. You may have many tasks, he's given each of us roles, but your ultimate purpose in every one of those things is to bring glory to your Creator.

And when we start to treat like something like making enough money or getting a particular piece of paper that we think will unlock certain doors for us or any of the other things that threaten to become our purpose in a particular place, or in a particular endeavor, we are in danger of giving something else.

The place of God We also must. Therefore have no no purpose that is in. Contradiction to him. Not only must all our purposes be under his, his glory and unto his glory. So they all must be subject to that and subsidiary participating in that. But there are a whole lot of things that can't be your purpose.

Then You can't have something sinful as your purpose unto, the glory of God. And then God alone is our ultimate pleasure. He has created us for Himself. We are made in His image. This is one of the great things that differentiates us from the rest of the creatures. He's created them so that they can enjoy other created things, You can use that.

It's useful for training a beast. Isn't it to know what pleases the beast and yet how beastly we often are? When because one or another created thing is missing, We find ourselves unwilling or unable to delight in the creator. We end up like ASAP in Psalm 73 from most of that song, like a beast towards God, because we have him and he wasn't enough for us.

In fact We treated him as nothing. We said, why have I cleansed my hands in vain, You have the Living God and he's nothing to you. This is why the scripture can give the command to rejoice. Always you say, well, what about all the times that I ought to grieve wasn't Christ grieved by things.

He said, yes and you should be grieved by whatever, grieves the Lord Jesus Christ, but he also never stopped rejoicing in his Father. He has obeyed this command perfectly His continual delight in. His Father is what is counted for you when you trust in him? Do you continually delight in God with all your heart.

So that whatever else is grieving you, you have that wonderful mixture that a believer knows of rejoicing in the Lord. Even as you grieve over, what is sinful? And miserable in this world. You do that continually and

perfectly? No, you don't but the Lord Jesus did. Let's count it for you when you trust in him, as if you had done it and got rewards.

You, and you belong to, Jesus Christ through faith. As if you had done it and even more because many of us say, oh, I wish I could delight in him like that, There are so many joyless moments in my life, there are so many dark and discouraging. And even because of my remaining sin despairing moments of my life.

And yet, not only is the righteousness of Christ, counted for you. But what kind of person is God making you, when you believe in Jesus Christ, He's making you like himself. And Jesus himself, said These words, I have spoken said the Lord Jesus. That my joy may be in you, So we must have God alone as our ultimate pleasure.

And then this works very similar to the way of the purpose. Having God alone is our ultimate purpose that we must not eat to enjoy food without enjoying first and foremost. God Himself in His goodness to us to design us to need food and to design food supply, what we need and to design food to be so pleasurable.

So that we are even helped by the food to enjoy the goodness of his design. You see kids? It's not wrong to enjoy food. Is it In fact it's wrong not to enjoy what God has called. Good. Do not call evil. What God has called. Good learn to enjoy His good creation but C to it dependent independence upon him that you're enjoying him.

And his goodness in that creation because you are to eat and drink and whatever you do unto the glory of God. He says that at the end of first Corinthians 10, you know what he says in the middle of first Corinthians 10, He describes the idolatry of the people of Israel, not by the fact that they had a golden calf at the bottom of the mountain.

But that the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play their pleasure was in the created things apart from the Creator. And he gives that as a warning, says, these things came upon them as an example, but they are written down for our instruction upon whom the ends of the ages has come.

So enjoy all that God has created good to the glory of God and enjoy it more and more Don't be afraid that you enjoy it too much. So long as it's him that you are enjoying more and more even and above whatever the good creature is. The first commandment is among other things, a command to deep profound enjoyment of God in everything that he has made.

Lest we start to enjoy things apart from him. The tiniest bit of joint enjoyment apart from him as idolatry isn't it? But there is no enjoyment to great if you are enjoying him. And he's also our only sustainer, Here's our only sustainer. And he said, I am that. I am nothing has given him being.

He has given being to everything else and nothing sustains or helps him continue but he sustains everything else and therefore we must depend ultimately upon God alone. Now this doesn't mean that you become a superstitious wacko. Who doesn't use any means doesn't ever study to preach, for instance, a pick on myself and say, I'm depending upon God for this sermon.

I know it sounds ridiculous. I have heard it and it is offensive because God has given His Word and God has given his given us minds, and God has given us time, and he has commanded us to study. He says to use means This doesn't mean that you, you try to be healthy without eating and you refuse all, you know, whatever medical treatment.

They're not talking about now, the wisdom of medical treatment. There's a lot of treatment that's foolish. It doesn't mean that you say, I'm going to let go and let God about the training of your child with whom you are inconsistent for long enough that you both can no longer stand each other and you're going to give up.

I've been in that conversation. Only God can help her. Now, Only God could help her then and he uses means. And his means is you You're not letting go and letting God, you refusing to depend upon the God who made you her mother. God alone, as our ultimate power, God alone as our ultimate principle, That's a preacher thing to try to illiterate there.

But that is that if we're depending upon God, then not only do we use, the means that His disposal. We do it in accordance with His rules. You cannot say that you are trusting God, to help you while you sin. And so you define good and evil by the commandments and the statutes of God.

He is the one who who defines what is right and wrong for us. Got alone is our Savior got alone as your hope for escaping wrath because a violation for this commandment every time we find ourselves feeling. Again that right hatred of our remaining sin and then we respond to it, not by embracing Christ and saying, Lord, thank you.

That Jesus is righteousness, is perfect and His atonement is complete. Thank you for telling me that, none, who rest upon him will be put to shame that everyone who calls upon his name will be saved. None can be lost if they have Christ But what do our hearts usually reflects to or often reflex to because of our remaining sin?

Oh Lord. I'm gonna do better this time Now. That's not a wrong desire. But when that's how we try to console our hearts, When that's what we try to run out from under the guilt by Then we're putting repentance in the

place of faith, aren't we? And rather than having God alone, as the one who saves us out from under his wrath, like he had done for them in the Exodus.

We're saying I will run really fast Lord from this Egypt or the Sodom or this flood. So let's be careful of our hearts. That we don't think of anything else or look to anything else to bring us out from under his wrath. And then as we run, as we want to do better this time as we love him because he first loved us and want to obey His commandments because the commandments aren't burdensome, it's a remaining sin.

That's burdensome and we say who, who will save me from the body of this death. His commandments are holy and righteous and good. And I delighten them in my inner being. How then will you stop doing the evil that you hate? How then will you do the good that you want to do by having the law?

Be not in the hands of your sin and your death, but having the law be in the hands of the Spirit of life, who is applying Christ to you, that he alone is the power by which you come out from under that bonded. That you don't think that it's because of how.

Well, you mean it this time or how clever the plan is this time around? Or how hard we're going to try that too is putting God, putting ourselves or something else in the place of the God who brings us out of the house of bonded. So God our only Creator God our only sustainer.

God is. Holy People have a problem with verse 3 that God demands to be the only God. And with the second commandment that God has a jealous God. You know what? God demands to be your only God because he is the only God. He is holy He's not at all.

Like anything that had run into in Egypt In Egypt they have an almost innumerable panoply of Gods and none of them were holy, They're all wicked and they existed in this delicate balance of interaction with one. Another God alone is God and if he permitted of any other God than himself, and if he permitted of any disregarding of himself or sin without wrath, Then he would not be true to himself and he would be sitting.

It doesn't tolerate other gods like the gods of Egypt and he demands that we be holy like he is that we insist upon His exclusivity and that when The New Testament comes along and starts saying things about Jesus, the price and telling us to do things too. And with Jesus the Christ that you must only do with God, We know that God hasn't suddenly canceled the first commandment.

We know the identity of Christ, don't we? That he is the Living. God, he is. Holy and then the last place, having said all of those things, he adds those last two words that I in my infantile understanding of the Bible, as a young child thought that I could have a whole list of things that I depended upon and delighted in and was devoted to so long as God was number one on the list, You just a little bit above number two but it's a spatial word and not even so much, a spatial word.

Usually you have one particular preposition which would be the before me especially this one means upon or against God takes our finding our purpose or pleasure or power or principle or redemption from under his wrath or ability to to come out from under the slavery to sin. He takes all of those personally as a strike against him so much for the idea that we can have a whole list of them.

And just have God at the top, It is as a personal attack, upon God to give him any competition at all in any of those areas or marvelous. Then that we who had push down upon his glory, suppress the truth and unrighteousness worshiped the creature rather than the creator.

Who is blessed forever? Amen. Who had sinned and fallen short of His glory that for us. God Himself became a man to bear our sin and be exhibited as the one who absorbed all of the wrath. For all of the idolatry that his people is elect had ever and would ever commit and praise God, that his people who belong to him through faith in Christ and who've been given a new heart by the Holy Spirit and want to obey this commandment.

Well, one day, keep it perfectly.

And then, let's pray. Oh Lord. There is much in our lives that needs reordering, or even elimination in order that we would stop making attack upon you in violation of this commandment forgive us. We pray for the sake of the sacrifice. That Christ has offered on our behalf and for the sake of the love in which you gave him to be that sacrifice.

And then in response to him and his righteousness, his person, his obedience, and even yes as your love, which gave him to be all those things for us. Make us to be like Him that those whom you form you and predestined to be conformed, to his image and have called.

And justified that they would be glorified. And that we might have his joy in us that we might love you with all the heart, soul, mind and strength.

What we might glorify and enjoy you forever for. We ask it in his name. Amen.