

Putting God First

We are always making choices – which T-shirt to wear – which flavour of crisps to buy. Sometimes we have good reasons for the choice we make. Often it is just a matter of preference. Many of the choices we make are not very important but some are extremely important.

God gave us the Ten Commandments as guidelines for our daily living. He wants us to obey his commands. His first commandment states, ‘Thou shalt have no other gods before me’ (Exodus 20:3).

When Joshua was an old man, he gathered the leaders of Israel together at Shechem to tell them God’s message. They were reminded of God’s goodness to them in times past. He delivered them from slavery in Egypt and gave them the Promised Land. They were presented with a vitally important choice. To put away the gods that their forefathers used to serve. Choose not to serve the same false gods that the local people the Amorites serve. Instead, ‘fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and truth.’

‘Choose you this day whom you will serve,’ Joshua told the people, ‘but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.’

We have that important choice too. The Lord God Jehovah, the God of the Bible, is the only God. We

Glorifying God

should worship him only. He tolerates no rivals. You may hear about other gods and religions in school. Jehovah is not merely the best god; he is in a class of his own – the one and only true God.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were captives in Babylon. King Nebuchadnezzar told the people to worship his golden statue or else they would be thrown into a burning fiery furnace. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to bow down. They obeyed God's first commandment. 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me.'

Nebuchadnezzar was angry and heated the furnace seven times hotter than usual. When the three men were thrown in, Nebuchadnezzar was amazed. 'We threw three men into the fire,' he exclaimed, 'but I see four men walking unhurt. The fourth looks like the son of God.'

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego walked out of the fire and there was not even the smell of burning on their clothes. Nebuchadnezzar was impressed. 'Blessed be God who saved his servants. They trusted in him and risked their lives in order to worship the one true God.'

We can ask God to give us the courage and commitment to put him first. The first puzzle on page 13 will show you what Jesus says should be first in your life.



Bible Verse

*And God spake all these
words, saying,
I am the LORD thy God, which have
brought thee out of the land of
Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
Thou shalt have no other gods
before me.
Exodus 20:1-3*

Bible Search 1

The missing words from these verses will show you what Jesus says should be most important in Matthew 6:33.

1. But if from thence thou shalt _____ the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul (Deuteronomy 4:29).
2. And the gospel must _____ be published among all nations (Mark 13:10).
3. Who knoweth whether thou art come to _____ for such a time as this? (Esther 4:14)
4. And the spirit _____ moved upon the face of the waters (Genesis 1:2).
5. His soul shall dwell at ease; _____ seed shall inherit the earth (Psalm 25:13).
6. Follow after _____, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness (1 Timothy 6:11).

Bible Search 2

Find the words missing from the verses. The initials of your answers will spell out an important message.

1. Let us hear the conclusion of the _____ matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments. (Ecclesiastes 12:13).
2. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him _____ shalt thou serve (Matthew 4:10).
3. Serve the LORD with fear, and _____ with trembling (Psalm 2:11).
4. For all have _____, and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).
5. What doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk _____ with thy God? (Micah 6:8)
6. There is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter _____ life, keep the commandments (Matthew 19:17).
7. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his _____ with singing (Psalm 100:2).
8. Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the _____ image which thou hast set up (Daniel 3:18).
9. And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we _____ (Joshua 24:24).
10. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall _____ thy paths (Proverbs 3:6).