

CAREFUL WITH GOD'S NAME

TEXT: (Exodus 20:7, KJV)

⁷Thou 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.

INTRODUCTION

1. "The LORD says, "Family of Jacob, listen to me. You are called Israel, and you come from the family of Judah. You swear by the Lord's name and praise the God of Israel, but you are not honest or sincere" (Isaiah 48:1, NCV).
2. "Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" (Matthew 7:22-23, NIV).

I. WHAT'S IN A NAME?

A. Your Name Represents Your Reputation

1. "A good name is more desirable than great wealth. Respect is better than silver or gold" (Proverbs 22:1, GW).
2. "But for the sake of my name I did what would keep it from being profaned in the eyes of the nations in whose sight I had brought them out" (Ezekiel 20:14, NIV).

II. CONSEQUENCES OF MISUSING GOD'S NAME

A. Misusing God's Name Offends God

1. "No using the name of God, your God, in curses or silly banter; God won't put up with the irreverent use of his name" (Exodus 20:7, MSG).
2. "Don't desecrate my holy name. I insist on being treated with holy reverence among the People of Israel. I am God who makes you holy and brought you out of Egypt to be your God. I am God" (Leviticus 22:32-33, MSG).

B. Misusing God's Name Brings Damnation to the Offender

1. "The LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name" (Exodus 20:7, NIV).
2. "Say to the Israelites: 'Anyone who curses their God will be held responsible; anyone who blasphemes the name of the LORD is to be put to death'" (Leviticus 24:15-16, NIV).
3. "Let me tell you something: Every one of these careless words is going to come back to haunt you. There will be a time of Reckoning. Words are powerful; take them seriously. Words can be your salvation. Words can also be your damnation" (Matthew 12:36-37, MSG).

C. Misusing God's Name Harms Others

1. "What you say can mean life or death" (Proverbs 18:21, NCV).
2. "Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose" (Proverbs 18:21, MSG).
3. "And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I *am* the LORD" (Leviticus 19:12, KJV).
4. "Keep your word even when it costs you" (Psalm 15:5, MSG).

III. TAKING CORRECTIVE ACTION

A. Recognize the Importance of Your Words

1. "You say, 'If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gold of the temple is bound by that oath' (Matthew 23:16, NIV).
2. "You also say, 'If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gift on the altar is bound by that oath'" (Matthew 23:18, NIV).
3. "You blind men! Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? Therefore, anyone who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. And anyone who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who dwells in it. And anyone who swears by heaven swears by God's throne and by the one who sits on it" (Matthew 23:19-22, NIV).
4. "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation" (I Peter 1:15, KJV).
5. "But because the God who called you is holy you must be holy in every aspect of your life" (I Peter 1:15, GW).

B. Revere God's Name

1. "Give to the LORD the glory his name deserves" (Psalm 29:2, GW).
2. "Our Father in heaven, let your name be kept holy" (Matthew 6:8, GW).

C. Rely on God's Name

1. "And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek you" (Psalm 9:10, ESV).
2. "In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name" (Psalm 33:21, NLT).
3. "You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it" (John 14:14, NIV).
4. "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God" (Psalm 20:7, NIV).
5. "David said to the Philistine, 'You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel'" (I Samuel 14:45, NIV).
6. "By what power or what name did you do this?" (Acts 4:7, NIV).
7. "It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed" (Acts 4:10, NIV).

CONCLUSION

1. "Our Father in heaven, may your name always be kept holy" (Matthew 6:7, NCV).
2. "This is the commandment, the rules and regulations, that God, your God, commanded me to teach you to live out in the land you're about to cross into to possess. This is so that you'll live in deep reverence before God lifelong, observing all his rules and regulations that I'm commanding you, you and your children and your grandchildren, living good long lives.

Listen obediently, Israel. Do what you're told so that you'll have a good life, a life of abundance and bounty, just as God promised, in a land abounding in milk and honey.

Attention, Israel!

God, our God! God the one and only!

Love God, your God, with your whole heart: love him with all that's in you, love him with all you've got!" (Deuteronomy 6:1-5, MSG).

QUESTIONS/ASSIGNMENT

1. Memorize Third Commandment: "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain" (Exodus 20:7, KJV).
2. List ways in which people break the Third Commandment.
3. Why does God get offended when people misuse His name?
4. What new thing did you learn today?