

"Protecting God's Reputation"  
THE THIRD COMMANDMENT  
Exodus 20:7  
Dr. Rick Bartosik  
Mililani Community Church  
March 30, 2003

Introduction: The Third Commandment is concerned about protecting God's reputation and honoring and exalting His Name.

BIBLICAL MEANING OF A "NAME" – A person's name referred not simply to what a person was called but who he actually was – it was a description of a person's character and reputation.

Psalms 29:2: "*Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name.*"

II Samuel 16:5-7 – David's name attacked by Shimei. Similarly, profanity is really attacking God's honor and despising Him. See Lev. 24:16

WHY IS GOD SO CONCERNED ABOUT MISUSING HIS NAME?

Because he knows that there is something greater than what's wrong with your mouth. It's your heart. The Bible says the way an individual speaks is an accurate barometer of his or her heart. See: Matthew 12:33-35; Luke 6:45

HOW CAN WE MISUSE GOD'S NAME BESIDES SWEARING?

By careless words like "God!" or "Oh God!" making the name of God just an exclamation of surprise or shock or anger. By breaking an oath or a promise (Psa. 15:4; Lev. 19:12; Matt. 5:33-37). By accepting theories that reject God as the Supreme Designer and erase His name from creation, giving credit instead to an evolutionary hypothesis.

IN A CULTURE THAT REGULARLY IGNORES GOD AND MISUSES HIS NAME,  
CHRISTIANS ARE CALLED TO REVERE HIS NAME

God's people are "called by God's name" (II Chron. 7:14) and along with that great honor comes a tremendous responsibility of representing with our LIVES the God we claim to love and serve.

Matthew 5:18: "*Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*"

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ON THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

Preparation: Read Psalm 8; Psalm 29:2; 66:1-2; 96:1-2,7-8.

Glory in the Hebrew language (kabod) means "heavy", or "burden." So the name of the LORD carries a lot of weight! Therefore we must acknowledge His power and give Him the praise befitting His level of majesty! The opposite of giving Him glory is to minimize the name of the LORD, to despise or scorn or treat indifferently His name. Treating something heavy as though it were light.

- What do these verses say about how we should honor God's name? Psalm 61:8; 86:9; 89:16; 92:1; 102:15; 119:55; Romans 15:9; Hebrews 2:12; Revelation 11:18
- How did people misuse the name of God in the following passages? Leviticus 24:10-16,23; Isaiah 36:18-20; 37:1-6; Numbers 15:30-31.
- Read how the priests in Malachi showed contempt for God's name. In what ways do we sometimes show contempt for God's name? Malachi 1:6-8.

Blasphemy: "the act of insulting or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God." Blasphemy is not simply the improper speaking of His name. It is deeper than that. It is also a matter of how we think and act toward Him, not simply what we say.

- Can you think of some ways people can blaspheme God in their thoughts and actions, as well as in what they say?
- How can Christians honor God's name: in our conversation, in our thought life, at our place of work, in our homes, in our sufferings, in our prosperity and success, in our worship?