

Q46. What is required in the first commandment?
A46. **The first commandment requires us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly.**

1 Chronicles 28:9; Deuteronomy 26:17; Matthew 4:10; Psalm 95: 6-7; 29:2

DQ1: What does the First Commandment require us to know and acknowledge?

DQ2: What does it mean for us to know and acknowledge God?

DQ3: What is the outcome of keeping the First Commandment?

DQ4: If God of the Scripture is the only true God, then there cannot be any other true God. Is this acceptable to you? If not, why not?

DQ5: If the fact that God of the Scripture is the only truly God is acknowledged, then how should you live your life toward God?

Notes:

The First Commandment requires us to **know** and **acknowledge** that Jehovah is God and the only true God. But what does it mean to know and acknowledge it?

Trusting God does not mean blindly following God. One must know God. To know God means to have the personal relationship with Him. To know God is not to imagine a relationship with an unknown being. Biblically speaking, knowing God presumes that God first revealed Himself so that one could know Him. Man cannot know God man's way but only God's way. Indeed, God made man so that man could know Him when He reveals Himself to man.

To acknowledge God means that we acknowledge Him with his whole being, i.e., spiritually, rationally, emotionally and intellectually so that there is no lingering doubts about who God is. To acknowledge God requires true faith. True faith is tested in acknowledging God in any and all circumstances. How did God cause his people to acknowledge Him? Recall the Exodus story. For forty years, the Lord God led the Israelites through the wilderness so that the Israelites could know and acknowledge God by experiencing all types of situations and circumstances.

When we meet someone, we slowly become acquainted with him or her over time. But, it will take a long time before a deep friendship is formed. This is because we must experience each other in many different types of situations and circumstances over a long period of time. Likewise, God's people must learn to consistently acknowledge God over time.

When we come to know and acknowledge God, we bring worship and glory to Him. The first and most visible sign of someone who knows and acknowledges God is to worship Him. To know God is to have entered into a relationship with Him since there is no other way to know Him. To acknowledge God is to have decided that He is the Master of one's life. But, there is more. To acknowledge God, you must acknowledge Him in a way that others will also know that you are a child of God. Your inner acknowledgment of God is not sufficient. There cannot be doubts about where you stand in your decision to follow or not to follow God, because **GOD IS**.

To say that we are true Christians is to say that we know and acknowledge God of the Scripture to be only true God and that no other person or thing could take the place of God in our lives. The First Commandment very explicitly and emphatically teaches us that there cannot be true God except the God of the Christian canon, the Old and New Testament. There is none other! God is unique to the exclusion of all others. The claim of the exclusive God can seem rather harsh and abrasive but it is true. We cannot maintain our faith unless we are absolutely convinced of and committed to the First Commandment. It is precisely the claims such as the First Commandment is what has brought upon the church of Christ much persecution throughout history. The more clearly the church declares the First Commandment, the greater the persecution it will invite. Yet, the Scripture does not apologize or make excuses for such a bold claim. We, too, must be clear on this point. And, we must be very thankful and proud of the fact that God is the only true God. At the same time, we must learn to become compassionate toward those who worship and follow false gods.

In reality, it is not easy to acknowledge God as the only true God. It is most disturbing and discomfoting to think that so many who follow false gods and religions will end up in hell. Some may even wish that somehow those who follow false gods and religions would be saved in their own ways. Nonetheless, the Scripture and the First Commandment do not leave any room whatsoever for such a possibility. Salvation is found only in the one and true God, the God of the Scripture. This is foundational for all believers.

How then should those who know and acknowledge God as the only true God live?

The answer is simple: they must live as required by God, not wavering or doubting the commands of God. The life of obedience and the life of disobedience will appear in stark contrast. The life of obedience will bring worship and glory to God. The life of disobedience will bring wrath of God. The First Commandment will separate the sheep from the goats, from the obedient and disobedient.

How then should the obedient approach the disobedient?

What should be our attitude toward the disobedient?

What are your answers to these questions? Please give your best answers.

If we can keep the First Commandment wholly, then the remaining nine commandments will be kept as well.

Image a person who could keep the First Commandment perfectly. To be sure, there is such a person.

His name is Jesus Christ. His life, filled with obedience to God's command, was truly beautiful to behold.

Finally, we must only worship only Jehovah God and no others. We must be willing to risk all things in keeping the First Commandment. No amount of mistake will be allowed in keeping this command because God has spoken by His authority.