

3. The Lord Alone

¹³ Fear the Lord your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name. ¹⁴ Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you.

Deuteronomy 6:13-14

Even good things can become idols. A healthy diet and exercise are good for you. But if that becomes your identity, where you find your worth in life, that is an idol, and is essentially what Moses is warning the people to stay away from.

Be careful, or you will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods and bow down to them.

Deuteronomy 11:16

Be careful that you do not forget the Lord, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

Deuteronomy 6:12

Dedication in Deuteronomy 6 means...

Listening to God's voice (in His Word)

Loving God with everything you are

Worshiping the Lord alone (rejecting idols)

Community Group Questions:

1. What is the most important takeaway in this text for you?
2. Does this text change what you think it means to "listen"?
3. What does it look like to love God first in your life?
4. Do you think these commands are still for us today?
Why or Why not?



Dedication
The Greatest Commandment

Deuteronomy 6

Corbett Robertson - Sierra Community Church

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The greatest commandment?

³⁷ "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22:37-40

1. Listen (Shema)

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Deuteronomy 6:4

¹³ So if you faithfully obey (Shema) the commands I am giving you today—to love the Lord your God and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul... ¹⁵ I will provide grass in the fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied.

Deuteronomy 11:13,15

"Hear, O Israel". It means something like: "Listen. Concentrate. Give the word of God your most focused attention. Strive to understand. Engage all your faculties, intellectual and emotional."

Jonathan Sacks

When Moses says Shema, he's instructing the people to listen carefully and respond to what God is asking of them. This is essentially the same as what James says in his letter...

²² Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. ²³ Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴ and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

James 1:22-24

"There was a profound difference between the two civilizations of antiquity that between them shaped the culture of the West: ancient Greece and ancient Israel.

The Greeks were the supreme masters of the visual arts: art, sculpture, architecture and the theatre. Jews, as a matter of profound religious principle, were not. God, the sole object of worship, is invisible. He transcends nature. He created the universe and is therefore beyond the universe.

Therefore the supreme religious act in Judaism is to listen. Ancient Greece was a culture of the eye; ancient Israel a culture of the ear. The Greeks worshipped what they saw; Israel worshipped what they heard."

Jonathan Sacks

2. Love

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

Deuteronomy 6:5

Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.

John 14:23

Deuteronomy 6 is in-between the second giving of the 10 commandments in chapter 5, the covenant agreement between God and His people. Chapter 6 lays out the importance of the people's responsibility to apply everything they've just heard. Chapter 7 reminds them of God's dedication to them and the promises attached to dedicating themselves to God.

⁷ The Lord did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. ⁸ But it was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. ⁹ Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments.

Deuteronomy 7:7-9