

New City Catechism

Discussion Questions

Episode 9: What does God require in the first, second, and third commandments?

Short Answer (matches song): First, that we know God as the only true God. Second, that we avoid all idolatry. Third, that we treat God's name with fear and reverence.

Long Answer (doesn't match song): First, that we know and trust God as the only true and living God. Second, that we avoid all idolatry and do not worship God improperly. Third, that we treat God's name with fear and reverence, honoring also his Word and works.

Verse to learn: ***Deuteronomy 6:13–14***

It is the Lord your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear. You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are around you.

Discussion Questions:

1. When you picture God, what does He look like?

A: Answers can vary - allow for involvement. You could even have people draw what they imagine God looks like. Ultimately, no answer will be "correct" because God is Spirit. You could draw a picture of what you imagine Jesus to look like, but most of our images in our heads are rough guesses (or poorly adapted paintings/drawings to fit our culture/skin color/etc.)

2. Based on question 1, why do you think it is wrong for us to try to make an image of God? Why does our attempt to picture God fall short?

A: Allow discussion. Our images are often OUR perceptions of God, which are often very biased to our likings and desires. God is holy (set apart) and should not be compared to other pictures/statues/carvings/etc of other humans. We often bring God into our mold (human/limited) rather than letting God draw us into His understanding (eternal/beyond our understanding).

A follow up question might be: How have your life experiences affected your view of God?

3. Read 1 Chronicles 29:11, and discuss why God is the only true god (1st commandment).

A: He is ABOVE everything; exalted as head over all. Everything is HIS, therefore, nothing can stand above Him, or even beside Him because He owns everything.

4. An idol can be a "false god" or "worshipping god falsely." What is the difference?

A: False idol: a god that is completely different from the God of the Bible. Buddha, Allah, etc. Worshipping God falsely: Worshipping "the God of the Bible" but with our own interpretations of Him. Examples: The God of the Old Testament is different than the one of the New Testament (O.T. judgment/wrath, N.T. love, mercy, grace = Religious Modernism). Or, it can be as simple as "I don't like that God judges people. Or that God does not approve of _____ sin. When people pick and choose, what part of God they worship, they are worshipping God falsely.

5. Why does the third commandment insist that we honor and respect God's name (character)?

A: God created us with a desire for Him that ONLY He can fulfill (as He is). If we always try to change God to fit this hole in us, we will never find peace; never be whole. God, AS HE IS, is what will fill us and satisfy our hearts. If we try to fill it with another god, or a god we have created, we will never have peace. God is calling us to Himself because He created us to be filled ONLY by Him; the one true God.

Follow Up: Spend some time looking up the names of God. Here is a link to a quick search of the names of God.

Quick links for searching or printing materials:

https://www.blueletterbible.org/study/misc/name_god.cfm

https://www.openbible.info/topics/gods_name