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Section: Commands (Law)

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October 4, 2023

**HANDOUT NOTES**

**Q47. Why does God give the third commandment: You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God?**

So we will respect and honorGod as the worthy and holy One.

* **How Serious Is God About the Misuse of His Name?**

**Leviticus 24:16a** Whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him.

The term **blasphemy** may be generally defined as “defiant irreverence.” The term can be applied to such sins as cursing God or willfully degrading God. Blasphemy is also attributing some evil to God or denying Him some good that we should attribute to Him. It is to lie about who He is.

* **God Is Worthy and Holy**

Webster’s dictionary of 1828 defines **vain** as: Empty; worthless; having no substance, value, or importance.

**Exodus 3:13** Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?”

**Exodus 3:14a** God said to Moses, "I am who I am”.

**Exodus 3:14b-15** And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.

**Psalm 8:1** O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.

**Psalm 29:2** Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.

**Acts 4:12** And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

**Romans 10:13** For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

**Philippians 2:10-11** so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

* **Reverence for God**

**Isaiah 48:11** For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my namebe profaned? My glory I will not give to another.

**1 Chronicles 29:11** Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all.

**Revelation 4:11** Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.

The worst thing that can be phony about us is us. That may be where some of us are. We go to church. We sing the songs. We say the right things. But it’s not reality. Listen, if we are called by the holy name of God, we must not sully that name by living as if our conduct does not concern him or his glory. (Kevin DeYoung)

**Malachi 3:6** For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed.

**James 1:17** Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

**Matthew 6:9** Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.”

Hallowed: holy, set apart, not common.

Is God set apart from or higher than everything else in your heart?

**Psalm 66:17** I cried to him with my mouth, and high praise was on my tongue.

* **Speak the Truth About God**
* **The third commandment also forbids empty or false oaths.**

**Leviticus 19:12** You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD.

**Profane** is to treat something that is sacred as common.

**Psalm 38:21** Do not forsake me, O Lord! O my God, be not far from me!

**Psalm 40:8** I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.”

There is no place for using “Jesus Christ” in flippant humor or irreverent sloganeering. I remember seeing a Christian T-shirt, playing off the familiar beer advertising slogan, that said “This blood’s for you.” Someone was too clever for his own good. Or what about our use of Christian words and phrases in sarcastic ways? Like breaking into the “Hallelujah Chorus” when our team scores a touchdown. Or spilling our coffee and saying with a smirk, “Thank you, Jesus.” Or making people laugh with our purposefully ill-timed “Praise the Lamb!” interjection. There are better ways to be silly than with such serious things. (Kevin DeYoung)

**Ephesians 5:3-4** But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.

* **The third commandment also prohibits false claims of prophesy.**

**Deuteronomy 18:20** But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.

A more serious way to break the third commandment is by using God’s name to advance our own agenda. Some Christians say, “The Lord told me to do this.” Or worse, they say, “The Lord told me to tell you to do this.” This is false prophecy! God has already said whatever he needs to say to us in his Word. Of course, there is also an inward leading of the Holy Spirit. But this is only an inward leading, and it should not be misrepresented as an authoritative word from God. (Phil Ryken)

* **The third commandment requires that we speak the truth about who God is and how he works.**

**James 1:26** If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.

**Matthew 15:18** But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person.

Our words matter.

Have you been lazy with the words that come out of your mouth? Have you been self-justified when angry to speak in ways that do not honor God?

Are there still times where you curse others or use words inappropriately or profane the Lord’s name by tossing it to and fro?

The third commandment requires, That the name of God, his titles, attributes, ordinances, the word, sacraments, prayer, oaths, vows, lots, his works, and whatsoever else there is whereby he makes himself known, be holily and reverently used in thought, meditation, word, and writing; by an holy profession, and answerable conversation, to the glory of God, and the good of ourselves, and others. (Westminster Larger Catechism)

**Colossians 3:17** And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

**Ephesians 5:4** Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.