

From Your Pastor
A Study of the Shorter Catechism

Question 45: *Which is the first commandment?* **Answer:** *The first commandment is, Thou shalt have no other gods before me (Exod. 20:3).*



Question 46: *What is required in the first commandment?* **Answer:** *The first commandment requireth us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly (1 Chron. 28:9; Deut. 26:17; Matt. 4:10; Ps. 29:2).*

Question 47: *What is forbidden in the first commandment?* **Answer:** *The first commandment forbiddeth the denying, or not worshipping and glorifying the true God as God, and our God; and the giving of that worship and glory to any other, which is due to him alone (Ps. 14:1; Rom. 1:21; Ps. 81:10,11; Rom. 1:25,26).*

Question 48: *What are we specially taught by these words [before me] in the first commandment?* **Answer:** *These words [before me] in the first commandment teach us, That God, who seeth all things, taketh notice of, and is much displeased with, the sin of having any other God (Ezek. 8:5,6; Ps. 46:20,21).*

Memory Verse: *“You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.” (Matt. 4:10)*

An Explanation: *As we continue through the Ten Commandments in the next few questions and answers from the Shorter Catechism, let us keep an illustration in mind. The Law of God can be likened to a mirror as you might find in an enchanted land. The mirror can be seen in, but it can also be seen through. We look through the mirror of God’s commandments to see the wonderful and perfect character of our God, and His perfect holiness and righteousness. We look into the mirror and see the reflection of how we are living in light of His character and righteousness. As we look through the mirror, so we see a gracious and forgiving God who provides all the grace and power we need to live holy lives. As we look into the mirror and see our own reflection, we learn where we specifically need to repent of our sins, and seek in Christ the grace and power to live holy lives. Through the mirror to behold the happy and joyful life we were created to live; in the mirror to behold the progress we may be making in living before Him but also to be aware of the ongoing need of repentance and forgiveness we need in Christ Jesus!*

How do you see God and His character in questions 45-48? How do you see Christ? What is your need of change? Use the Shorter Catechism exposition of the Law to focus your sights on God, His glorious Christ, and your need of ongoing repentance and faith!

Prayer: *Father, let me live my life before you, seeking to please you in all I do and say by your grace (2 Cor. 5:9). Teach me your ways, and let me demonstrate my love for you in joyful obedience, as my Savior before me has shown to me! (John 15:9-11).*

“It is a pleasure to him who loves holiness, to behold a most exact delineation of [holiness] in the written law of God. But what is that delineation but only a picture? It is indeed exact, and painted in natural colours; but then it is a picture only, without flesh and blood, without life and motion. How much greater therefore the pleasure, to behold the same holiness which is portrayed in the law, living, as it were, and animated in Christ?”

- Herman Witsius