



Exodus 20:7

“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.

1. When we utter the name of God I _____.

- Expletive: I’m angry, frustrated, in pain or embarrassed so I use the name of God as a four-letter word.
- Curse: I hate another so I speak God’s name as a condemnation of them.
- Swaggering Crudeness: I disrespect, profane or desecrate God’s name as a way to gain respect for myself. • Frivolous speech: OMG
- Blasphemy: I hate God so I slander and profane His name.

The Christian’s Response: Psalm 19:14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

2. When we swear an O _____ in the name of God and then do not keep it.

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

Num. 30:1-2 “This is what the Lord has commanded. ²If a man vows a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by a pledge, he shall not break his word. He shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.

Duet. 23:21-23 “If you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not delay fulfilling it, for the Lord your God will surely require it of you, and you will be guilty of sin. ²²But if you refrain from vowing, you will not be guilty of sin. ²³You shall be careful to do what has passed your lips, for you have voluntarily vowed to the Lord your God what you have promised with your mouth.

Suggested Questions for Small Groups

1. Why do people curse and use the name of God when they do so? What are the motives behind our cursing, expletives and crude language?
2. In James 3:9-12 he exclaims that we use our tongues to bless our Lord and then to curse people who are made in the likeness of God. The irreverent use of God’s name as well as crude or impure speech (see Eph. 5:4) has been a problem for Christians since the beginning. How do you battle this human tendency to use irreverent language?
3. If someone asks you to ‘swear on a stack of Bibles’, or ‘on your mother’s grave’, or ‘cross your heart and hope to die’, or to ‘swear in the name of Jesus’, what will you say? (See the Matt. 5 and 23 passages in this outline.)
4. Have you ever personally made “*a vow to the Lord your God*” (Duet. 23:21)?
5. Read Matt. 7:15-23. What are the activities that Jesus says do not necessarily indicate a true relationship with God? According to these verses how can we know that we have true relationship with the Lord?
6. What do you think was going on in the heart and mind of the Psalmist when he wrote Psalm 19:14? How might meditation on a verse like this help you with your heart, your words and the fruit produced in your life?

Next Sunday, May 16, 2010: Ten Commandments Part 5 When to Work and When to Rest

Is the Fourth Commandment, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy”, a burden you must obey or a gift you can celebrate. Today most people like Sunday because it is a day when they are not required to work. But few people today show a concern about keeping Sunday “holy”. What does God desire for us today when it comes to the Fourth Commandment? Next Sunday we will focus on our six days of Work and our one day of Sabbath with the hope to discover God’s will for us today.

Jesus' teaching on oaths made in the name of God (or anything else):

Matt. 5:33-37

"Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.'³⁴ But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God,³⁵ or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.³⁶ And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.³⁷ Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil.

Matt. 23:13, 16-22

"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in.

¹⁶*"Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'If anyone swears by the temple, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.'¹⁷ You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred?¹⁸ And you say, 'If anyone swears by the altar, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath.'¹⁹ You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred?²⁰ So whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it.²¹ And whoever swears by the temple swears by it and by him who dwells in it.²² And whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it.*

You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn: Every Jew was aware that it was sinful to make an oath in the name of God and then not do it. The clear instruction of the O.T. Law was that oaths were to be honored and kept - almost as though God was a partner in the transaction.

Do not take an oath at all: Why would Jesus state that no oaths be taken at all? It was because of the evil motives of human hearts (37). The scribes had found supposed loopholes (Matt. 23:16f); they taught that if you swore by "heaven" or "earth" or "by Jerusalem" your oath was not as morally/legally binding. But Jesus now is uncovering this lie by saying that God demands that all our communication be trustworthy and true. The only reason for oath taking was that we fear that people are lying or will break their promises in the future.

Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No': The reason that oaths are made is because people are often liars and covenant breakers. God's will: God wants His own people, as citizens of His kingdom, to be truthful as He is true. When we say yes, we can be trusted to follow through with our 'Yes'.

3. When we claim intimate R_____ with God, but it does not exist.

Matt. 7:15-23

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.¹⁶ You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?¹⁷ So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit.¹⁸ A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit.¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.²⁰ Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

²¹*"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.²² On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?'²³ And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'*

- You can claim an intimate relationship with God and not have it.
- You can accomplish great works of ministry in the Lord's name and still be a "worker of lawlessness" - totally disconnected from God.
- You can be assured of your relationship with the Lord by...