

Do Not Misuse My Name

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[0:00] Psalm 113. Psalm 113.

I praise the Lord that he is our good and kind shepherd who leads us in this dark trial. And I would be wrong not to praise him, but I am thankful that he's given me a heart to praise him.

And I would be wrong not to thank you and to express to you my thanks and Josie's thanks for all the expressions of your love. The cards, the emails, the texts.

We feel loved. And so many of you have said, what can we do? What can we do? Is there anything more we can do? And you feel like your hands are tied.

All we can do is pray. And I just want to reassure you there is nothing more important than that. And we are experiencing the joy of God's answers to us.

[1:48] So thank you for your prayers. If we need drivers and help in the future and other ways, we'll let you know. You've expressed your love and willingness to help. Thank you.

But know that there's nothing more valuable than mentioning our name before the throne that rules the universe. And from which is dispensed mercy and grace to help us in our time of need.

Well, when are you more likely to break the third commandment? That is, to misuse the name of the Lord your God. When you hit your finger with a hammer?

Or when you're sitting here in church? We're going to come back to that question. But the answer to it may surprise you as we find that there are many different ways that we can break the third commandment and misuse the name of the Lord our God.

We've come to the third of the ten commandments that God himself spoke from Mount Sinai. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.

[2:58] For the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name. Exodus 20 and verse 7. Remember a couple weeks ago that the second commandment teaches us that God is concerned about the way that we worship him.

It is to be without physical images of him. And now the third commandment teaches us that God is concerned about the way that we use his name.

The way we use his name. What's in a name? Well, a name stands for a person, doesn't it? When I speak your name, I don't just think of the letters in your name.

I think of you. And all that you are. Those qualities about you. That's what I think of when I use your name. And so it is with God's name. It's not just a tag by which we're saying, hey, you, or we're just addressing someone to get their attention.

No, a name stands for all that that person is. And so with God, it stands for all that he has revealed himself to be. And since God is holy, therefore his name is holy.

[4:13] And since God is special, therefore his name is special. And it is therefore ever to be treated by us in a holy and a special way.

The third commandment is a revealing thing. Because how you use God's name shows what you think of God.

For out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. So how you talk about this God and how you use his name is revealing what you think about him.

I think it was A.W. Tozer said there's nothing more important about you than what comes to your mind when you speak or hear the word God spoken. What are you thinking in your mind, your heart?

God's name is holy. We're to think holy thoughts of him as we use his name. His name is to be used with reverence. Because God himself is not, or I should say that God's name is used without reverence because God himself is not revered and feared in the heart.

[5:25] So it's a brutally honest indicator how we use the name of God reveals our heart's view of God. Now consider in the first place this morning the fact that God thinks very highly of his own name.

Psalms 138 and verse 2, David says, You have exalted above all things your name and your word. You have exalted above all things.

Now that's as high as you can go to be above all things. It's up above you. It's up above world leaders. It's up above angels and demons.

God himself has exalted. He's lifted up his name as high in honor above all things with his word. So God has things in the right order.

And what God himself holds in highest regard is to be held in highest regards by us. So we're to hold his name in the highest place of reverence.

[6:34] We're to speak of that name. And there are many names of God, aren't there? All revealing himself. We're to speak the name of God with the highest honor whenever we say it, whenever we pray it, whenever we sing it, whenever we think it, whenever we hear it, whenever we represent it.

That name is to be held high in our hearts. It's not a name to be kicked around and used lightly with improper use.

Now, even earthly kings and judges are respectfully addressed, aren't they, as your honor. Your honor. There's reverence. There's a sense of, I don't know if we'd call it reverence, but of honor given to earthly kings and judges.

How much more so when we are speaking of or to the king of kings and the judge of all the earth, should we use his name with honor and respect?

So Psalm 138 too shows us how highly God thinks of his own name. Matthew 6 and verse 9 is another verse that shows us how high he thinks of his name.

[7:49] You don't need to turn to it because you have it memorized. This then is how you should pray. Our Father in heaven. Now, what is the first petition in the Lord's Prayer?

Hallowed be your name. It's almost a New Testament echo of the third commandment. And it's positioned first here in the Lord's Prayer in order to show us its importance to God.

And again, what is important to God is to be important to us. Father in heaven, your name is hallowed. It is holy.

It is exalted and special. And may it be kept holy. May it be high and honored. First in my heart.

On my tongue. In my life. And then in other people's lives. Around the world. May your name be hallowed. Doesn't it pain you to hear how God's name is being used by the world today?

[8:59] As if it's nothing more than a curse word. An idle word. Just to be thrown in. To spruce up the language a bit. Blasphemous things are being said about our God and of his Christ.

His holy name is daily drug through the mud. And it doesn't sit well with us. His name deserves to be reverent. So we pray.

Our father in heaven. Hallowed be your name. May your name be hallowed. And held holy. May people think highly of you.

And use your name in a holy manner. Starting with me. I wonder, is that on your prayer list? Is that at the top of your prayer list? And now I'm being searched.

It was with Jesus. And in the very prayer in which he taught us. This is how you are to pray. The very first thing. As we come to our glorious father.

[10:04] Who is in heaven. We want your name to be held high. And hallowed. You know, it's a profitable study of scripture to see everything that God does for the sake of his name.

But we're going to see next week, Lord willing. How men do a lot for their own namesake. And that we want our names to be.

And our reputation to be clear. Well, it's a profitable study to see what God does for the sake of his name. Let me just mention some. Lord, why did you create things the way that you did?

He says in Psalm 8. So that when men consider the heavens, the work of my hand, my fingers. They may look up with wonder and say, oh, Lord, our Lord. How majestic is your name in all the earth.

I made things in such a way to cause people to praise the majesty of my name. Lord, why did you raise up that wicked man, Pharaoh, that caused such pain and hardship and death for your people?

[11:12] That I may display my power in him. And that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth. When they hear all that I did to Pharaoh for the sake of my people.

For my namesake, I raised up a wicked man named Pharaoh. David, why does the Lord lead you in paths of righteousness? For his namesake.

Because when his sheep walk in paths of righteousness, it magnifies the name of a good shepherd. What must that shepherd be that all of his sheep walk in paths of righteousness with him?

Asaph, why should God forgive your sins? For his namesake. That others might come to know just how awesome our God is in mercy.

David, why did the Lord save his people? He saved them for his namesake to make his mighty power known. Psalm 106, 8. That they might be for the display of his splendor.

[12:12] For his namesake, he saved them. Samuel, tell us, why will the Lord not forsake his people? For his own great namesake.

To show that he is able to save completely all that come unto God through Jesus Christ. He's able to save them completely. To get them all the way home to heaven. He wants his name to be seen as the great savior.

And not one of his sheep will be missing in that day. That's why he doesn't forsake his own. What we see as we read our Bibles is that everything God does in creation, in redemption, in providence, in judgment, he does in order to make a name for himself.

This is the great concern then at the heart of the one true God. To uphold the honor of his great name on the earth.

Well then we come to the second point. And it's this. That this God who thinks so highly of his name demands that we honor it as well. He says in the third commandment, you.

[13:27] We've just seen what he thinks of his own name. Now it's you. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God. So the third commandment requires us to reverence his name.

To always use it in a holy and honorable way. In our thoughts, our words, and even our actions as we'll see more of next week. My name is hallowed and holy, God says.

Therefore you're to set it apart as holy and hallowed. That's the idea of hallowed and holy. It's something that's set apart from the rest. His name is not common.

It's not just a common name like John, Jane, Dick, and Tom. No, his name is set apart as holy, different, unique. The name of God.

And so we're to set it apart and use it in an honorable way. See that you always use it in a way that recognizes my specialness. My greatness. That I am a God to be revered.

[14:30] Now that's something we owe him. Every one of us owe this to God. The reverencing of his name. The glory due his name. As Psalm 96.8 says.

The glory due his name. Are you paying your dues? Are you giving God the glory due his name in the way you use it? Well, that's the positive duty required in the third commandment.

We're to reverence his name. But you'll notice that the third commandment is not given in a positive form, but in the negative. It's not you shall do something. It's you shall not.

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God. So we're seeing when it's given in the negative, the positive is always understood. Understood. If I'm not to misuse it, then I am to properly use it.

I'm to reverence it. But now let's consider. It's given in the negative. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God. There's something here to be avoided at all costs.

[15:29] Well, let's go deeper. What then are the sins forbidden in the third commandment? What is it that we are not to do? What is it? Some specific ways.

We don't want to just think of the third commandment in general. We want to know specifically. What does it look like to misuse the name of God? So that's the third point. Some specific ways that God's name is misused.

And the first category is that of obvious vulgar profanities. Indeed, the word profane means to speak of sacred things irreverently.

Some things are holy and they're to be treated in a holy manner. But when we take sacred things and treat them in an unsacred way, holy things in an unholy way, it's profanity.

That's where that word comes from. We profane that name. But it's come to stand for a much larger category. And often that's what we first think of when we think of the third commandment.

[16:28] We think of these obvious vulgar profanities when God's word is used as a swear word. A word to curse with. And it's often, God's name is often then used when people are venting rage and frustration.

And someone pulls out in front of them in traffic and pop comes the name of God to damn that person. That's profaning the name of the Lord our God.

When you stub your toe, you hit your thumb with a hammer and God's holy name pops out of your mouth. That's what we're talking about by profanity.

Irreverent humor. Using holy things of God to get a laugh. John Newton, the author of Amazing Grace, tells us in his book, his own autobiography, that before he was converted, he used to entertain rough sailors on his father's ship.

And he would mimic a preacher. And he would stand up and preach, blaspheming God's holy name to get a laugh out of the sailors.

[17:42] That's profanity. Mocking God. Have you ever heard someone daring God to strike them dead if this and that and the other?

They were mocking the name of God at Calvary too. If you are the son of God, come down from there. God's name is used as a filler just to add punch and emphasis to words.

We all know people who can't get ten sentences out of their mouth without throwing God's name into the mix. Not in reverence, but profanely treating a holy thing as a common thing.

So when we hear the third commandment, we probably think right away of that person with a foul mouth in the locker room at the workshop, spewing all kinds of profanities.

And as long as we're thinking of them, we may think we're doing pretty well with the third commandment. At last, I found a commandment in the tent that I don't have a problem with. All this one I have kept since my youth up.

[18:56] But there are more ways than this to misuse the holy name of God. So let's move into the second category of less obvious profanities. Less obvious. Not any less offensive to God.

I'm not meaning that. I'm just saying they're less obvious to people. When God's name is used as an expression of surprise over something good or bad, and suddenly Jesus Christ's name is mentioned.

Or good Lord is mentioned. And what is more common today than O-M-G, whether in texts or in words?

You're watching a home makeover show, for crying out loud. It's an innocent show. And they take these old homes and they fix them up. And then they bring the owners in, blindfolded, and they open their eyes, and they see their makeover home.

And what's the first thing out of their mouth? It's profanity. Oh, my. You've heard it. It's commonplace in our day, isn't it?

[19:58] To take the name of God and just use it as an interjection. No, it's the Holy One. It's His name, and it's to be kept holy.

Are you surprised at something? Wow still works. Awesome is an old one. You can revive that word.

Make up a word. But don't drag God's holy name down and just use it as an expression of surprise. It's not what it is. It's the representation of a holy God.

Use it in a holy manner. Isn't it something the way that the media has just let out all the stoppers in this matter?

So if you're going to keep God's name holy, you're going to swim upstream. Media has done away with such old fogey censorship of God's name.

[20:56] And it's sad if you have any dealings with young people today to hear even young children early misusing God's name and not being corrected. God Himself is not revered or feared, and so neither is His holy name.

We're not surprised. There's no fear of God before their eyes, so there will be no fear of God when they use their mouths. And sadly, many professing Christians take God's name in vain like this every day.

There's nothing holy anymore, not even God's holy name. And let's be very careful before we adopt the sanitized forms where G's is substituted for Jesus.

And gosh is substituted for God. Let's be known as a people who so esteem our God that we're careful not to treat His name in any way that would cast dishonor upon Him, but in a way that would show we hold that name above everything else.

It's that important to us. It's our first petition in our praying that we want that name hallowed. Holy is His name.

[22:10] Then we ought not to call things holy that aren't holy. And I'm going to be discreet, but you've heard it. Holy this and holy that. No.

God is the Holy One of Israel. Flippant references to God as the man upstairs, the movie Bruce Almighty, taking God's name and applying.

This is blasphemy. You know, the Muslims kill when their prophet Muhammad is blasphemed. Or Allah is blasphemed.

God says, you shall not misuse my name. You know, even the word hallelujah, and sometimes I think this is done ignorantly. I think people don't realize. Do you know what hallelujah is?

It's praise the Lord in Hebrew. Yah. Yahweh. You see, or sometimes talk about Yahweh. Those are the letters of God's name expressed in a certain Hebrew way.

[23:11] So, praise the Lord. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. That's our Lord's name. So be careful how you use hallelujah.

I've seen it used in the most irreverent ways. And I wonder sometimes if people realize that the Lord does not hold them guiltless who misuse His name.

Thomas Watson says, many have God in their mouth and the devil in their heart. How many godless entertainers have sung God bless America without ever reverencing God in their hearts?

Do you know what blessing God came to give to man?

Acts chapter 3. God came to bless us in turning each of us away from our sins. Do we want that when we sing God bless America?

[24:13] Turn us away from our sins? Or do we just sing God bless America in a way that does not truly reverence the God who reigns over nations and men?

Well, it is true, as Watson says, that when worldly men talk about God, they almost invariably dishonor His name. And again, I would say, how can it be otherwise if He is not feared in their hearts that what comes out of their mouth when they speak of religious things is not giving to God the due that is His?

Well, those are less obvious profanities taking holy names of God in an unholy way. But let's talk thirdly of the category of using God's name for deceitful and sinful purposes.

Now, we're really seeing, I trust, just how sinful mankind is, how much we need to be saved because we take God's name and we use it for deceitful, sinful purposes.

Remember, kids, when Jacob stole his brother Esau's birthright, and Father Isaac's getting old and he can't see very well, and it's time to hand the birthright over to his firstborn son Esau, and so he sends him out to get some deer and to fix his favorite food.

[25:34] And while he's hunting Jacob, working with his mother, gets some food ready and dress him up so he smells like his brother Esau and comes in before his old blind father pretending to be his brother Esau.

And Father Isaac is surprised that he came back from the hunt so soon. I mean, you already got a deer and have it prepared. Wow, that was quick. Listen to Jacob's response.

The Lord your God gave me success. Do you see the wickedness in that? He multiplies his sin of lying by bringing God into it to cover his lie.

He could have just said, Yeah, I got lucky and I hit the deer, the first one I saw in shock. The Lord your God has given me success.

That's what men do to the holy name of God. They drag it in for deceitful and sinful purposes. When false prophets say, Thus says the Lord, and their own ideas follow, that was the perennial problem in the Old Testament.

[26:50] God complains, I have heard what the prophets say who prophesy lies in my name. They say, Thus saith the Lord, and then what comes out of their mouth is not what the Lord says, but what they say.

I'm against these prophets who wag their own tongues and yet declare, The Lord declares. And that stands over any false teacher today who is teaching lies in God's name.

You know that the religious crusades to go and kill the Turks were organized with a slogan, It is God's will. It is God's will. And what sin has not been committed under the claim of God's will.

That TV evangelist who says, God told me that if you send me your next paycheck, he'll give you back tenfold. In God's name.

The woman who wants a divorce from her husband without biblical grounds and says, I believe this is what God wants me to do. Don't bring God into it. Just say, I want to do this.

[27 : 59] But God's name is often drugged into and made service to get the sin, the thing that we want, the deceitfulness, all kinds of things done in the name of God.

Remember Saul of Tarsus? Before he was saved, he was killing Christians? Trying to force them to blaspheme Jesus, to say bad things about Jesus.

That's breaking the third. He tried to get them to break the third commandment. Do you know why he was doing it? He was doing it in service to God. See, in the name of God, killing Christians.

And then when he was converted, Paul was converted and began preaching that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God. Remember those 40 religious Jews who swore an oath in the name of God that they would neither eat or drink until Saul was dead?

That's using God's name to support their sin of murdering God's servant. The wicked misuse of the Lord's name. And when godless politicians use God's name for political gain to appeal to Christian voters, it's misusing his name.

[29 : 20] It's taking a holy name on unholy lips and heart and turning it to personal gain. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.

And the fourth category, this whole area is something that is spoken of largely in the Old Testament. It's misusing God's name in vows and oaths.

Now the Bible clearly shows us that there's a proper place in special circumstances for believers to make vows and to swear an oath. And when we do, we are to swear by the name of the Lord.

Jeremiah 4 and verse 2. We're to swear by our God. And that honors him as the witness who sees everything and hears all that we are about to say as the supreme judge who will hold us to it.

That's a proper vow, a proper oath. But the Bible is constantly warning us about misusing God's name in oaths and vows. I just want to mention a few.

[30 : 27] There's the falsely swearing vows and oaths. It's a misuse of God's name when we lie under oath. That's what we call perjury, isn't it?

To lie under oath. And it's happening every day in the courts of our land where people are swearing in God's name to tell the truth. They stand there. They hold their hand up and say that they will tell the truth, only the truth, nothing but the truth.

So help me, God. And then they proceed to tell a lie. To make statements that are not true.

That is a breach of the third commandment. Leviticus 19, 12. Do not swear falsely by my name and so profane the name of your God.

You see, God's name is profane. It's drugged down when we take his holy name and call upon his holy name and him as witness and then we speak lies. That's doing the devil's work in the name of God, as Thomas Watson says.

[31 : 44] I wonder if God could not say of our nation what he said of Jerusalem long ago in Jeremiah 5. Go up and down the streets of Jerusalem. Look around and consider. Search through her squares.

If you can find but one person who deals honestly and seeks the truth, I will forgive this city. Although they say, as surely as the Lord lives, still they are swearing falsely.

Now that's what they would say. They would take an oath in God's name and they would say, as surely as the Lord lives, I saw this man do this and do that. And God is saying they take his name on their lips and yet what comes out of their lips then is false.

It's profaning the name of the Lord. You know that's something that the Apostle Peter even did, didn't he? That night when he betrayed his Lord, when he said that he didn't know Jesus, he even added oaths.

He swore by God's name that he didn't know the man. He even called on God to curse him if he was not telling the truth.

[33 : 00] Why? To make the lie more believable to those who were standing around. Telling lies in God's name is a misuse of God's name and the Bible is full of warnings against it and yet we see it so common today.

The second type of vows and oaths is rashly taking and making vows and oaths. Jephthah's vow where he made a rash oath, something he shouldn't have vowed but he called on God and made an oath and then kept his oath, a rash oath that should never have been made or fulfilled.

To swear by God's name without due consideration and reverence to God's name. You met people, they just say, swear to God, blank, blank, blank, whatever they're saying.

Swear to God it's true. And they just keep saying that. Swear to God rolls off many a tongue as a byword just to make what they're saying sound more believable, more convincing.

Whereas the reality is if a man has to use oaths, his word is not very believable, is it? Let your yes be yes and your no be no.

[34 : 14] And then people will believe you. You don't need to add oaths. Rashly taking vows and oaths. And then unfaithfully breaking vows and oaths.

You see, once we call on God as witness that we swear by God as surely as the Lord is living and watching, we make him the witness of whether or not the promises that we make will be kept and performed.

But when we call on his name and make the promises and then break those promises and don't fulfill our vows, we're acting as if the name of God doesn't mean much.

It doesn't mean much that I called on God's name because I can do that and still not do what I said I would do. And God's own name is drug down in that way.

That's what God complains of in Jeremiah 34. You made a covenant before me in the house that bears my name. So you stood in the house that bears my name and you swore an oath in my name that you would free your Israelite slaves.

[35 : 20] Israelites had taken fellow Israelites and made them their slaves and it was wrong. And so they came into the house that bore God's name and took his name in an oath-bound promise to free all their Israelite slaves.

And God says, but now you've turned around and profaned my name. What had they done? Well, they'd gone back on their promise and they forced those Israelites to become their slaves again.

Misusing God's name. Profaning it. Dragging it down. Treating it lightly. To swear by God's name and then go back on it is to treat his name as if it's nothing special.

So I ask you, some of you have been to an altar and made vows before the Lord and these witnesses gathered here today to be faithful to one another as husband and wife in sickness and health in good times and bad times, riches and poverty.

You made a lot of promises that day. Vows. Calling on God as witness. Oh, we must be very careful. We make baptism vows.

[36 : 32] We're saying in our baptism, I here and now renounce sin and die to sin and rise to live a new life in Christ. ordination vows, ministers, promise to preach the word of God and to shepherd his flock.

Now, you see, when we make vows like that, promises like that, God is watching them to see whether we think highly of his name and keep them or whether we break them and think of his name lowly.

And so I wonder what God must hear all day long, every day, coming forth from this earth.

He hears his name. He keeps hearing his name and how it's being used. Should he not judge this nation for this?

Should he not do something for the sake of his name that is daily blasphemed and degraded? We have time to study just one more way that the Lord's name is misused.

[37 : 38] More next week, especially one major way that I want to focus on. But just one more. God's name is misused by the vain and thoughtless use of his name in worship.

That is, when we take God's name upon our lips unthinkingly, even in worship, is to misuse it. the translation of the King James Version on the third commandment is you shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

And that's the idea here that we take his name upon our lips, but it's in vain. It's worthless. We're thoughtlessly, unthinkingly using his name.

Remember, that was Jesus' charge of the people in his day, even as it was Isaiah's in his day from Isaiah 29, 13, saying that these people come near to me with their mouth and they honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

And the heart is the chief thing in worship, isn't it? Our God says, give me your heart. And to take God's name on our lips in worship while our hearts and our thoughts are elsewhere is to have no real dealings, no heart dealings with God.

[38 : 49] It's only so much lip service without the heart involved, and that is a misuse of the name of the Lord our God. We sing hymns that use God's name.

We did them again this morning. You took God's name upon your lips. But if we're daydreaming, thinking about something else while we sing, not paying attention, we're misusing that holy name that we've taken on our lips.

We call on his name in the song, My Jesus, I love thee. I know thou art mine. For thee all the follies of sin I resign. Oh, it's so easy to sing.

It's a nice tune. It's so nice and harmony and so on. But is that holy Jesus yours when you sing that song?

Is he yours? And do you really renounce all your sinful follies? Do you renounce them for the love of Jesus? You see, we can easily take the name of God on our lips and thoughtlessly just be singing along without thinking about what we're singing.

[40 : 11] It's the name of God we're taking. We sang the doxology, precious song in which we took the name, the single name of God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

One name, the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Did we give proper reverence to those names as we sang them? Or were they just words of the song?

And so we sing the words of the song to not stand out as different from the rest of the group? Or do we realize that our God is three persons in one God and he's my Father and he's the eternal Son of God and he's the blessed Holy Spirit of God.

Do we give proper reverence and just think of them as for who they are as we take their names on our lips? In prayer, we call on his name, don't we? In fact, that's a name of the followers of Jesus.

They're referred to in Acts 9 as those who call on this name. And so we begin and end our prayers calling on God's name, don't we? We say in Jesus' name at the end of our prayers often, and rightly so.

[41 : 27] But do we just use it as a formula to say now I'm winding down and just about ready to say amen? Or do we really think, God, I'm coming before you in Jesus' name.

He's the only reason me and my prayer will be acceptable to you because you receive me in Jesus through his righteousness and I come in his name. And in his name the door is wide open then to the throne of grace.

We confess that every time we say in Jesus' name. But do we have any thoughts about the precious Son of God as we take those names on our lips? It's the name of God that must not be thoughtlessly used.

To use God's name in vain repetition in prayer. Just to keep saying Lord, Lord, Lord or Father, Father without thinking.

Whether the Roman Catholic saying so many holy fathers as he prays the rosary without thinking about the Holy Father or whether it be a Protestant that unthinkingly repeats the name of the Lord.

[42 : 30] It's misuse of the Lord's name. Unbelieving prayer. prayer. To pray, to call on God's name but to treat him as someone less than God in our asking.

Don't really believe this is going to help but I'm praying it's the thing to do. We don't treat that name as the Holy One that He is. We can misuse the Lord's name even while saying prayers.

How many today in their church liturgy have the Lord's prayer in their name and they call upon God's name to be hallowed without any intention of doing so themselves and they will go out today and use it in cursing the guy that pulls out in front of them without any conscience whatsoever about her and surprise this and surprise that.

But they're taking up that name when they recite the Lord's prayer and their liturgy and they're asking Him to forgive their sins as they forgive those who sin against them even while they hold grudges against others and will not forgive others.

They're taking God's name in vain. And that's what the third commandment is forbidding us to do. Even the giving of tithes and offerings something that's part of the worship of God in Malachi chapter 1 God charges His own people with showing contempt for His name.

[43 : 57] You treat me as a nobody. How did they do that? Not by cursing Him but by bringing an offering to Him. What kind of offering did they bring to Him?

The blind and injured and crippled and diseased animals. And God says oh that you would close the temple doors I'm tired of this profaning of my name.

Cursed is the cheat who keeps the healthy animals for Himself and offers me the crippled and diseased. For I am a great king says the Lord Almighty and my name is to be feared among all nations.

God is saying my name is to be honored in the way that you give to me. Are you do your offerings to God show that you think highly of Him.

Have you thought about that? That your tithes and offerings are a way that you show God the honor you think is due His name. This great glorious gracious King. We can take communion as a mere ritual.

[45 : 08] Just take the bread and drink the cup and we're not thinking about the glorious name of Him who is here represented. Faithless hearing of the word of God being preached in which God's name is being opened up before us.

Only hearing the word but not doing it shows contempt for His name. The Lord says why do you call me Lord, Lord and do not do the things I say? Why do you come before me and say you're my Lord you're my Lord but you don't do what I say that's profaning my name.

Don't use my name then. Don't call on me as Lord if you're not going to really obey me as Lord. You see all of these things are showing that it's the name of God that is at stake in the matter.

So when are you more likely to break the third commandment? When you hit your thumb with a hammer? Maybe that's when you used to misuse the Lord's name and maybe you still struggle with that.

God has grace to forgive. Even the apostle Peter who swore in God's name you didn't know Jesus repented and found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

[46 : 23] You too can find grace and forgiveness and he will give you strength to learn a new way to respond when something painful happens something suddenly bad happens to you.

Try ouch that hurts that'll work it's not it won't sin it's not sin just don't use God's name. Which is it? When you hit your thumb or when you sit here in church I trust you can see that we're probably much more likely to misuse God's name in church because the potential for misuse of God's name is greater in church because God's name is used so much in our worship.

On the average Lord's Day I calculated that we use the Lord's name around 200 times on the Lord's Day in our gathered times together. In songs prayers scripture readings Sunday school lessons sermons preached fellowshiped together a couple hundred times.

And each time the name of God is used there is the potential for misusing it by taking his name on our lips lightly and unthinkingly without my heart engaged taking his name into my ears and not giving it proper reverence.

Remember this commandment was given at Mount Sinai to people who were used to taking the name of the Lord upon their tongues more than any other people in the world.

[47 : 51] The other peoples had their gods. Israel had the Lord Yahweh their God and they of all people were constantly using the name of God in their worship in their conversation and it was to them that God says now when you use my name reverence it keep it special don't misuse it.

That alone is probably enough reason before we begin our worship times to just bow your heart and say God I'm about to take your name on my lips a whole lot here in this next hour.

I'm about to hear your name a whole lot would you please help me now tune my heart to reverence your name. That third commandment may be all that you need to get you to bed on Saturday night at a sufficient time so that when you come to worship you can be attentive enough to give to that name the honor that is due it.

I don't know about you but I find that this third commandment is far from an easy one to handle. I need a redeemer if there was no other commandment in the Bible but the third commandment I need a savior because I have too often come short of this commandment and each misuse of the holy name of God the infinite name of God is worthy of infinite punishment.

I have misused the Lord's name in a way that I deserve to go to hell and suffer eternally just that one commandment and the verse says that the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name I need a redeemer I need a savior if this was the only command I ever had and the good news of the gospel is there is a redeemer Jesus God's own son and he took the sin and guilt of his people to the cross at Calvary where he was punished on behalf of all who trust in him and that punishment due to me for my breaches of the third commandment was poured out on him he was held guilty and I the guilty one was set free forgiven pardoned Jesus never broke the third commandment he hallowed God's name every time he sang it and prayed it and he did that often and every time he heard it in the synagogue preaching in the reading of scripture and every time he used it in informal discourse he held

[50 : 45] God's name high in his heart and did nothing never cast the slightest dishonor on God's name and his heart just breathes in that first petition as he's teaching us this is how you ought to pray father in heaven hallowed be your name can't you hear the heart of Jesus and this is the most important thing that I have to say to you God as I come to address you right now just may your name be kept high in my heart in the world Jesus perfectly kept the third commandment he always lived in a way that hallowed that set it apart as special he never drug it down and therefore he has a perfect record a perfect righteousness to give to me who don't have any righteousness of my own no perfect obedience here but he has a perfect righteousness to cover all my misuses of the Lord's name all the slights of it it's by the obedience of the one man

Jesus that the many will be made righteous his obedience is put to the account of all who trust him you know we are saved not by our own obedience to these commandments we are saved by Jesus obedience to the commandments and when any poor sinner owns what he is a sinner who's broken every one of the commandments comes and confesses and trusts in Jesus who kept them all his perfect report card is put on our report card all of our sins were reckoned to him on Calvary and he took the punishment that we deserve there is now no more condemnation no more judgment for me forgiven pardoned reconciled at peace with God and then he gives us strength to keep the third command he puts the Holy Spirit in our hearts for what end to make us careful to obey his commands and one of them is the third command that means he's he's put the

Holy Spirit in your heart believers to help you to keep God's name high in all your use of it and you know the Lord takes great pleasure when we do that when his people gather together as we do today and we speak well of his name listen to what he says in Malachi 3 then those who feared the Lord talked with each other and the Lord listened and heard and a scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the Lord and honored his name and as you honor the name of the Lord he's listening and he's pleasing says write that down that deserves reward and in the day of judgment he will gather you into his arms and reward you far beyond anything that you have deserved rewards of grace he takes great delight in those who honor his name indeed the Lord will honor those who honor him and there's some orthodox Jews who came to a commandment like the third commandment and they overreacted and so they never spoke the name of God they would just put in other words instead of

God as substitute words instead of saying the kingdom of God they would say the kingdom of heaven and heaven would just have to be plugged in and that means God we dare not take the name of God on our lips that's not what the third commandment is saying not at all that's to miss the point the positive duty required by the third commandment is that we use God's name in a reverent way contrasted with the misuse of it we are to rightly use it we're meant to call on his name we're meant to confess his name to take his name on our lips to not be ashamed to speak his name in this wicked and adulterous generation we're commanded to praise the Lord his name his great and awesome name let the name of the Lord be praised both now and forevermore from the rising of the sun to the place where it sets the name of the Lord is to be praised so let us not be fearful and shut our mouths from taking his name upon our lips we're to sing to his praise to his name are others misusing the name of the

Lord today and thinking nothing of it then let us all the more join our hearts now and our voices now and lifting up the name of God and praise and speaking of the glory that is due his name let's pray heavenly father we do confess we do confess gladly together as your people that your name is holy and we're asking that you would help us to hold it high in our worship in our daily conversation whatever we are doing that when we take your holy name on our lips that it would be with hearts that think highly of you come and help us thank you for a savior who's perfectly kept that law for us forgive us for Jesus sake look on him and pardon us see his perfect record and put it to our account we have no other trust no other salvation than the name of Jesus and we glory in that name bring others today to see their guilt before this God if they are outside of the savior and draw them to him who is willing and able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him we pray in Jesus name amen