



Commandment Three Concerns God's Name—Never Misuse God's Name; Never Use Profanity or Vulgarity Exodus 20:7

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Commandment Three Concerns God's Name—Never Misuse God's Name; Never Use Profanity or Vulgarity Exodus 20:7

<p>Commandment 3: Never dishonor God's name; never use profanity or vul- garity</p> <p>a. He is the LORD your God b. He will hold you account- able</p>	<p>7 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.</p>
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Profanity and vulgarity are sweeping the earth. Cursing, swearing, foul and filthy talk, polluted and distasteful language—even using God's name in vain—all forms of profanity and vulgarity are flowing from the mouth of man. Words that expose a prejudicial and disrespectful heart and that degrade others are even peppering the daily conversation of people.

Unfortunately, man's language has always included *gutter talk*. But today, *gutter talk*—profanity—seems to be running rampant. Profanity is becoming more and more accepted by society. Profanity is becoming one of the most prevailing sins and 'popular' vices of the world. This is the subject covered by this commandment, a subject that must be heeded or else the very foundation of society—human language with all the emotions it arouses—will collapse. Simply stated, profanity is a creeping paralysis that will destroy civilization. How could profanity and vulgarity possibly have such a devastating effect upon society? Because civilization is bound together by the civility and decency of human language and by God's grace being poured out upon mankind. Profanity will cause civilization to disintegrate into verbal attacks that lead to personal violence and lawlessness. Profanity—foul, dirty cursing and indecent, prejudicial, and damning talk—destroys human language and arouses emotions and reactions that cause people to strike out against fellow citizens. Thereby civil and decent societies are corrupted and civilizations destroyed—all because human language lost its decency and civility; all because profanity paralyzed the growth and development of human relationships. This is the subject of this great commandment: *Commandment Three Concerns God's Name—Never Misuse God's Name; Never Use Profanity or Vulgarity, 20:7.*

- I. Who is to obey this commandment (v.7)?
- II. How long was this commandment to be in force (v.7)?
- III. What is forbidden by this commandment (v.7)?
- IV. Why did God give this commandment (v.7)?
- V. What are the Biblical consequences of breaking this commandment?
- VI. What are the Biblical benefits of keeping this commandment?
- VII. What is the teaching of Jesus Christ concerning this commandment?
- VIII. What is the decision required by this commandment (v.7)?

I. Who Is to Obey This Commandment?

It is a *personal* commandment: a commandment given to you individually. How you use God's name—how you treat God's name—is of vital concern to God. He is the great Creator, the Sovereign LORD and Majesty, the Supreme Ruler and Judge of the universe; therefore, His name is always to be honored, praised, and worshipped. Because of His person—who He is—God demands and insists that you never—no, never—misuse His name.

- ⇒ *You* must never curse nor abuse His name.
- ⇒ *You* must never use His name in a frivolous or insincere way.
- ⇒ *You* must never take the name of the LORD God in vain.

This commandment is directed to *you*. It is directed to me. It is directed to every human being upon the earth.

“But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation” (Jas.5:12).

II. How Long Was This Commandment to Be in Force?

As long as people live. No person who has ever lived, who is living now, or who ever will live is ever to misuse God's name. The true and living God is *God Almighty*, the Sovereign LORD and Majesty of the universe, the *Ruler and Judge* of all people. Therefore, any person is a fool to misuse God's name...

- a fool to curse God
- a fool to use God's name in an abusive way or in a frivolous or insincere way

No person of any generation or period of history—as long as God lives, as long as God exists, from everlasting to everlasting—is to misuse or take God’s name in vain. This is what God demands; this is one of the ways we are to relate to God. This commandment is in force as long as we live and as long as God exists, forever.

“And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee” (Dt.28:10).

“Sanctify [set apart] the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread” (Is.8:13).

III. What Is Forbidden by the Third Commandment? How Is This Commandment Broken Or Violated?

The Hebrew word “vain” (*lassaw*) means empty, meaningless, thoughtless, senseless, frivolous, worthless, groundless. It means using God’s name in a thoughtless and insincere way. The root of the word (*shawu*) has the idea of a vapor that fades and vanishes away, a vapor that is meaningless and worthless.¹ It also has the idea of a tempest, a storm, a tornado that is erratic, that jumps here and there, that causes destruction and devastation, that is totally senseless and destructive.²

How does a person misuse the Lord’s name or takes God’s name in vain? There are at least four ways:

1. A person misuses God’s name or takes God’s name in vain by *profanity and vulgarity*. This commandment forbids profanity.

- a. Profanity is the cursing, abusive, bitter, blasphemous use of God’s name or of any of God’s creation. By creation is meant everything within the universe. Thus taking God’s name in vain, misusing God’s name, includes all uses of vulgarity and profanity: the use of foul, distasteful slang words, and even words such as damn, hell, darn, and other such words.

What do such words have to do with misusing God’s name? Very simply, when we use profanity, we are profaning and cursing something in creation. And no person has the right to profane and curse anything in God’s creation. We must never forget this one fact:

- ⇒ The earth is the Lord’s: He is the great Creator and Sustainer of everything within the universe. He is the Sovereign LORD and Majesty of the universe itself and of everything within the universe. All creation exists because of God, and all creation stands to the praise of God’s name. Therefore, to profane or curse anything in creation is to take God’s name in vain. To use profanity—to profane or curse anything—is destructive, totally senseless and worthless.

¹ William Wilson. *Wilson’s Old Testament Word Studies*. (McLean, VA: MacDonald Publishing Company, No date given), p.465.

² James Strong. *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1990), 7723.

- b. Profanity is a terrible thing when it curses God Himself or uses His name to swear. Using God's name is an insult cast in His face and will result in terrible judgment upon the profane curser.

Remember, a person's name stands for the person. When a person's name is mentioned, if we know the person, our thoughts immediately picture him: who he is and what he is, his nature, character, behavior, and beliefs. We have an immediate image of the person, the kind of person he is.

This is especially true with God. God is holy and righteous. He is loving, kind, and gracious. God is the great Creator and Sustainer of the universe, the sovereign LORD and Majesty of all. Moreover, God is the great Redeemer, the Savior of mankind. He is God Almighty, the Most High God, the LORD God of the universe, whose name is set above the heavens, and whose name is called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace (Is.9:6).

God's name is holy. God's name is different from all other names, set apart from all other names. God's name is above, before, and over all other names. God's name is higher than the heavens, far above every name that is named, in both heaven and earth, visible and invisible.

The point is this: God's holy name should arouse us to stand in awe before Him, never to curse Him. God's holy name should stir us to reverence and adore Him, even fear and tremble before Him. The last thing any person should ever do is misuse God's name:

- ⇒ use His name as a curse word
- ⇒ use His name in a vulgar, disgusting way
- ⇒ use His name in a profane way

Thought 1.

Profanity is like a storm, a terrible, terrifying tempest that is destructive, totally senseless, and worthless. Profanity is a prevailing sin that is sweeping our nation and world today. Profanity is rapidly becoming so acceptable that it is a part of everyday conversation. The terrible danger of profanity has been forgotten. The danger is tragically ignored and even denied. Nevertheless, the danger is a true fact: profanity is a creeping paralysis...

- that destroys the source of respect between people, between the citizens of a diverse society and nation
- that destroys the moral strength and esteem of a people for one another and for their nation
- that corrupts the language of a nation and people
- that destroys the ability of a people to continue to grow, build, advance, enhance, enlarge, and increase the quality of their lives, society, and nation

Profanity will destroy a nation by corrupting the language and respect of people for one another. Over time, profanity will attack and destroy everything held dear by society. Note how a foul mouth destroys:

“His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity. He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily set against the poor....He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it” (Ps.10:7-8, 11).

“Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes” (Ro.3:13-18).

2. A person misuses God’s name by *false swearing*. Perjury—lying under oath—is wrong. Calling upon God to witness to a lie is misusing God’s name. False swearing may take place before a neighbor, a business partner, a wife or husband, a judge or jury. Tragically, when we are called upon to swear or take an oath to verify that we are telling the truth, far too often we lie: we swear falsely.

“Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil” (Mt.5:33-37).

“If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the LORD, and lie unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour; Or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely; in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein” (Lev.6:2-3).

3. A person misuses God’s name by using His name in some *irreverent way*, in some frivolous, dishonoring, or light way. How does a person do this? *Reverence* is the key word. When God’s name is used, it is always to be in a reverent way. God’s name is never to be used in any irreverent way whatsoever.

- a. All the sayings that use God’s name in an irreverent or careless way are wrong:
- | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| ⇒ God Almighty | ⇒ Oh God | ⇒ God or Jesus Christ or |
| ⇒ Sweet Jesus | ⇒ Somebody up there | Christ (by themselves, |
| ⇒ God damn this | ⇒ The Man upstairs | spoken carelessly) |
| or that | ⇒ Lord have mercy | |

Any use of God’s name that is not reverent—that is not in prayer, praise, witness, or worship—is wrong.

- b. All the flippant joking about God, the frivolous, humorous stories that use God’s name, are wrong.
- c. All the prayers that carelessly and repetitiously use God’s name in a *thoughtless* and *meaningless* way are wrong: “Lord do this; Lord do that,” “God bless” and “God help.”

God’s name is sacred: it is holy, righteous, and pure. God’s name is the name of the Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient God. God’s name is to be worshipped and praised—always revered—never used in a thoughtless, meaningless, flippant, frivolous way; never used in a dishonoring or light way. God’s name is never to be misused, never to be taken in vain.

“But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting [crude, rude, foul, dirty, joking], which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks” (Eph.5:3-4).

Thought 1.

Adrian Rogers, in his book Ten Secrets for a Successful Family, says this: “When you use...profanity, it shows two things: an empty head and a wicked heart. You see, profanity reveals a feeble mind trying to express itself. But it also reveals a wicked heart truly expressing itself. ‘Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,’ Jesus said in Matthew 12:34....A profane mouth reveals a profane heart!”³

Or as the excellent preacher Vance Havner once said, “What’s down in the well comes up in the bucket!”

4. A person misuses God’s name by *hypocrisy*. This commandment prohibits using God’s name hypocritically, forbids claiming the name of the Lord in a hypocritical way. A hypocrite....
- is a person who professes the name of God but lives for self and the world
 - is a person who uses God’s name to manipulate people (to get what he wants)
 - is a person who uses God’s name to secure support for projects that are not necessarily God’s will (for example, politicians or religious leaders)
 - is a person who uses God’s name to secure followers, to deceive people

³ Adrian Rogers. *Ten Secrets For A Successful Family*, p.60.

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Mt.7:21-23).

“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” (Lk.6:46).

“Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth, nor in righteousness” (Is.48:1).

Thought 1.

In the early days of American history, the great general George Washington took a strong stand against profanity. He wrote in his orderly book of August 3, 1776: “The General is sorry to be informed that the foolish and wicked practice of profane swearing, a vice hitherto little known in the American army, is growing into fashion...He hopes the officers will, by example as well as influence, endeavor to check it, and that both they and the men will reflect that we can have little hope of the blessing of heaven on our arms if we insult it by our impiety and profanity.”⁴

IV. Why Did God Give This Commandment?

Why does God forbid vulgarity? Why must we never misuse God’s name, never swear, curse, nor damn anything upon earth, never damn anything in creation? Two reasons are given within the commandment itself.

1. First, you must not use vulgarity or misuse God’s name for a very clear reason: because the LORD is *your* God (v.2, 7). If you have accepted Christ as your Savior, then the LORD has saved you from Egypt, from the enslavements and bondages of this earth (v.2). He has saved you from sin, shame, and death. He has saved you from the bondages of the flesh, from...

- adultery and immorality
- drunkenness and carousing
- false worship and idolatry
- hatred and strife
- jealousy and envy
- wild living and sensuality
- cursing and lying
- sorcery and witchcraft
- anger and division
- selfish ambition and greed

⁴ J. Vernon McGee. *Love, Liberation and the Law*. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995), p.38-39.

And on and on. God has saved you from all this to a life of love, joy, and peace. Moreover, He has saved you from death and the judgment to come. He has saved you from hell itself. You are going to live forever, eternally with Him. The LORD is now your God. How could you ever misuse His name?

Now note: if you have never accepted Christ, then all the above can be yours. God will save you from the enslavements and bondages of this earth and give you life eternal. The point is this: the drive and energy of your heart must be not to misuse the name of the LORD God, the Savior of the world. The drive and energy of your life must be to stand in awe of His name: to praise, worship, serve, and bear testimony to His name.

“Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name” (Ps.100:4).

“Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread” (Is.8:13).

“For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones” (Is.57:15).

“And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Ph.2:8-11).

“By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name” (Heb.13:15).

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” (1 Pt.2:9).

2. Second, you must not use vulgarity or misuse God’s name for a terrifying reason: because the LORD holds you accountable if you misuse His name. The word “guiltless” (waqah) means that God will not count us clear or free from blame. He will not count us clean or pure, innocent or guiltless. God will not acquit us, not let us go unpunished.

A man may curse God or swear falsely to his wife or neighbor or even to some jury, and he may not be corrected or punished. But God knows that the man cursed His name or lied, and Scripture is clear: God will punish him. God will avenge the person who insulted His great and glorious name. In fact, note what Scripture says: the person who curses and misuses God’s name stands as an *enemy of God*.

“Thine enemies take thy name in vain” (Ps.139:20).

- ⇒ The person who uses profanity openly declares that he is the sworn enemy of the high and holy God. This person is condemned; God shall avenge His name and judge the *curser*.
- ⇒ The person who swears falsely deliberately declares that he is the sworn enemy of the true and righteous God. The person is condemned; God shall avenge His name and judge the *false swearer*.
- ⇒ The person who uses God's name in an irreverent way, who is careless and thoughtless in the use of God's name, will not be guiltless. He shall be condemned. God shall avenge His name and judge the *irreverent person*.
- ⇒ The person who uses God's name hypocritically stands as the sworn enemy of God. The hypocrite is condemned. God shall avenge His name and severely judge the *hypocrite*.
- ⇒ The bold sinner—the person who misuses God's name—must appear before God to give an account for his cursing and lying and for his irreverent use of God's holy name. If a person curses God, he curses the name of the high and lofty One, the name of the LORD God Himself, the only living and true God, the only holy name that could have saved him from death and judgment to come. God shall avenge His name and judge the *bold sinner*.

“As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him” (Ps.109:17).

“And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling [hired laborer] in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts” (Mal.3:5).

“And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Th.1:7-8).

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Heb.9:27).

“But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men” (2 Pt.3:7).

“And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him” (Jude 14-15).

“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whore-mongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars [cursers, false swearers], shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death” (Rev.21:8).

V. What Are the Consequences of Breaking This Commandment, the Consequences of Misusing God’s Name?

What happens to the person who uses profanity and blasphemes God? What happens to the person who damns things and curses things to hell, who has a foul, filthy, degrading and distasteful mouth? God’s name is holy, and it must be treated as such. No foul mouthed person, no person who misuses God’s name, can escape these terrible consequences.

1. There are the consequences upon God.

- a. The person who misuses God’s name, who uses profanity, blasphemes the name of the LORD.

“Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?” (Jas.2:7).

“And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name of the LORD, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses: (and his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan:)” (Lev.24:11).

- b. The person who misuses God’s name, who uses profanity, profanes or abuses God’s name.

“And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes” (Ezk.36:23).

2. There are the consequences upon oneself, the day-to-day consequences.

- a. The person who misuses God’s name, who uses profanity, shows that he does not know God, that he is wicked and unrighteous.

“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness” (Ro.3:10-14).

“The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined....His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity” (Ps.10:2, 7).

“But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee....Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son” (Ps.50:16-17, 19-20).

- b. The person who misuses God's name, who uses profanity, shows that he is a hypocrite.

“Then began he [Peter] to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew” (Mt.26:74).

“Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be” (Jas.3:9-10).

- c. The person who misuses God's name, who uses profanity, is a fool.

“He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool” (Pr.10:18).

- d. The person who misuses God's name, who uses profanity, has a throat like an open grave, a throat that bears the stinking smell of death.

“For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue” (Ps.5:9).

“Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips” (Ro.3:13).

- e. The person who misuses God's name, who uses profanity, shows that he has an evil heart.

“O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Mt.12:34).

“The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords” (Ps.55:21).

- f. The person who misuses God's name, who uses profanity, will have a testimony, a reputation, that is marked by malice and deception.

“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice” (Eph.4:31).

“Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings” (1 Pt.2:1).

“For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile” (1 Pt.3:10).

- g. The person who misuses God’s name, who uses profanity, will be deceived and have a vain, useless, empty religion.

“If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain” (Jas.1:26).

- h. The person who misuses God’s name, who uses profanity, will defile his body.

“And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell” (Jas.3:6).

- i. The person who misuses God’s name, who uses profanity, will be found out, he will be exposed, even though he took every caution to be discreet and secretive.

“Curse not the king, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter” (Eccl. 10:20).

- j. The person who misuses God’s name, who uses profanity, curses people who are made in God’s image.

“For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others” (Eccl.7:22).

“Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude [likeness] of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be” (Jas.3:9-10).

“An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered” (Pr.11:9).

“Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders” (Jer.9:4).

“Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judg-

judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge” (Jas.4:11).

- k. The person who misuses God’s name, who uses profanity, will be held accountable for every idle word in the day of judgment.

“O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment” (Mt.12:34-36).

- l. The person who misuses God’s name, who uses profanity, will suffer the reciprocal judgment of God: suffer the very curse he pronounced and uttered.

“As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him. As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones” (Ps.109:17-18).

3. There are the consequences of judgment.

- a. The person who misuses God’s name, who uses profanity, will face the judgment of God and not inherit the kingdom of God.

“Neither filthiness [obscenity], nor foolish talking, nor jesting [coarse joking], which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God” (Eph.5:4-5).

“Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer” (Ps.101:5).

“Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not....And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim” (Jer.7:8-9, 15).

“For the land is full of adulterers; for because of swearing the land mourneth; the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their course is evil, and their force is not right. For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the LORD. Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery ways in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitation, saith the LORD” (Jer.23:10-12).

- b. The person who misuses God's name, who uses profanity, will be declared guilty and condemned.

“Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain” (Ex.20:7).

“But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation” (Jas.5:12).

- c. The person who misuses God's name, who uses profanity, will bear the curse of his profanity and be destroyed by his very own words.

“As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him” (Ps.109:17).

“He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction” (Pr.13:3).

“Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles” (Pr.21:23).

- d. The person who curses his father or mother shows that he is not cleansed and will be condemned and face the terrible wrath of God.

“Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness” (Pr.20:20).

“There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother. There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness” (Pr.30:11-12).

“For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips let them even be taken in their pride: and for cursing and lying which they speak. Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah” (Ps.59:12-13).

VI. What are the Benefits of Keeping This Commandment?

What happens to the person who does not misuse nor take God's name in vain? The person who uses God's name correctly will be greatly blessed.

1. The person who uses God's name correctly will be saved.

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Ro.10:13).

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (Jn.1:12).

“Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his

thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon” (Is.55:6-7).

2. The person who uses God’s name correctly will confess and bow at the name of His Son, Jesus Christ.

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Ph.2:9-11).

3. The person who uses God’s name correctly will be filled with God’s Spirit, walking about with joy.

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph.5:18-19).

4. The person who uses God’s name correctly will walk in light.

“Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God” (Is.50:10).

5. The person who uses God’s name correctly will be heard, helped, and strengthened in the day of trouble.

“The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee; Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion; Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice; Selah” (Ps.20:1-3).

“The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them” (Ps.145:18-19).

“For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him” (Ro.10:12).

6. The person who uses God’s name correctly will be safe and secure.

“The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe” (Pr.18:10).

7. The person who uses God’s name correctly will have his prayers answered.

“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name” (Mt.6:9).

“Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not” (Jer.33:3).

8. The person who uses God’s name correctly will have a mouth filled with praise and honor.

“Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honour all the day” (Ps.71:8).

9. The person who uses God’s name correctly will know how to help others with a special word of encouragement.

“The LORD God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned” (Is.50:4).

VII.What Is the Teaching of Jesus Christ Concerning This Commandment?

1. Jesus Christ declared that a person misuses God’s name by false swearing.

“Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil” (Mt.5:33-37).

Thought.

We must never swear to make a promise we cannot keep. Perjury—lying under oath—is wrong. All misuse of God’s name that calls upon Him to witness to a lie is misusing God’s name. The false swearing may take place...

- before a wife or husband
- before a judge or jury
- before a neighbor
- before any person
- before a business partner

“But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation” (Jas.5:12).

“If a man vow a vow unto the LORD, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth” (Num.30:2).

“When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee” (Dt.23:21).

“Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows” (Job 22:27).

“Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High” (Ps.50:14).

“Vow, and pay unto the LORD your God: let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared” (Ps.76:11).

“When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed” (Eccl.5:4).

2. Jesus Christ declared that God’s Name is holy, set apart from all other names.

“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name” (Mt.6:9).

Thought 1.

Note several points.

- a) God’s name is much too precious to be used flippantly. His name is a *refuge for man*, not a cesspool to be filled with foul language.

“I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust” (Ps.91:2).

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Ph. 2:9-11).

- b) God’s name is to be hallowed, set apart as holy.

“And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth” (Lk.11:2).

“Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, that they separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, and that they profane not my holy name in those things which they hallow unto me: I am the LORD” (Lev.22:2).

- c) God’s name is to be feared.

“If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD” (Dt.28:58).

d) God's name is a strong tower into which the believer can run.

“The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe” (Pr.18:10).

3. Jesus Christ declared that God's name must be glorified and honored.

“Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again” (Jn.12:28).

Thought.

We must always seek to glorify and honor God's name...

- in everything we do
- in everything we say
- in everything we think

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Mt.5:16).

“And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me” (Ps.50:15).

“Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ro.15:5-6).

“Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel” (Ps.22:23).

“I will praise thee, O LORD my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore” (Ps.86:12).

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's” (1 Cor.6:19-20).

4. Jesus Christ declared that God's name must not be abused by the hypocrisy of self-righteous men [professing believers].

“Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity” (Mt.23:28).

Thought.

God's name must never be misused.

a) We must not misuse God's name by professing (blessing) God and then using profanity.

“Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be” (Jas. 3:10).

b) We must not misuse God's name by living a hypocritical life, claiming to know God but refusing to obey Him.

“He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (1 Jn.2:4).

“They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate” (Tit.1:16).

- c. We must not misuse God’s name by judging others in the name of God when we are ever so short ourselves.

“Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother’s eye” (Lk.6:42).

VIII. What Is the Decision Required by This Commandment?

Simply stated, we must obey God’s commandments.

1. Note that the commandment can be stated positively: Honor God’s name—always. This was exactly what Christ Himself said. In fact, He said that we were to pray every day for God’s name to be *hallowed* (Mt.6:9).

2. Note also that the commandment can be stated negatively: you shall not misuse God’s name, shall not take His name in vain.

What decision is demanded by this commandment? We must not curse or swear; we must turn to God for salvation and forgiveness. We must...

- quit cursing and swearing
- quit using God’s name in irreverent and thoughtless ways
- quit using God’s name hypocritically

3. Note what Scripture says about this commandment and God’s name.

- a. We must not misuse God’s name, never take God’s name in vain. This is one of the Ten great Commandments.

“Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain” (Ex.20:7).

- b. We must never swear falsely, not by God’s name: we must not profane His name.

“And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD” (Lev.19:12).

- c. We must fear God's name.

“If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD; Then the LORD will make thy plagues wonderful [fearful]” (Dt.28:58-59).

- d. We must not use God's name hypocritically nor have a hypocritical tongue.

“Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth, nor in righteousness” (Is.48:1).

“Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh” (Jas.3:9-12).

- e. We must not love false oaths.

“And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the LORD” (Zech.8:17).

- f. We must never swear; rather we must speak directly, never swearing nor using oaths.

“But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil” (Mt.5:34-37).

“But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation” (Jas.5:12).

- g. We must swear only by the God of Truth.

“That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth” (Is.65:16).

- h. We are to believe on God's name, not curse His name.

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (Jn.1:12).

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Ro.10:13).

- i. We are to walk in the name of the LORD our God, not curse Him.

“For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever” (Mic.4:5).

- j. We are to proclaim the name of God to people, bear testimony to His name.

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Pt.3:15).

“Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me” (Is.43:10).

“Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay” (Jer.20:9).

- k. We must praise God’s name not curse His name.

“Praise the LORD; for the LORD is good: sing praises unto his name; for it is pleasant” (Ps.135:3).

- l. We must hallow God’s name, set God’s name far above all names.

“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name” (Mt.6:9).

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (Jn.17:17).

- m. We must not misuse God’s name by making a false, hypocritical profession.

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in

thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Mt.7:21-23).

“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” (Lk.6:46).