

## Ten Commandments - #1 The Lord Your God

1	Worship no other God than me.	Worship and serve only the true God.
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***I am the Lord your God, who rescued you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship any other gods besides me.***  
(Exodus 20:2-3 NLT)

There are many higher powers that individuals in recovery relate to. There are a number of religions who have one or many gods connected to their belief system. Some people seek to find the divine within themselves. Others don't bother with the idea of God at all but they worship and trust in their money or their popularity or their political power.

For Christians in recovery we are called to know, love and serve only one God. That God is the one who created us, who rescued us from bondage and brokenness, who gave us his Son Jesus to die on the cross for our sins and who now lives in us by the power of the Holy Spirit. God calls us to become personally involved with him and to depend completely on him for our wellbeing. He's the God who has brought us out of the slavery of our addictions. He's on the side of our freedom. He wants us to have life without violence and oppression.

In order for us to experience that freedom, we must put away every false idea, every false dependency and rely completely on him. Simply put, God is saying, "There is no other power that can give you freedom except me. There is no other way to have freedom than to trust only in me." As addicts we've tried all sorts of things to take away the hurt or to give us a sense of confidence and power. All of them failed. God now invites us to come and trust Him since He's the one who not only made us but who has also brought us out of the slavery we got ourselves into.

***Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will direct your paths.*** (Proverbs 3:5,6 NLT)

The first "other god" we have to lay down is the object of our addiction. We have replaced the god who created us with a chemical or food or a habit that we expected to give us ultimate pleasure, power, or problem solving ability. We have been willing to do anything for our addiction. We have been willing to give up anything and everything for our addiction. We have focused on one thing and one thing only - our addiction. We must now ask God to forgive us for falsely worshipping something other than Him and turn to Him for a new way of life.

In this new way of life, God commands us to put down every other person, every other belief, and every other power we have previously embraced and worshiped and trust only Him. We can be sure that relatively soon after we come into recovery, the devil will seek to have us turn our

allegiance to a new object of worship. For some it will be a relationship, or sports, food or even ourself.

***So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual sin, impurity, lust, and shameful desires. Don't be greedy for the good things of this life, for that is idolatry*** (Colossians 3:5 NLT)

We want to be in control of our choices. We want to shape our new life in recovery. God, in this commandment, tells us that the way to a free and fulfilling life is to give Him first priority in every area of our life. Before we make any choice we will see if it lines up with what God says works and we will adjust our lives and plans when they don't. As we plan we'll ask God, "God what is your plan for my life? What did you create me to do? How can I serve your purposes in my life today?"

Rick Warren in his best selling book *The Purpose Driven Life* began the first chapter with the statement, "It's not about me." His point is that the Christian life is about surrendering all of our life - our ambitions, hopes and desires - to God and getting our plans from Him. Jesus put it this way:

***And he will give you all you need from day to day if you live for him and make the Kingdom of God your primary concern.*** (Matthew 6:33 NLT)

If we are serving God we can't be serving ourselves first. We're so used to running after what we want, when we want it that it is difficult in recovery to trust God when circumstances change at a pace different than our desire. Often in recovery we will hear how we have to put "me first" in order to get well. The Christian says, "I can only get well if I put God first and surrender to his will completely." In fact the Bible teaches that we will have to deny ourselves

***Then Jesus said to the disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must put aside your selfish ambition, shoulder your cross, and follow me. If you try to keep your life for yourself, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for me, you will find true life.***  
(Matthew 16:24-25 NLT)

Which God will we serve today? The God of the Bible, the god of our addiction, the god of ourself?

### Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. What's the challenge of this first commandment for me?
2. What needs to change in my life so I am obeying this commandment?