

God is spiritual adultery and that it provokes God to anger and righteous jealousy. Deuteronomy 32:16 says...*They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominations they provoked him to anger.* Although we may be tempted to ignore or gloss over violations of the first commandment, we must learn to hate and forsake this sin because it is “much displeasing” to God and provokes His anger. Proverbs 11:21 says the wicked will not go unpunished but the righteous shall be freed. That’s the good news. With repentance and faith comes forgiveness. Christ’s righteousness becomes ours and we are made free to love God as we ought.

Discussion Questions

- When you reflect on your sin and repent before God, do you tend to focus on outward actions like stealing and lying rather than sins of the heart?
- Have you committed spiritual adultery and “much displeased” God? Will you repent?

Day 5 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

“You shall have no other gods before me.” This is the first command that God gives to His people on Mt. Sinai. It tells them what to do—worship the true God. It tells them what not to do—deny God or worship anything else. But more than this, it reminds the people that God is God. He sees them, He knows their hearts, and He is much displeased when their hearts stray from Him. God deserves their worship. He will not ignore their lack of it. In the book of Hosea, God compares the unfaithfulness of the Israelites to adultery and warns of their coming judgment. *And I will punish her for the feast days of the Baals when she burned offerings to them and adorned herself with her ring and jewelry, and went after her lovers and forgot me, declares the LORD* (Hosea 2:13). And yet, in this passage God also gives hope for restoration because of His great love for His people. *And in that day, declares the LORD, you will call me “My Husband,” and no longer will you call me “My Baal.” For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more... And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the LORD* (Hosea 2:16-20).

Discussion Questions

- Do you have “Baals” in your life that you need God’s power to remove?
- Does the idea of God being a jealous God bring you fear or comfort? Why?
- How does Jesus fulfill the promise of mercy described in Hosea?

Baptist Catechism

Family Worship Guide



West Oaks Baptist Church

(in preparation for Sunday, September 15th, 2024)

Baptist Catechism Question #53

Q: What are we especially taught by these words before me, in the first commandment?

A: *These words before me, in the first commandment teach us, that God, who seeth all things, taketh notice of and is much displeased with the sin of having any other God.*

Suggested Memory Verse

Psalm 44:20–21 *If we had forgotten the name of our God or spread out our hands to a foreign god, [21] would not God discover this? For he knows the secrets of the heart.*

Day 1 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

Our question this week begins with the phrase “especially taught,” meaning something of particular importance. When teaching someone to drive there are many things that need to be covered: how to make a turn, how to change lanes, how to use the blinkers or windshield wipers, and so much more. All of these are important, but one thing stands out above the rest. It is *especially* important to teach where and how to use the brake! In the last 4 weeks we have covered many aspects of the first commandment: what it commands as well as what it forbids. But, what are the most important things we learn from this commandment? There are three specific concepts that we will look at this week as being “especially taught” in the first commandment: 1) God sees all things 2) God takes notice of things, and 3) God is displeased with all sin but especially the sin of having other gods. Our memory verse this week says... *If we had forgotten the name of our God or spread out our hands to a foreign god, would not God discover this? For he knows the secrets of the heart* (Psalm 44:20-21). God knows the secrets of our hearts, He sees us when we sin, and He is displeased with our disloyalty. The first commandment is not just about doing the right thing on the outside... it is about God’s ability to know our hearts. Is God truly first in your life?

Discussion Questions

- What things in life would you “especially teach” to others?
- We often keep our sins hidden from others. Does knowing that God sees your heart change how you live?
- How does the gospel bring hope for someone who has put other things before God in their heart?

Day 2 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

Let’s take a closer look at what is “especially taught” by the first commandment. The answer begins with a reminder that God sees all things. In fact, nothing can be hidden from God. When someone first encounters this idea they are usually horrified. We try so hard to keep our secrets hidden from others. We learn over time to act one way on the outside while feeling the opposite on the inside. God, however, sees all of our secrets and knows what we are feeling and thinking. Speaking to the church in Ephesus, God says to them...“*I know your works, your toil...* (Revelation 2:2). They were doing some things right, but God had a few things against them because of what was in their hearts. Psalm 90:8 says, *You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence.* God created us, fashioned us, formed us. How could He not know everything about us? Yet how often do we live our lives as if God can’t see us or know what we are thinking? Even if we realize that God sees us, we sometimes still persist in the thought that we can hide our sin. *If I say, “Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night,” even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you* (Psalm 139:11–12). This should dissuade us from sin and encourage us to do right (Gen 39:9, Matt 6:4).

Discussion Questions

- Why might some people think “having other gods” is an invisible sin? Is that true?
- How does it make you feel to think that God sees everything you do and think?

Day 3 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

The catechism says God takes notice of our sin and in particular the sin of having other gods before Him. What does it mean to take notice of something? When students hear or see something they think is important for class, they will take notes to better remember it. When a car flees the scene of an accident, witnesses may make note of the license plate number. Whether physically writing it down or making a mental note to remember, noting something indicates importance and often suggests the information will be needed or will require further action. In the case of God noticing our sin, it shows that God not only saw, but that He considers it important and that He intends to do something about it. Looking at humanity in the Old Testament, God says they are...*a people who provoke me to my face continually, sacrificing in gardens and making offerings on bricks* (Isaiah 65:3). The people were constantly sinning by having idols and other gods they worshiped, and this provoked God. He would act against them because He saw them and noticed them in their sin. Having other gods is called spiritual robbery and adultery. Isaiah 42:8 says...*I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols.* We are called instead to... *know the God of your father and serve him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought* (1 Chronicles 28:9).

Discussion Questions

- What kinds of things do you take note of during the day?
- If you saw a robber steal something of yours, would you take notice or ignore it?
- Are you guilty of spiritual robbery (stealing God’s worship and giving it to something else)?

Day 4 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

The boys and girls catechism says that repentance means “to be sorry for sin and to hate and forsake it, because it is displeasing to God.” All sin is displeasing to God, but with the first commandment we learn that He is “much displeased” when we put other gods before Him. Why might this be? In general, sin goes against the character of who God is. We ought not to lie because God is Truth. We shouldn’t steal because God is the giver of all good gifts. But when we break the first commandment, we don’t just go against a particular aspect of God’s character, we go against the essence of who God is. God is also much displeased because turning to other gods is a rejection of His great love. Scripture tells us that giving our hearts to anything before