

LESSON 9

Worship God Alone



Learning Objectives

In this lesson you will:

- Explore the meaning of the first commandment.
- Consider ways that people today sometimes worship false gods.
- Discuss false gods we see today.

Opening Prayer

O Lord, help me to love you and worship you above everything, for you alone are the holy one, the mighty one, and the immortal one. Grant me the grace to love you as you deserve to be loved. Amen.



Opening Activity

Scan the QR code to access the online resources.

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Introduction

Loving God means that we follow him and worship him alone. The truth is that we can love God because he made us for himself. As we saw in Lesson 8, the saints are the best examples of how to follow Jesus and be **faithful** to him. God wants our hearts and our prayers. The more we love God, the more we will seek to hear his voice, so as to follow him. Jesus reminds us: “Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened” (Mt 7:7–8). We are all searching for God.

Now suppose your small group has been hired by the Church to investigate who God is and where he can be found. Together, answer the following questions. Be prepared to share your report with the class.

1. Where can God be found?
2. What evidence is there for his existence?
3. How does he act?
4. How can people get in touch with him?

Point 1

First Commandment

The first commandment goes as follows:

“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me” (Ex 20:1–3).

Throughout history, people have feared and admired forces beyond their control. Some people worshipped the sun, moon, stars, thunder, ocean, or certain animals. Gradually, Moses and the Israelites came to believe there is only one God. God gave them the commandments and the first commandment is about him.

Basically, this commandment tells us how we should act toward God. God is our Creator. It is right to **worship** him—to praise and **adore** him.



Point 2

False Gods

God cannot be described completely by words. That is why it is easy to get confused about who God is. That is also why many people have turned to false gods known as **idols**. They want a God they can see and touch. The golden calf was one of the gods the Egyptians worshipped. And as will be seen in the Climbing the Mountain section, the Israelites even worshipped the golden calf when Moses was delayed in coming down from the mountain. Moses became so angry at them for doing this that he threw the Ten Commandments down and burned the golden calf in a fire (see Ex 32:1-6).

Point 3

Today's False Gods

Worshipping a golden calf may seem silly to us today. How could people think that a statue was really God?

Even though the people of Jesus' day knew the first commandment, they often turned to these false gods instead. Here is the story of a time Jesus had to remind them to worship only the true God. Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all those who were selling and buying there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves. And he said to them, "It is written: 'My house shall be a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of robbers" (Lk 19:46).

Today, we may "worship" false gods even though we do not realize it. We might be very focused on being popular or having lots of money. Instead of worrying about those things, we should give all our attention to God.

Activity 1

Maze

Navigate the maze to find Jesus, avoiding idols like money and fame along the way.



Activity 2

Prayer Chart

How much do you let God be a part of your daily life? The table below lists various times throughout the day or week. For each time, check the column that describes how often you pray then.

Time	Usually	Sometimes	Never but I'd like to
When I wake up			
Before I eat			
After I eat			
Before making a decision			
After something good happens to me			
When I'm worried about something			
After I've sinned			
Before going to bed			
At the Divine Liturgy on Sunday			

Maronite Hymn



Who Can Fully Comprehend God as the Holy Trinity?

Syriac: msheeho natareh l'eedtokh

Who can fully comprehend God as the **Holy Trinity**?
So great is this mystery far beyond our scrutiny!
The Father, before all time, begot the Son,
the Eternal Word.

The Begotten Son took flesh from the holy Virgin's womb.
The Spirit was sent to give courage and perfect.
All creation worships him, the Lord of all,
in three persons, one true God.

— *Book of Offering: Service of the Word*



Listen to the hymn.

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My Role Model

Saint Thecla, the First Woman Martyr

Saint Thecla was a first-century teenager who lived in Iconium (present-day Turkey). Her parents were pagans, which meant they believed in gods other than the true God. Thecla was engaged to marry another pagan. Then one day her life changed. While sitting by her window, Thecla heard the Apostle Paul preach about Jesus and the true God. Impressed by what she heard, she listened by her window for three whole days. After Paul was arrested, Thecla visited him in prison, where she learned more about the one true God and decided to dedicate herself, body and soul, to this God alone. When Thecla ended her engagement, the governor threatened to punish her. Refusing to worship any god but the God of Jesus, she was taken to the arena to be burned at the stake. Just as the fire was lit, a sudden thunderstorm doused the flames, and Thecla was freed. She joined Paul and worked as an apostle, preaching about God to groups of women. Despite several arrests and attempts on her life by the pagan government, God rescued her each time. Thecla remained faithful to God until her martyrdom at age ninety, offering her body and soul to the Lord. We celebrate her feast day on September 24.

Saint Thecla, pray for us.

Recall



*Find and circle the five words below hidden in this puzzle.
Then use the words to answer the questions below.*

G O W F P L M A
S E O A D O R E
R T R I N I T Y
E Z S T B W I V
A X H H H R K B
G C I F A L S E
J V P U N Y F M
I D O L J U G N

Adore
Trinity
Faithful
Idol
Worship

1. The first commandment tells us to _____ God alone.
2. We believe that God is a _____, three Persons in one God.
3. We _____ God when we praise and worship him in the Divine Liturgy.
4. An _____ is an image or statue of a false god.
5. God is always _____ to us, even when we turn to other gods.

Weekly Journal



At the Divine Liturgy, join in saying the Nicene Creed and think about each word as you pray.

Write: How did you worship God this week?

Concluding Prayer



Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
One God to whom is the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Climbing the Mountain

Bonus Materials for Students & Teachers



Ex 32:1-6

The Golden Calf

When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron, and said to him, “Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.” Aaron said to them, “Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.” So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron. He took the gold from them, formed it in a mold, and cast an image of a calf; and they said, “These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!” When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, “Tomorrow shall be a festival to the Lord.” They rose early the next day, and offered burnt offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel.

Reflection

In this passage from the Book of Exodus, a large gathering of Israelites worship a life-size statue of a golden calf, or what is actually a bull, which represents the Egyptian bull-god Apis. They have decided to worship a pagan god while their leader Moses has been away on Mount Sinai receiving the stone tablets on which God has written the Ten Commandments, his laws on how to live properly. Aaron, dressed in a white cloak, has melted down gold earrings to create the idol. Then Moses returns with Joshua, and in his anger at seeing the calf, smashes the tablets.

Saintly Quote

“God asks little, but He gives much.” — *Saint John Chrysostom*

Questions

1. How does this Scripture verse speak to your heart?
2. Have you ever taken matters into your own hands when you felt as if God was not answering your prayers? If so, what did you do?

Reaching the Summit

For Teachers & Parents



“God’s first call and just demand is that man accept him and worship him.” — CCC 2084

The First Commandment

It is wrong to worship false gods. Although this commandment may seem simple, it took a long time for people to understand its truth. God created everything in the universe. God is not only all-powerful, but also loving. God cares about humans and answers their prayers. God is always faithful to people, even when people turn to false gods.

Other False Gods

Money: People who worship money only want to get rich and don’t care who they hurt or cheat. They only want to get rich.

Possessions: People who believe that things— a big house, a fancy car, designer clothes, and the latest electronic equipment— will make them happy crave possessions.

Fame: People who want to be successful rock stars, athletes, movie actors, or politicians just so everyone will know their name and recognize them seek fame.

Power: People who like to give orders and control other people seek power.

Discussion Questions

1. How can you remove the false gods in your life and in your child's life?
 2. What can you replace the false gods with?
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Words to Know



Q. Who is the **Holy Trinity**?

A. The one true God, who is three divine Persons— the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Trinity is not three separate gods, but one God.

Q. What is an **idol**?

A. Anything that takes the place of the one true God; for example, a statue, image, or other representation of a false god. Worshipping idols is a sin against the first commandment.

Q. What is **worship**?

A. To give praise or show respect for God. One way we worship God is by taking part in the Divine Liturgy. It is wrong to worship false gods.



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