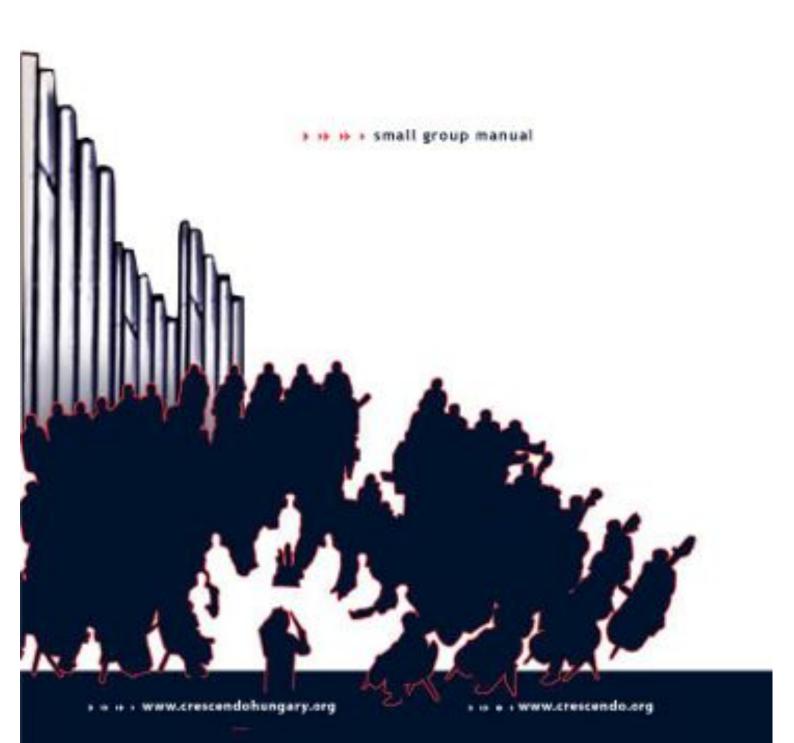
VII. CRESCENDO

SUMMER INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS

NYÁRI MŰVÉSZETI AKADÉMIA

AUGUST 2 - 16, 2010 SÁROSPATAK, HUNGARY



The 10 Commandments for Artists

Foreword

The 10 Commandments – everyone knows of their existence. They are ethical guidelines which help to create order in life and relationships. But do we *really* know the 10 Commandments? We would like to look into them here and ask what they have to say to us artists. Three points in advance:

- 1. The 10 Commandments are several thousand years old. We must therefore put ourselves mentally into their historical and geographical frame of reference and translate them. We will do this not at the beginning of the course, but during it.
- 2. The 10 Commandments come in an order which is significant. But we will change this order and also give the reasons for doing this.
- 3. The 10 Commandments were of course not originally addressed to artists.

The first recipients were the People of Israel. The second recipient is Everyman, for the Commendments are valid generally. It is only as a third level of priority that we ask what they mean for us artists. In order to avoid overly hasty conclusions and false interpretations, we must therefore always have the original recipients in mind! The following pages offer impulses for discussion groups. The following elements are included: introductory text, impulses for discussion and, occasionally, food for further thought. It is recommended that you follow the sequence of material. But, fortunately, there is no 11th commandment which says "You shall always follow the sequence!" Not only the sequence, but also the discussions and resulting meetings are important!



Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571-1610) Narcissus

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Translation into English: Bill Buchanan

1 "You shall not ...!"









Imperatives – frustrating or helpful?

"You shall not!" - "You are not permitted!" - "You shall!" The 10 Commandments all consist of such imperatives. At first sight, this may deter us. We live today in a so-called "permissive society", in which a great deal is allowed. (This is true at least for many countries in this world.) In this setting, it seems perfectly normal and even "chic" to transgress the 10 Commandments: deceiving others, for example, or committing adultery. And now this old text says to us "You shall!" and "You shall not!" Can we make any sense of this?

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How do we react to such imperatives? What experiences have we had with imperatives? Where have imperatives helped us – perhaps on our path as a musician and artist?

And looking at contemporary society: does it need imperatives?



"Signposts to freedom"

We all know basic rules of music or art. Without them, there would be no art. Or traffic signs: if they were not there, we would have undiluted chaos. And chaos



can result very quickly if a traffic rule is disregarded.

We too would be helpless without signposts. Someone called the Commandments "signposts to freedom". To understand this, we must first have a look at the context in which the 10 Commandments were formulated. We find them in the Bible, in the so-called "Old Testament", where they occur in two different passages: in Exodus, chapter 20 and in Deuteronomy, chapter 5. The People of Israel has left years of terrible imprisonment in Egypt behind them after being liberated by God in a miraculous way. They were able to start their journey out of Egypt, the Exodus. Musicians know this event from Handel's "Israel in Egypt" or from Schönberg's "Moses and Aaron". The Exodus is now **the** decisive event for Israel in its continuing history.

The realisation is there:

we can be free! God is setting us free! – And this freedom leads the people back into the land of their fathers.

During the 40 years (!) of the Exodus, God now gives Moses the Ten Commandments. They are to be understood in this context as help in making the transition from imprisonment to freedom and not at all in the reverse sense of taking freedom away and setting up constricting rules.

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What knowledge and experience do you already have concerning the 10 Commandments and their context?

How can laws lead to freedom?

2 "Help parents! Help, we need parents!"



"You shall honour your father and your mother" (5th Commandment)
"Honour your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you."



The most difficult Commandment?

The original text of this Commandment (it is the 5th Commandment) is literally: "You shall allow father and mother their weight". One could translate this with "take seriously" or "respect". In Israel, it was also understood as a call to support one's parents materially in their old age. The Rabbis say this is the most difficult Commandment!

We live in a society which has also been called "the fatherless society". Many parents (especially fathers!) do not face their responsibility towards their children. They are absent physically or in spirit. Or the opposite situation occurs: the parents (especially the fathers!) are authoritarian and do not allow the children any freedom. They are "too present!"

^{1.} Our relationship with our parents forms us! It is therefore important for us to spend time looking at this consciously. This is also part of our respect towards our parents: we do not "forget" them and blot them unfeelingly out of our thinking. Look into the matter earnestly! This Commandment can help us to avoid two extremes:

^{1. &}quot;Idolising" our parents instead of "honouring" them. Not being able to separate from them.

^{2.} Rejecting our parents instead of respecting them. Seeing only what is bad about them. Not being grateful for the good that they have done. Being rebellious (perhaps for one's whole life) against all authorities to which one is subject.

What formative influence has your relationship with your parents had on you? Have you already thought about this before?

We need parents!

It is part of growing up that one separates oneself from one's parents. But it is also part of growing up that one seeks good "parents" or mentors (=advisor, tutor) – especially as a musician and artist. We in "Crescendo" are keen to support this idea of mentoring for musicians! What can this mean?

- Having older mentors besides friends your own age.
- Looking for good teachers.
- Being able to separate oneself from bad parents / mentors.
- Also being able to separate oneself from good parents in a healthy process of letting go.
- Not allowing projections to be made: parents → mentors (a bad relationship with parents has a negative influence on the relationship with teachers / mentors)
- A relationship with "new parents" can even heal the relationship with one's own parents.

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Do you have any experience of good mentors? Are you open for "mentors" – particularly here in the "Summer Institute"? Are you ready to seek opportunities to talk to others and to accept help?

Further food for thought:



Becoming parents ourselves! One day (perhaps quite soon!), we ourselves will be needed as parents. Not only because we have children ourselves, but because younger people need us ... are we ready to do this?

Artists honour "parents!" Artists create something new, but they also pass on treasures from the past to the present. A society without such treasures has no memory and is endangered.

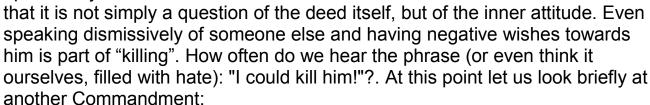
Live long! The Commandment "Honour father and mother" has the pendant "so that you may live long." What could this mean?

3 "Do not hate, but love – but how?"

"You shall not kill!" (6th Commandment)

The original Hebrew text means: You shall not murder! We probably all agree with this Commandment and we have little trouble in understanding it.

But: in the so-called Sermon on the Mount, Jesus takes up the subject of the Commandments and makes it clear





This Commandment is often taken to mean "You shall not lie!".

Lying is without doubt not good, but this Commandment is telling us something else: You shall not say untrue things about others (out of jealousy, for example, and competitive thinking) and thus do him damage.

Relationships in an orchestra, for example, in an art college, in a theatre school, in an opera ensemble, amongst teachers, amongst students in a music college are sometimes ugly, poisoned and "deadly". This can also be true of the relationship between teachers and students.

???

Question: Have you already experienced, or are you at the moment experiencing, this phenomenon? How do you react? What does this Commandment mean for you?



Learn to love

Jesus was asked by his disciples which Commandment is the greatest. Interestingly, he did not answer this by quoting one of the Commandments, but by combining two passages from the Old Testament together:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbour like yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (Gospel of Matthew, 22,34-40)

Here Jesus makes it quite clear: with the Commandments, it is question of the immer attitude and not simply of deeds. We can draw the following comparison: the Commandments are like lamps and the double commandment of love is like the chain on which the lamps hang.

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- What does the double commandment of love say?
- How can hate, anger and jealousy be transformed into love?
- What experiences have you already had of a relationship or a person being "dead" as far as you were concerned, and then something new happened to revive it?

God is gracious even to murderers

- Cain was the first murderer. But God made a mark on his forehead so that others should not kill him (i.e. the upwards spiral of violence and response to violence is not perpetuated).
- King David had Bathsheba's husband killed so that he could marry her.
 God punished him (the son of David and Bathsheba died), but he also forgave David.
- David wrote moving Psalms of penitence (Psalms 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143), which have also often been set to music [e.g. Psalm 130: "De profundis clamavi, Domine" "From the depths, o Lord, I call to you", set by Bach, Dowland, Honegger, Kaminski, Orlando di Lasso, Liszt, Mozart, Praetorius, Reger, Schein, Schönberg, Schütz, Spohr etc.).
- The main theme is repentance and forgiveness: Psalm 32,5: "I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord" / and you forgave the quilt of my sin."
- **Jesus** prays on the cross for his murderers: "Lord, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (Gospel of Luke, 23,34)
- Stephan is killed, but prays for the killers: "Lord, do not hold this sin against them ..." (Acts of the Apostles 7,58)

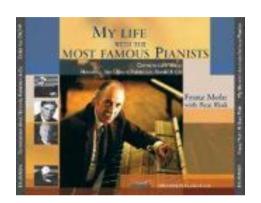
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What message do such texts have for your life personally?

These texts (and the fundamental assurance of God's forgiveness and grace) have inspired many composers and other artists. Can this fundamental assurance still be represented artistically today? If yes, how? What experiences (musical and artistic) have you had with this?

Further food for thought:

Example: Franz Mohr (chief concert technician with Steinway & Sons and piano tuner for Horowitz, Rubinstein, Glenn Gould etc.) told of his experience with Dr. MacFarlane.



"The annihilation of my place of study and, soon afterwards, my native village Düren shook me deeply. In 1943, on a winter night, the Allies bombed the Music College in Cologne, where I was studying violin. I had rented a little room close by, and, when I looked out of the window and saw that the building was in flames, I ran towards it. Even more eerie, however, than the sea of flames was the fading sound of the burning instruments. Piano strings broke, and all of a sudden sounds

were heard from the organ in the music room, through which a stream of hot air was flowing. It was as if the instruments were joining in an immensely powerful song of lamentation. The sounds remained with me for a long time. Soon after, I was called up as a soldier. I hated the war with all my heart and looked for a way to escape from my military service. In November 1944 I had a few days' leave and was able to visit my parents and my younger brother in Düren. My elder brother was in Russia and was never to come home. On the day after my return to Düren, on 16th November, the Allies reduced this little town to rubble and ashes. My experiences on this day and in the following months are told in detail in the first book. To go into the matter very briefly: on that day in November I lost not only my brother, but also my faith in God. In the air-raid cellar in our house I shouted at my praying mother: "Stop it! There is no God!" Furthermore, I was full of hate for the English, who had flattened Düren and burned it out. My parents were indeed very strongly opposed to the Nazis, and it was clear to me that the Germans had started the war. Nevertheless, I hated the English. And it was an Englishman, of all people, Dr. MacFarlane, who gave me my first Bible and said, in his unforgettable way, "Franz, how ever full of hate you may be: I love you, and Jesus loves you! I will pray for you every day. ... ". I can still see his face in front of me today, so full of love. That was someone who responded to my hate with love."

Extract from the interview "Grosse Maestros, hinter der Bühne erlebt" and the audio-book published by Crescendo in 2010: "My Life with the most famous Pianists"

4 "Egocentric or eccentric?"



"You shall not commit adultery." (7th Commandment)

"You shall not steal." (8th Commandment)

"You shall not covet your neighbour's house. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, his male or female servant, his ox or donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbour."

(10th Commandment)²

Three Commandments - one message

These three Commandments belong together. It must be an important message if it is emphasised no less than three times: You shall not steal! But the other three Commandments place the accent slightly differently.

- In the 7th Commandment, the key point is that a bond of trust which should join the marriage partners is broken.
- The 8th Commandment originally applied to stealing persons.
- The 10th Commandment is talking not only about an inner attitude, but also about concrete deeds: "You shall start any actions which lead to taking something away from your neighbour."

² The context of "wife – servant – ox" seems strange to us and may raise the question of what role the woman played in the Bible. Here are two answers: 1. The social order in Israel in Old Testament times is patriarchal. But this does not mean that this order is "God's will". The story of Creation, for example, speaks differently on this matter. 2. In the Bible, the position given to the woman is enormously superior to that known by other peoples. This was already visible in the Old Testament, and comes out in its fullness with Jesus – e.g. in John's Gospel, chapter 4. (As as comparison: the great Aristotle counted the woman amongst the useful tools!)

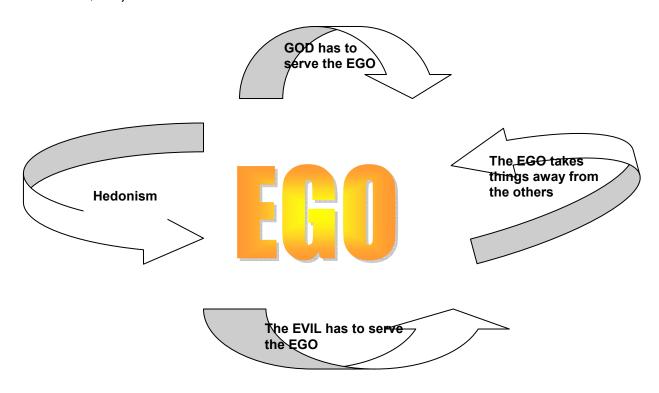
In all three Commandments, the concern is to warn about the "Ethics of Egocentricity".

The important question for the egocentric is: "How can I profit?" – "What value is this to me?" – "What can I get out of it?" – "How can I make sure that the other does not have more than me?". Others must serve him.

Even God is misused f or this purpose. And we know this theme not only from literature ("Faust", "The Soldier's Tale"): even Evil (the Devil) must serve the ego.

The advantages for the egocentric

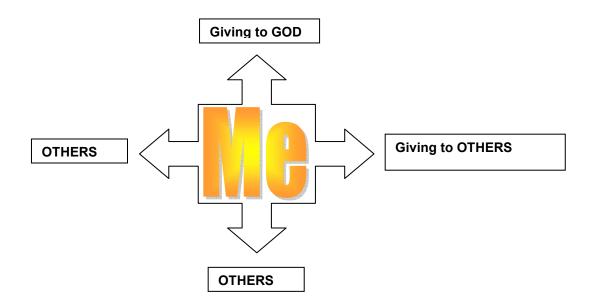
Now, the egocentric seems at first sight to have many advantages and often to have success. (This is lamented, for example, in the Psalms. "I have seen a wicked and ruthless man flourishing like a green tree in its native soil." Psalm 37, 35)



The disadvantages of the eccentric

The opposite would be an **"ethic of the eccentric"**, with the question: "What can I give the other?" – "How can I help him?" – "How can I improve his position?" – "How can I serve God?"

At first sight, this seems mainly linked to disadvantages. Anyone living according to an ethic of the eccentric is often a true "eccentric" in the eyes of others and a "strange bird".



What can we say about the advantages and disadvantages of the egocentric and the eccentric – looking also at the field of culture and music?

How can you build up a career without being an egoist / egocentric?

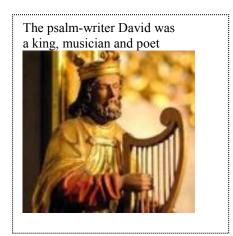
Have you had experience with egocentrics and eccentrics?

A surprising connection with blessing

In Psalm 37 and many other passages in the Bible, we are shown an interesting connection:

"Anyone who is an egocentric will fall. Whoever gives will receive!"

David sings: ""I have seen a wicked and ruthless man flourishing like a green tree in its native soil, but he soon passed away and was no more; though I looked for him, he could not be found." Psalm 37, 35)



And conversely: "Turn from evil and do good; then you will dwell in the land for ever" (= then your land will not be taken away from you); verse 27

This is not an automatic mechanism, however, but is connected with the reality of blessing!

- In Psalm 37 we read, for example: "For the Lord loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones. (= those who wish to belong to him)" (verse 28)
 - or: "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will do this" (verse 5)
- The **Beatitudes taught by Jesus** promise blessing to the peacemakers (they will be called the children of God), to those who are persecuted for the

- sake of righteousness (the kingdom of heaven belongs to them), those who are merciful (for they shall receive mercy), those who mourn (they shall be comforted) etc. (Gospel of Matthew 5,3-10)
- Jesus says: "Whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it." {Luke 9,24}

What does blessing mean for us? Have we already experienced it? How can we experience blessing?

5 "Enjoy freedom and free time!"



"Remember the Sabbath by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall do no work, neither you nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." (4th Commandment)

Freedom!

It may seem slightly strange to choose to think about a day of rest in the middle of this time of intensive work at the Summer Institute. In fact, we are just about to have a free day.

But this Commandment is not concerned simply with a few hours off, but with a basic attitude towards our work.

In the story of Creation in the Bible, we read that God created the Earth in 6 days and that he rested on the seventh day. This story of Creation (it offers not a scientific explanation of the beginning of the world, but is a statement of faith) gives us here something essential: God is not dependent on his work! God is the great artist: he created the universe, the earth, the plant world, the animals and man so that we can live in a fantastic "total work of art".

The recurrent phrase in Genesis is: "And God saw that it was good (also meaning "beautiful")".

God would have had every reason to "fall in love" with his work of art. But now he can let go of it because he is greater than his creation.

Heard recently in a conversation at the music college:

Question: "Do you have free time?"

Student: "No, if I have free time, I practise."

Question: "Why?"

Student: "Because otherwise I am not good enough. I always have to practise, practise, practise. Otherwise I have a bad conscience! I have no time left for free time."

Question: "Do you have any identity except as a musician?"
Student: "I am a musician with my whole being. Otherwise I would not know who I am and what I should do."

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- Can you let your "art" go from time to time without getting a bad conscience?
- Do you have an identity apart from that of an artist?
- A related topic: "diligence" and "laziness". Sabbath rest is not the same thing as laziness. How do you tackle with laziness?
- What would be a more healthy rhythm between "working" and "resting"?

Freedom for others as well!

In Deuteronomy, the Commandment is formulated slightly differently:

"Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the Lord your God brought you out of there with a mightly hand and an outstretched arm."

The subject here is captivity and freedom. One can remain imprisoned in work, in the pressure (from outside and within) to be successful... It is remarkable that this Commandment is not given an egoistic formulation, but that the Sabbath rest applies also to children, slaves, aliens, and even animals.

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How can we encourage a Sabbath culture in the circles we move in?

Food for thought:

- We read: "Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." The day in question is therefore one on which man should think in a special way about important questions in life and about God – and on which he can celebrate fellowship – in a church service, for example. This is not a law, but an invitation. What form do you give your Sunday or other free time?
- Many people do not know what to do with their free time. They have no centre in their lives. What is the centre of your life?

6 "Soli Deo Gloria!"

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of of slavery.
You shall have no other gods before me. (1st Commandment)

The two stone tablets

The 10 Commandments consist of two stone tablets. Looking at the 1st tablet, we find Commandments referring to our relationship with God. On the 2nd

tablet (which is the one we have spoken about up till now), the subject is the relationship between

people.

But both tablets are linked with each other.

 The ethics of the 2nd table are an expression of God's nature. One could reformulate all the Commandments of the 2nd table and make a statement about God from them, as in this example:

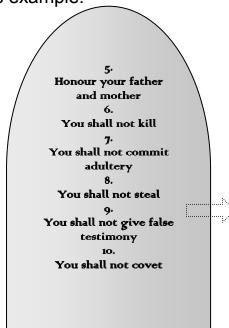


Soli

Deo

Gloria





5.
God is our father
6.
God gives life
7.
God keeps his
covenant
8.
God gives us
abundantly
9.
God has good thoughts
about you
10.
God doesn't take away
anything

Is this self-explanatory?

Does it correspond to your picture of God?

 Conversely, our relationship with God (the "Soli Deo Gloria" of the 1st tablet) also affects our relationship with our fellow human beings (2nd tablet).

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Is this self-explanatory? Have you had similar experiences?



The golden calf

Regarding the context: Israel is freed from Egypt by God. Moses went up onto the mountain to speak with God and to receive the 10 Commandments. But the people became impatient and afraid. They made a golden calf of gold and declared it to be their God.

"When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him."

² Aaron answered them, "Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me." ³ So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. ⁴ He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt."" (Exodus 32,1–4)

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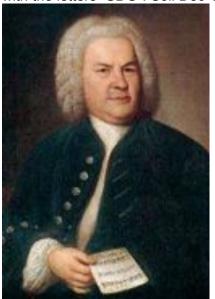
What is Israel's problem? Is this a general human problem?

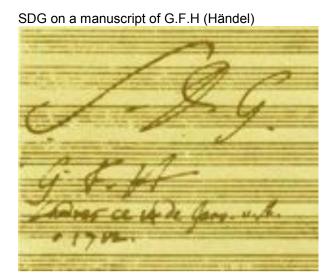
What is the character of an idol?

What are the idols in our society? In your life?

What could "Soli Deo Gloria" mean for your life and career planning?

Bach and Händel signed many works with the letters "**SDG**": Soli Deo Gloria





7 "The God of Life"

God or idol?

You shall not make for yourself an idol³ in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them (2nd Commandment)

You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God ...⁴ (3rd Commandment)

Die Commandments of the 1st tablet are not easy to understand. We must place them within the framework of understanding of the Old Testament or the biblical revelation.

- God created us and knows what is good for us
- He loves us and does not want us to separate ourselves from Him (who

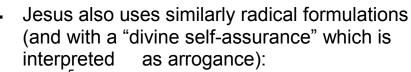
³ = Image of God or other Gods that one worships.

⁴ = Doing things in God's name but which are against his commandments. Using God's name in the interests of one's own power

 is love and life!). Separating oneself from God therefore means moving out of His area of blessing. {But this is what mankind has done – beginning with Adam and Eve.

Yet God remains true to His love. He is not a power-crazy egomaniac;
 rather, he desires the best for us! This is why He gives

us the 10 Commandments. This is why He reveals Himself to the people of Israel and to mankind. And this is why He sends His son Jesus Christ in order to forgive us.



"I am⁵ the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (=other gods/idols do not lead to the heavenly father) (Gospel of John 14,6.)

- "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (=other gods/idols are "thieves and robbers"). (Gospel of John 10,1ff.)

- "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry"
 (=with other gods/idols you will be hungry!) "and whoever believes in
 me will never be thirsty" (=with other gods/idols you will be thirsty).
 (Gospel of John 6,35)
- "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies" (=with other gods/idols there is no resurrection). (Gospel of John 11,25)

???

What do these words of Jesus mean to you?
What is meant by images (idols) and other gods (1st Commandment)?

Guilt and forgiveness

Idols and other gods bring the following consequences: doing harm to oneself and to one's fellows. God is angry when we become His enemies – and thus the enemies of our fellow human beings – and do evil in His name. This is referred to in the following verses from the 2nd and 3rd Commandments:

⁵ = The "I am" words of Jesus are consciously modelled on God's self-revelation in Exodus 3: "I am who I am".

... for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing love to a thousand {generations} of those who love me and keep my commandments. (2nd Commandment)

... for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name. (3rd Commandment)

???

How does it become clear that the "punishment" (= also the logical consequence of our evil deeds) can be felt over many generations? In society? In families?

How can this chain of guilt be broken?

What do the Bible passages quoted below tell you?

What does it mean to become and be a Christian?



From Psalm 103: "With all my heart I praise the LORD. The LORD forgives our sins, The LORD is merciful! He is kind and patient, and his love never fails. He doesn't punish us as our sins deserve. How great is God's love for all who worship him? Greater than the distance between heaven and earth!

How far has the LORD taken our sins from us?

Farther than the distance from east to west!

Just as parents are kind to their children, the LORD is kind to all who worship him.

(Psalm 103)

A question for artists: how can one represent, in today's art, "guilt and forgiveness", "sin and forgiveness"?

Words in the New Testament

"Greater love has no one than this that he lay down his life for his friends." (Jesus about his own mission)
Johannesevangelium 15,13)

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God (agnus dei), who takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29)

"What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? **He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all - how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?**" (Romans 8:31-32)

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1.John 1:9)

"In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus."

(Romans 6:11 Paul to the Christians in Rome)

The Ten Commandments

(Exodus 20:2-17 NKJV)

1

"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me.

2

"You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who

hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My Commandments.

3

"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

4

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

5

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

6

"You shall not murder.

7

"You shall not commit adultery.

8

"You shall not steal.

9

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

10

"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."