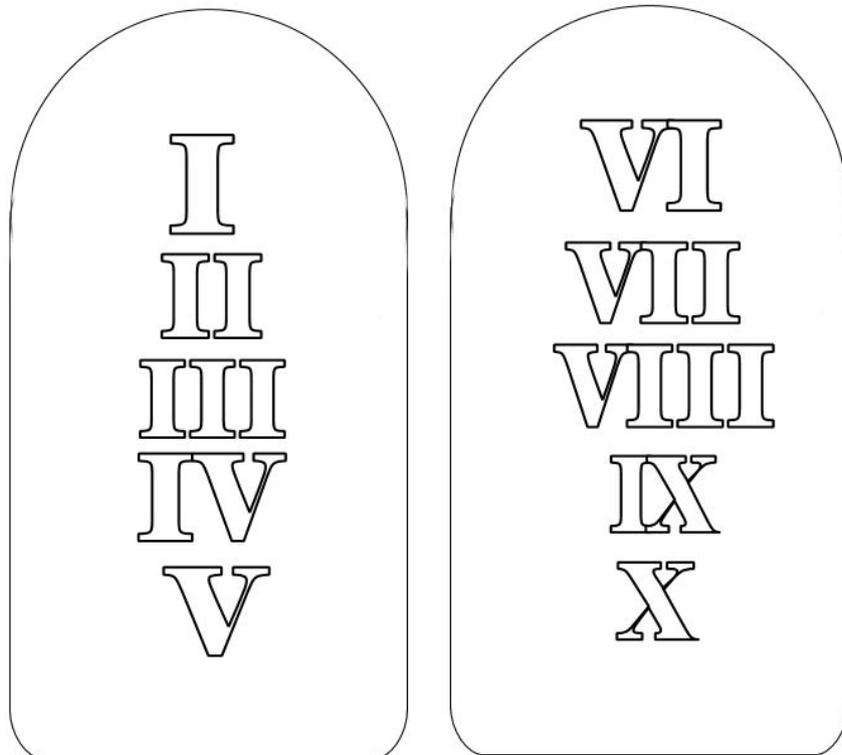


Thou Shalt Have No Other Gods



By Cynthia Bailey-Rug

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Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, King James Version, Cambridge, 1769.

Exodus: 20:3: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Most of us when we hear this first of the Ten Commandments believe it means that so long as we do not worship Buddha or Mohammad, we are obeying it. But, have you ever considered that allowing the opinions of other people is also idolatry? Think about it- we as Christians are only to believe what God says about us in the Bible. Things like I am the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:21), I am more than a conqueror (Romans 8:37) and such. Sadly, so many of us have a habit of allowing what others say about us, good or bad, to determine how we see ourselves. This places the person judging us in the position of a god in our life.

I grew up with a rather domineering mother. She has a way of saying things that can come out in a hurtful way. For example, instead of encouraging me to lose weight by offering to exercise with me, she would tell me repeatedly I "needed to lose a whole lot of weight," even when I was only a few pounds overweight. She was also sure to command I do certain things, instead of asking that I do them. This combination of things in her personality, along with my own insecurities led to me growing into an adult who thought when someone tells me I am a certain way, that I was as they said. The opinion of people overrode what God had to say. I had been put down so many times in my life that I had terrible self-esteem. After a revelation of this Scripture, however, things began to change.

First of all, I repented and asked God to forgive me for allowing anyone else to have His position in my life. From then on, every time someone says something to me about how I look, act, or whatever, I no longer take it as the way things are. I have learned to ask God to tell me instead what He has to say on the subject. Even last year at a family gathering, when my aunt told me how beautiful she thought I looked, as nice as that was to hear, I still asked God to tell me His thoughts on the matter. I did not want her sweet complement to put her in a position in my life that she

should not be in. It has become a habit now, whether I am being insulted or praised, to ask for God's input, and my self-esteem is much healthier than it was several years ago.

So please, if you also have a problem with taking to heart what people have to say about you like I have faced, I strongly encourage you to repent to the Father for allowing others to be in His place in your life by determining your self-image, and then asking Him to speak truth to you each time you are praised or judged. You will be very surprised at how your self-esteem changes for the better!