

How many of you like parades? What is the biggest, longest, greatest parade that you've ever been to?

Did you know that the largest and longest parade in the history of the world is actually in the Bible? Can you think of it?

- About 3500 years ago the children of Israel were led by Moses up and out of Egypt.
- The parade or procession started in Israel and went all the way to the land of Canaan.
- God led his people out of Egypt and through the wilderness with a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.
- The people follow the cloud and it leads them through the red sea and three days into the wilderness where they come to the foot of a very large mountain.
- This is Mount Sinai. The top of the mountain is covered with dark clouds... lightning is flashing... and thunder is crashing.

God calls Moses to come up to the top of the mountain... and there in that place in the very presence of God, Moses is given the Ten Commandments.

Like a loud burst of thunder.... God

And God spoke all these words, saying,

² *"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.*

³ *"You shall have no other gods before^[a] me.*

That's the first of 10 commandments:

³ *"You shall have no other gods before^[a] me.*

What do you think about that first commandment?

I want us to ask 2 questions about this first commandment... over the next several weeks:

1. *What is it to have a God?*
2. *Why should we have no other gods but the Lord?*

Pray

³ *"You shall have no other gods before^[a] me.*

1. *What is it to have a God?*

Answer: It is to have ONE who is able to do three things for us; and one who is right to expect three things from us.

What is the first thing that you want your God to be able to do for you?

- Answer: We want God to always help us.
 1. *Doesn't a little child always need help from his or her mother?*
 2. *What does a sick person need?*
 3. *What does a blind man need?*

We are like children in this world—like persons who are sick and blind.

We need to be taken care of... we need to lead and guided... we need to be nursed back to health because of sin.

Our parents can help us in many things.... Our teachers and friends can help us in many ways... ***but not in all.***

Is there one who never sleeps or grows tired... one who sees everything and is always there?

God our helper is the one

What is the first thing that you want your God to be able to do for you?

- God is always there to help us.

David wrote in the book of Psalms: "The Lord is my help; whom then shall I fear?"

Isaiah wrote: "Fear not, for I am with you.... Isaiah 43:5a (Repeat)

There are lots of other religions in the world and people all over the world cry out to false Gods... and you know what?

- Those false God's can't help them...

There is only one who is always there to help.

What else do you want your God to be able to do for you?

- The 2nd thing we want our God to be able to always do is save us.

When Daniel was thrown into the den of lions... he needed a God who could preserve his life from the jaws of these massive beasts.

When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were thrown into the furnace, they needed a God who could save their lives from the heat.

When Jonah was cast into the sea, he needed a God who could save him from drowning.

- Daniel found such a God in the Lord

- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego found such a God in the Lord
- Jonah found such a God in the Lord

When the disciples were in the small boat being tossed all over by the winds and the waves on the Sea of Galilee, they needed a God who could control the violence of the storm

- They found such a God in Jesus their Savior

I want to tell you a story about a man from India....

This man was lost... he didn't know God.

His conscience was troubled by his sin... He knew that there was something wrong with him... something that was broken.... Something that wasn't right.

For years he would travel around and talk to different holy men of other religions... Buddhists, Hindus and other religious men.

He did everything that these men asked him to do. At one temple he was told to take a long journey on his hands and knees... so he did. Another holy man had told him to not eat food for a long time and to try to prove himself worthy. One many told him to put pebbles in his shoes and to travel a long distance to another temple and to make a sacrifice to an idol there.

You know what?..... None of this worked. The man did all of these things, but he never felt better, he never felt whole, he never felt saved... and his sin continued to bother him.

On the way home from the far away temple, still with pebbles in his shoes the man sat down under a tree. While sitting under the tree he saw a crowd of people gathered around a man. The man was a missionary.

The Indian man heard the missionary say: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." The missionary taught how Jesus was able and willing to save all he came to him.

The Indian man heard this news and he thought to himself: "This is the savior I have been looking for." He believed and he was saved

Friends... What is more precious—the body that grows old, fades, and dies.... Or your soul that never dies?

Suppose a spring in your watch breaks... Who should you take your watch to? If my watch breaks and I bring it to you to fix can you fix it?

- *If I take my watch to a shoemaker, can he fix my watch?*
- *If I take my watch to the doctor, can he fix it?*
- *If I take my watch to a carpenter, can he fix it?*
- *What about a lawyer?*

- What about a blacksmith?
- What about a watchmaker?

Listen: The soul is like a watch... sin has broken the springs inside so that it won't work. If want to get our souls fixed, the soul-maker is the only one who can fix it.

Our hearts are broken and dirty because of sin...

- Jesus is our savior... he has come to seek and to save those who are lost.

³ *“You shall have no other gods before^[a] me.*

Our God is a God:

- who always helps us
- And can save us

And our God is a God who makes us happy... In sickness and in health we can rest in the comfort and love of our God

...For the Lord knows the way of the righteous—God knows his children... he cares for us... loves us... treats us with tenderness and love.... And even the hard things in our lives are there because God is working to make us better.

There was a man who had very serious cancer. The cancer had caused him much pain and suffering... and at this point there was no cure. The man was not going to get better... He was in a lot of pain.

A pastor went to the man to comfort him and care for him. The pastor started a conversation with the man who was quite pleasant in spite of his circumstances.

The pastor asked him what made him so happy. The man with cancer replied: “thoughts of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” The pastor was amazed at this man’s faith and hope in God in the face of these trying circumstances.

The pastor wanted to hear more and so he asked the man: Suppose, the God should give you your choice, to have your cancer, with all of its pain and suffering, and the certainty of dying soon, but being happy with God forever in heaven. Or, you can have happiness and health in this life for many many years, but with the risk of losing your soul later. Which would you choose?

What do you think the man with cancer said?

What would you choose?

- Give me the cancer and the pain with Jesus for eternity. Let someone else have the world, long life, and riches without him.

God had given this man true happiness even though he was very sick.

³ *“You shall have no other gods before^[a] me.*

What is our god like?

Our God always helps... he saves us... and he makes us happy...these are three things that we can expect from God.

Next week we will talk about 3 things that God expects from us.