



What Does It Mean to Take God's Name In Vain?

Exodus 20:7: (NASB) *You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.*



Our society is so advanced we can access the world from the palm of our hand. It is so sophisticated we can communicate our thoughts globally in an instant, and it is so self-absorbed we can design a reality with our own ego at its center. In the ancient history of the Jewish nation, the third of the Ten Commandments said not to take God's name in vain. We typically think of people using the name of God in a flippant, careless or disrespectful way as taking His name in vain. While this is true, it is NOT the point of that commandment. On the contrary, all of what society has become presents a much more accurate picture of what taking God's name in vain is all about. The fact is, it has become painfully easy to disrespect God. What should we be looking out for?

First, let's look at the immediate context of the third commandment - the first two commandments:

Exodus 20:2-5: (NASB) *²I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ³You shall have no other gods before Me. ⁴You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. ⁵You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children...*

Connecting the first two commandments: God must ALWAYS be first in our heart and mind. Idolatry is an outward manifestation of an inward lack of fidelity to THE ONE GOD which breaks the first commandment. Idolatry sets us on a path that further disregards the most sacred allegiance with which any human can ever be privileged.

What goes on in the inside inevitably comes out on the outside.

Now, the third commandment:

Exodus 20:7: (NASB) *⁷You shall not **take <5375> the name of the LORD your God in **vain <7723>**, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who **takes <5375>** His name in **vain <7723>**.***

Take: Strongs #5375 *nasa*; to lift, bear up, carry, take, support

Take in another text used in a slightly different way:

Exodus 6:8: (KJV) *And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did **swear <5375> to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the LORD.***

God was saying He carried the responsibility of the promise He gave to Isaac.

The idea behind *take* is to hold or possess - to carry the responsibility of God's name - to have whatever you are holding be, in a sense, a form of your signature.

When we sign our name to something it means something. A signature on a legal document is binding. Taking God's name is binding. In essence, we are signing ourselves up to carry God's name. We are claiming His name with our life.



Vain: Strongs #7723 *shav'*; 1) emptiness, vanity, falsehood; 1a) emptiness, nothingness, vanity; 1b) emptiness of speech, lying; 1c) worthlessness (of conduct)

Vain emptiness is like nominal (in name only) Christianity. It is taking God's name and having an emptiness in the follow-through. Instead, we need to cherish God's name.

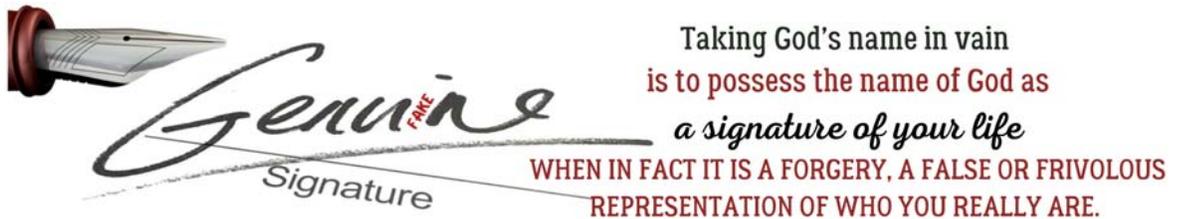
Some examples of the use of *vain* (Old Testament):

Exodus 23:1: (KJV) *Thou shalt not raise a false <7723> report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.*

Meaning, an empty report without substance.

Psalms 24:3-4: (KJV) *³Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in His holy place? ⁴He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity <7723>, nor sworn deceitfully.*

The idea behind *vain* is that of falsehood or an exaggerated and fantasy view of what is real.



This is downright disturbing. It seems that taking God's name in vain is the epitome of hypocrisy.

When God gave Israel those first three commandments, was He saying more than meets the eye?

Whenever we examine God's word we always find levels of meaning, and these commandments are no exception. Each of the first three do stand on their own, but combining them into a process shows the consequences of straying away from loyalty to God. This adds a broader base of understanding.

In each of our segments we have a theme for upholding God's name.

Upholding God's Sacred Name:
Be alert to the devious seeds of
DOUBT

The destructive, commandment-breaking process that ends in broken loyalty:

- **Doubting God within your heart and mind. When we have another god inside of our hearts, it has a basis of doubt.**



- Looking for other more tangible objects of worship and security. When we doubt God, we automatically look for other objects of worship and security.
- Continuing to outwardly carry the name of God while finding security and allegiance in earthly things.

Who is accountable to the Ten Commandments? God's chosen people, those of us who carry God's name.

The audio clips will address WORDS that can be considered taking God's name in vain.

 **The words, *Is Saying "OMG" or Words Like "Geez" Still Taking the Lord's Name in Vain*, gotquestions.org**

- *We could all use the reminder that our words carry meaning. As people who follow Christ, we care deeply about helping others and honoring God. We must ask ourselves, "Do these words help others and honor God?" If we're honest, probably not. It may not be easy to change a longstanding habit, but we must seek to speak words that build up one another and honor the Lord. Our goal is to be consistent in our words so that they would serve as a blessing to God and to others. This stands as our basis for evaluating terms such as "OMG" and "Geez." Does using these words give thanks to God the Father? If not, begin working to remove these words from your conversations and text messages in order to honor God in word and deed.*



If it is not just swearing or saying OMG, what does "taking God's name in vain" look like in practical terms? Let's share one example.

- Quoting the Bible out of context to justify a sinful choice. This is taking God's name in vain. God's name is reflected in His word, and we cannot twist it to fit our desire.

Let's take a look at Israel after they were given God's commandments.

First, they doubted God because Moses was absent from their presence:

Exodus 32:1: (NASB) *Now when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled about Aaron and said to him, Come, make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.*



Do we ever have doubts when we cannot see God's providence and leadings clearly?

Second, they pursued alternative worship - creating a pagan god. Just like the Egyptians:

Exodus 32:3-4: (NASB) ³*Then all the people tore off the gold rings which were in their ears and brought them to Aaron. ⁴He took this from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf...*



Do our inward doubts ever manifest themselves in outward actions of ungodliness that all can see?



Third, they took the name of the LORD and polluted it by making offerings to an image and celebrating:

Exodus 32:4-6: (NASB) ⁴...and they said, *This is your god (Elohim), O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.* ⁵Now when Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made a proclamation and said, *Tomorrow shall be a feast to the LORD (Jehovah).* ⁶So the next day they rose early and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.

The first word god (Elohim) means the "mighty one" which is what they called the calf. Aaron tried to refocus the people to have a feast to God (Jehovah). But how did that play out? They continued their focus on idolatry which started with doubt and ended up taking God's name in vain.



Do our outward actions ever bring us to claiming the name of God while we serve any type of pagan idolatries?

God's anger was strong, and rightfully so:

Exodus 32:7-8,10: (NASB) ⁷Then the LORD spoke to Moses, *Go down at once, for your people, whom you brought up from the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves.* ⁸They have quickly turned aside from the way which I commanded them. They have made for themselves a molten calf, and have worshiped it and have sacrificed to it and said, *This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!* ¹⁰Now then let Me alone, that My anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them; and I will make of you a great nation.



Do we ever stop to think about the mighty insult our actions and disloyalty bring to God?

God was testing Moses. Moses covers the people's folly by FULFILLING the first three commandments that the Israelites were breaking.

First, Moses' response to God is to reestablish God's mighty presence as the only Deliverer and God of Israel:

Exodus 32:11-14: (NASB) ¹¹Then Moses entreated the LORD his God, and said, *O LORD, why does Your anger burn against Your people whom You have brought out from the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?*



Do we continually establish God as over all?

Second, Moses established the idolatrous Egyptians as all too willing to draw false conclusions about the Almighty God:

¹²Why should the Egyptians speak, saying, *With evil intent He brought them out to kill them in the mountains and to destroy them from the face of the earth? Turn from Your burning anger and change Your mind about doing harm to Your people.*

Moses said idolatry has no place in God's plan.

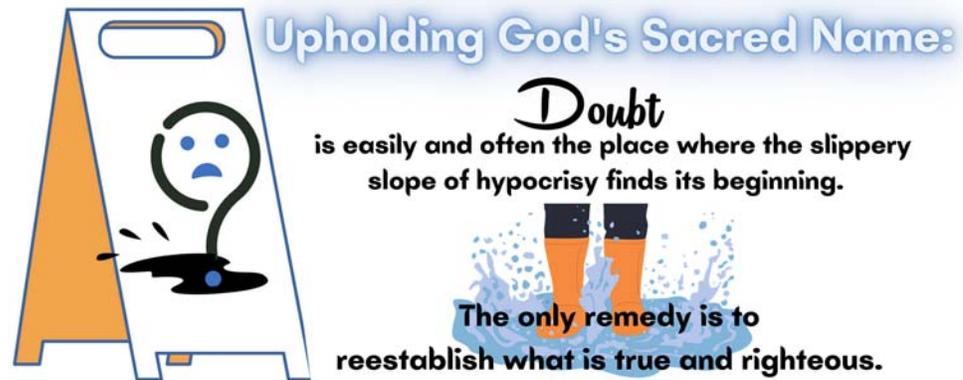


Do we realize what the world would likely conclude if we give cause for God to be angry with us? What kind of reflection is that on God if we carry His name?

Third, Moses lifted God's name up by rehearsing the mighty promises God gave to Israel's ancestors:

¹³Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, *Your servants to whom You swore by Yourself, and said to them, I will multiply Your descendants as the stars of the heavens, and all this land of which I have spoken I will give to Your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.* ¹⁴So the LORD changed His mind about the harm which He said He would do to His people.

Moses took idolatry out of the picture and reestablished God as being the only God. God saw this in Moses, and He knew Moses understood the commandments in his own heart. Therefore, God did not destroy the people. It was a wonderful test that Moses successfully passed.



Remedying doubt is not an easy thing to do. Sometimes we need the help of others and to see through their reassuring eyes.

**What about within MY church environment?
Are we ever set up to take God's name in vain there?**

This is difficult territory, as so many denominations have diversified views of the overriding message of the Bible. Our next approach to taking God's name in vain has to do with the leadership within Old Testament Israel. There were many lessons we can learn from them as to what NOT to do.



Let's go back to the words that could take God's name in vain.

 **Quick response, *What Should I Do When People Around Me Use God's Name in Vain, The Door***

- *Even now if I go into a gas station and get a tire fixed or something, there's three guys in there and one's talking. Now, if they're not talking to me, I don't say anything. But if one is talking to me and he says, "G...D," I say with a smile, "Praise the Lord, blessed be His name" and he keeps talking. He says that sucks, that so and so, and I said, Bless him, God take care of him, bless him. Just keep smiling. Just keep talking. Just conversation, not rebuke. The guy, about the third time he looks at me, and I said, Oh, I'm just balancing out the scale. You cuss God; I bless Him, just keeping it all balanced, go ahead with what you're saying. And I don't act rude to him, you know. It's kind of funny, but they get the point. You know what, they never cuss again when I walk in.*



That is a practical way to lightly let someone know we do not appreciate taking God's name in vain.



When people take God's name in vain in front of me, depending on the circumstance, sometimes I will say, "Oh, okay, I didn't know you were praying because you mentioned God and Jesus." If we are not coming down on someone and just making a suggestion, we are letting them know what is important to us and it hurts when taken carelessly.

In the last book of the Old Testament, we see the final messages of the prophet Malachi focusing on what was so wrong with the priesthood and then prophesying the coming of Jesus.

The priesthood stood accused of despising God's name - they were taking it in vain:

Malachi 1:6: (NASB) *⁶A son honors his father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My respect? says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests who despise <959> My name. But you say, How have we despised <959> Your name?*

Despise: Strongs #959 *bazah*; to disesteem

How have we despised Your name? The priesthood was defensive.

God's reply to the priesthood (the leaders of the people) is to point out the obvious - you are offering that which by Law is unacceptable:

Malachi 1:7-9: (NASB) *⁷You are presenting defiled (the King James Version uses the word polluted) food upon My altar. But you say, How have we defiled You? In that you say, The table of the LORD is to be despised. ⁸But when you present the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And when you present the lame and sick, is it not evil? Why not offer it to your governor? Would he be pleased with you? Or would he receive you kindly? says the LORD of hosts. ⁹But now will you not entreat God's favor, that He may be gracious to us? With such an offering on your part, will He receive any of you kindly? says the LORD of hosts.*

(Source: Matthew Henry Commentary) **Polluted:** either by ill-managing it, and misordering what is good and allowable, or accepting what is disallowed and forbidden, because of its blemishes.

They were offering what they should not have been offering.

The Law was abundantly clear that their offerings were to be the best of their flocks. It needed to cost them something:

Leviticus 22:21-22: (NASB) *²¹When a man offers a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD to fulfill a special vow or for a freewill offering, of the herd or of the flock, it must be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no defect in it. ²²Those that are blind or fractured or maimed or having a running sore or eczema or scabs, you shall not offer to the LORD, nor make of them an offering by fire on the altar to the LORD (they were to offer only unblemished animals).*

Because Israel was a physical nation with physical laws regarding what they owed God, it is easy to look back and see their selfish actions, keeping what was best for themselves. With God as their deliverer, this was never appropriate. The Laws were clear.



God was angry and calling for someone to put a stop to it:

Malachi 1:10: (NASB) *Oh that there were one among you who would shut the gates, that you might not uselessly kindle fire on My altar! I am not pleased with you, says the LORD of hosts, nor will I accept an offering from you.*

God was saying: Lock the door, no more sacrifice! I am done! Your sacrifices are pathetic!



Suppose you want to give a gift to someone who has done magnificent things for you. Maybe you were down and out, and this person lifted you up, gave you an opportunity that helped you get back on your feet and was there for you throughout the entire process. You now want to say thank you. You have this beautiful Ming vase and want to give it to this person who helped you. The only problem is that it is broken. You say, "It is in pieces, but you can glue it." How does that show honor and respect?

This is what the Israelites were doing. There was no honor or respect. They were taking God's name in vain.

What happened to Israel's spiritual leadership? They violated God's first three commandments.

- They were living *under* the Law but not *by* the Law. Their faith in the one God was lacking.
- They challenged God's accusations. They had the idols of pride and gain driving them.
- By their thoughts, idols and actions, they despised God's name. They held His name in vain.



What do I see when I look at MY personal church environment? Do I see a spiritual environment that strives for the highest sacrifices toward God, or do I see us being led as the priesthood led Israel?

- What is the spirit of our environment - is it godly first, last and everything in between? Is it all about honoring God?
- Is there rationalized reasoning that focuses only on an idolatrous use of personal comfort in our church environment? God did not promise us physical abundance if we worship Him.
- Do our thoughts, idols and actions cause us to merely claim God's name through Jesus instead of signing our name to the sacrificial contract and uphold the name of God through Jesus?

This fits well with our topic from last week. Please see CQ Episode 1135: Are Praise and Worship Necessary to Be a Faithful Christian?

Praise and worship are a way of life. Today's subject shows the same thing - it is not just having our words be God-honoring; it is about our entire life and what we do to represent godliness. We must all examine ourselves in our church environment. Are our godly principles in line with the first three commandments?



(Source: Matthew Henry) Five categories of actions that constitute taking God's name in vain: 1) hypocrisy - making a profession of God's name, but not living up to that profession; 2) covenant breaking - if one makes promises to God yet does not carry out the promised actions; 3) rash swearing; 4) false swearing; and 5) using the name of God lightly and carelessly.



This sounds like a parent telling their child to be aware of their surroundings. Think, question and consider!

**Doubts and careless following get us in trouble.
What else keeps us from keeping God's name sacred?**

As we have discussed, doubt and following unprincipled leadership have a foundation in external influence. It is important to delve into what we ourselves can do to prevent dishonoring God's sacred name. We all have an ego, and that can be trouble. Our egos can push us the wrong way, or we can decide to tame them.

Upholding God's Sacred Name:



Eradicate the idolatry of ego by hallowing God's name.

This is the core of solving any issues we might have with taking God's name in vain. Ego is a constant contributor when it comes to taking God's name in vain.

Satan's ego challenged God, and the priesthood in Malachi saw themselves more worthy of the best offerings than God:

Malachi 1:14: (NASB) *But cursed be the swindler who has a male in his flock and vows it, but sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord, for I am a great King, says the LORD of hosts, and My name is feared among the nations.*

God is calling them deceptive thieves! They were supposed to give Him the best offerings instead of keeping it for themselves. This is what taking God's name in vain produces. It is deceptive thievery by robbing God of what He deserves in the expressions of our lives.



Look in the mirror and ask, "Am I a *swindler*?" The answer is "yes" when we say things we should not say or do things that do not honor God. We must remember that we represent God and His son.

The fact that we would ask such a question, pleading forgiveness before God, is a wonderful sign. This is a God-honoring recognition of our own sin. We need to have remorse for such things and to come before the throne of grace. We will be forgiven; now stand up, do better and ask forgiveness. This is pleasing to God. If we tame our ego, we can learn from our mistakes.

To promise something of value to God and purposefully deliver something else is taking His name in vain. Let us always remember what our "signature" promises.



Several aspects, *What Does It Mean to Take God's Name in Vain, AmazingFacts*

- *You see, to take a person's name in vain means that you say, "I belong to this person." Like it used to be when a woman would marry a man, she'd take his last name. But if she takes his last name and she runs around with another man, she's taking his name in vain. So, that's one understanding, but it certainly does include that you should never take the name of the Lord - and they used to make vows, and they'd make oaths, and they'd make promises - and they'd use the Lord's name. And you should never use the Lord's name in an oath or a vow or a promise and then break it, but then also it is certainly true that we should never take the name of the Almighty on our lips irreverently.*

Marriage is a covenant made in the presence of God and is not supposed to be broken.

The New Testament started 400 years after the time of Malachi. Let's look at the time of Jesus and the beginning of the church.

Ananias and Sapphira were Christian followers who lied with terrible results:

Acts 5:1-5: (NASB) ¹But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, ²and kept back some of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet.



For more on the story of Ananias and Sapphira, please see our CQ Kids video, [Is it Ever Okay to Lie? ChristianQuestions.com/youtube](https://www.ChristianQuestions.com/youtube)

Ananias and his wife were converted followers of Christ. At this point in time, many followers sold their property for the benefit of the shared Christian community. Ananias said before God what he sold his property for, but he held a portion back.

³But Peter said, Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the holy spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? ⁴While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God. ⁵And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last; and great fear came over all who heard of it.

- \$ The reason for the selling of property was to engage in supporting all believers as they had need.
- \$ The selling of property was not required. It was an optional choice.
- \$ The giving of all proceeds was not required.
- \$ As this was an act of spiritual giving, honesty and integrity were required.

Ananias and Sapphira were devious and both died. They took God's name in vain. They said one thing but did another, having nothing to do with godliness.

The sacredness of God's name has the power to completely reset our thinking, if we let it:

Matthew 6:7-9: (NASB) ⁷And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. ⁸So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. ⁹Pray, then, in this way: Our Father who is in heaven, **Hallowed <37>** be Your name.

Hallowed: Strongs #37 *hagiazo*; to make holy, to venerate

Being hallowed means we make something holy. We lift it up so as to be nearly untouchable; it is so sacred.



The first ten words of the Lord's Prayer sum up the first three commandments: *Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.*

First, the words *our Father* fulfilled the first commandment to have no other God before Him.

Second, the words *Who is in heaven* are the opposite of the **idolatry** of the second commandment.

Third, the words *Hallowed be Your name* turns the **taking God's name in vain** of the third commandment on its head. When we hallow God's name, we are not taking it in vain.

Jesus is teaching us in the first line of the Lord's Prayer to hold up those first three commandments. Following this heartfelt dedication, these sentiments bring us to a place where we can fix what is broken. Jesus put the focus right where it needed to be - we should have holy awe of God.

It is no accident that the veneration of God's name should be the opening of our prayers.

For Christians, it is not just about God's name; it is also about our humble following of Jesus as the son of God:

1 Peter 3:15-16: (NASB) ¹⁵but **sanctify <37>** Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; ¹⁶and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.



We want to be as Christlike as our imperfections will let us. When we fail, we need to get up and try again.



UPHOLDING GOD'S SACRED NAME

Personal ego is part of us.
We can choose to follow it or lead it.
Hallowing God's name, not just in prayer, but ALWAYS, gives us the best opportunity to lead it.

Ego exists. Are we going to follow it or lead it with spiritual principles?

This all comes down to unequivocally knowing what is right and having awareness and intentional self-control.

We have seen several examples of what NOT to do.
What about examples of reverencing God's name?

The holy reverence of God's name is actually a universally recognizable phenomenon. By universally recognizable, we do not mean throughout the world; we do mean throughout the universe. Not only does the Bible give us human instruction as to honoring God's name, it gives us universal examples as well.

Upholding God's Sacred Name:



WITH WHOLEHEARTED REVERENCE OF GOD.

All of creation reverences the name of God:

Psalm 19:1-2: (NASB) ¹The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. ²Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge.

Just the expansiveness of the universe declares the glory of God! The fact that God should even pay attention to us is awe-inspiring:

Psalms 8:3-4: (NASB) ³When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained; ⁴what is man that You take thought of him, and the son of man that You care for him?

The angelic hosts revere His name:

Isaiah 6:1-3: (NASB) ¹In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. ²Seraphim stood above Him,



each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³And one called out to another and said, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory.

Holy, Holy, Holy! Even among the mightiest of spiritual beings, there is a sense of awe and submission in the presence of the Almighty.

 **Emptying the name, *How Do You Define the Sin of Taking the Lord's Name in Vain, Desiring God***

- *That was a quote from the Ten Commandments: "Don't take the name of the Lord your God in vain." The idea of vanity, and I think the Hebrew does carry this connotation, is don't empty the name. And so, yeah, I think that's right. It doesn't just refer to a certain tone of voice or a certain use of the word. It's dealing with God and speaking of God in a way that empties Him of His significance and so that would include both throwaway words - "God" or "Jesus" - or it would also include I think speaking about Him in trifling and flippant ways. Not just swear ways but cheap ways, low ways, insignificant ways that just treat Him like a commodity.*

We cannot treat God like a commodity we can take from, and it will always be there. We need to have a loftier approach to God. Words are important but our actions are so much more important.

The causes of our trials are the truest revealers of how we carry the name of God and of Christ:

1 Peter 4:12-16: (NASB) ¹²Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; ¹³but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of his glory you may rejoice with exultation.

Peter starts this out with: Do not be surprised when your trials are painful. Do not be surprised when they hurt you when they test you, when they stretch you, when you feel like you are going to break. Do not be surprised *as though some strange thing were happening to you* - this is sharing in the sufferings of Christ! Remember, this is what Jesus went through. We need to learn to rejoice in these trials, not like we are having fun as our lives fall apart, but with the *rejoicing of inner peace that looks up and realizes God's providence is over our lives.*



Here is the caveat of the testing ground of our trials:

¹⁴If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; ¹⁶but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.

Peter adds that if we are suffering *as a thief, or a murderer, or a troublesome meddler*, we are suffering because we did something wrong. There is no glory given to God for the suffering we do because we did something wrong. None of us are perfect, but we must try the best we can to honor and reverence Him with everything in our lives.



The name that we carry - *our signature* - will always reflect that which we most highly honor.

(Source: jccmb.com - Jewish Community Center) Jewish people do not write out the word God or His Hebrew names. When writing God, it is written as G-d (without the o). The reason for this is to reverence Him by not erasing, destroying or desecrating the name of God or anything that represents Him.

This shows an automatic physical reverence for the name of God. Do we have this attitude in our everyday existence? Or, do we tend to forget God's name as we go through our daily life, Monday through Saturday, and then suddenly remember again on Sunday? Am I a Christian in name only, or am I holding God's name up through the example of my life?

There is such importance in names in the Scriptures. Simon was given a new name:

Matthew 16:16-18: (NASB) ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, You are the Christ, the son of the living God. ¹⁷And Jesus said to him, Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. ¹⁸I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

Peter was given the name "rock" by Jesus which literally means a small stone. Peter gained strength through this and tried to live up to that name. He was solid and firm, immovable in testing and trial so that he could strengthen the brotherhood. He had responsibilities within the early church, and it inspired him to live up to the name Jesus gave him. Peter needed to grow into this character symbolized by his name change. He needed to leave "Simon" and become "Peter," the one others could rely upon.

Peter's name was to symbolize the change that was to crystallize in him - how about us?

Revelation 2:17: (NASB) He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.

Each of us is given a new name written on a white stone. What are we doing to have our lives conform to a new spiritual name?



What name does God have for me? Am I worthy of a new name in my exalting of God's name?



UPHOLDING GOD'S SACRED NAME:

To highly exalt the name of God at all times is to be faithful to our calling, for His name IS His character, it IS His wisdom and it IS His plan!



We need to honor and reverence God's name in all we say and do. Do not be the person who people look at and say, "So, *that* is a Christian!?" Be the example of examples. Be one of those who people look at and say, "There is something about that person that honors their beliefs." We need to honor the name of God and not carry it in vain. We need to live up to our signature.

*So, what does it mean to take God's name in vain?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*



Join us next week for our podcast on August 3, 2020
Ep. 1137: Is Faith Built on Reason or is Reason Built on Faith?

Bonus Material and Study Questions

Who are we? What does the signature of our actions show the world?

We lack reverence because we are too busy with our own reactions and conclusions:

Ephesians 4:25-29: (NASB) ²⁵Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor for we are members of one another. ²⁶Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷and do not give the devil an opportunity. ²⁸He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need.

2 Timothy 2:16-19: (NASB) ¹⁶But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness, ¹⁷and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, ¹⁸men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they upset the faith of some. ¹⁹Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, The Lord knows those who are His, and, Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness.

Practical application: Learning to live reverently - learning to "do" reverence:

Matthew 5:1-10: (NASB) ¹When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²He opened his mouth and began to teach them, saying.



Each of the following is an action that ultimately finds its basis in reverence:

³Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. ⁵Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. ⁶Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. ⁷Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. ⁸Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. ⁹Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. ¹⁰Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

The sacredness of God's name:

Leviticus 24:15-16: (ASV) ¹⁵And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. ¹⁶And he that blasphemeth the name of Jehovah, he shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the sojourner, as the home-born, when he blasphemeth the name of Jehovah, shall be put to death

God described:

Psalms 102:24-27: (KJV) ²⁴I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: Thy years are throughout all generations. ²⁵Of old hast Thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. ²⁶They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed: ²⁷But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end.

More on the word *vain*:

Vain: Strongs #7723 *shav'*; from the same as #7722 in the sense of desolating; evil (as destructive), literally (ruin) or morally (especially guile); figuratively idolatry (as false, subjective), uselessness (as deceptive, objective; also, adverbially, in vain)

The King James Version translates this word as "vain" 22 times, "vanity" 22 times, "false" 5 times, "lying" twice, "falsely" once, "lies" once and other words than those already listed 53 times;

- 1) emptiness, vanity, falsehood; 1a) emptiness, nothingness, vanity;
- 1b) emptiness of speech, lying; 1c) worthlessness (of conduct)

Some other examples of the use of "vain" (Old Testament):

Deuteronomy 5:20: (KJV) Neither shalt thou bear **false <7723>** witness against thy neighbour.

Psalms 127:1: (KJV) Except the LORD build the house, they labour in **vain <7723>** that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in **vain <7723>**.

Jonah 2:1-9: (KJV) ¹Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, ²And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and He heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and Thou heardest my voice. ³For Thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all Thy billows and Thy waves passed over me. ⁴Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. ⁵The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. ⁶I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me forever: yet hast Thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God. ⁷When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto Thee, into Thine holy temple. ⁸They that observe **lying <7723> vanities <1892>** forsake their own mercy. ⁹But I will sacrifice unto Thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD.



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Ep. 1136: What Does It Mean to Take God's Name In Vain?

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SHOW NOTES

1. What can we learn about the true meaning of the third commandment from its context and the way it is phrased? (See Exodus 6:8, 20:2-7, 23:1, Psalms 24:3-4)
2. How can doubt lead us to break each of the first three commandments? What are some practical examples of how we can take God's name in vain?
3. What questions must we ask ourselves to keep from walking down the same destructive path that the Israelites took? (See Exodus 32:1-10)
4. How can we apply the lessons from Moses' plea? (See Exodus 32:11-14)
5. How can we interact with others who take God's name in vain?
6. How did the leadership of Israel break the first three commandments? What questions should we ask to examine our church environment? (See Malachi 1:6-10)
7. How can our ego contribute to taking God's name in vain? How is this seen in Ananias and Sapphira? What can we do to eradicate it? (See Malachi 1:14, Acts 5:1-5)
8. What did Jesus teach us about the sacredness of God's name? (See Matthew 6:7-9)
9. What are some practical examples of appropriately reverencing God's name? (See Psalms 8:3-4, 19:1-6, Isaiah 6:1-3)
10. How can we use our trials as opportunities to glorify the name of God? (See 1 Peter 4:12-16)
11. Do you ever take God's name in vain? What will you do to replace that behavior with something that shows reverence to Him?