

Sermon Reflections

Worthy of the Name • Exodus 20:7

Summary: Let all that you do and say be worthy of the Name.

1. Take Up God's Name . . . (7a)

- Though the original command says that we are *not* to take God's name (Yahweh) in vain, the positive expression of this command tells us we *are* to bear God's name properly.
- The Hebrew verb for "take" refers to lifting up or carrying something. Thus, the scope of the command entails our entire manner of life, how we bear His name, not merely in speech.
- Consider the significance of Matthew 28:18-20 in light of this commandment. Being baptized into His name, are you conscious of the weight of "taking up" His name in your daily life?
- What do people think about Jesus when they look at you?

a) Purposefully (7b)

- In Hebrew, "vain" means empty, or with no purpose. We are to avoid vain use of God's name by always invoking it or bearing it with *purpose*.
- Therefore, do not:
 - slander God by saying false things about Him (e.g. "God is a woman")
 - misuse Scripture to further your own agenda, putting words in God's mouth
 - ascribe God's authority to your own human decisions (e.g. "God told me to . . .")
 - use His name frivolously or as a swear word (even Christian-ese substitutes)
 - use His name in a fake or thoughtless way (e.g. "going through the motions")
- How can you more purposefully take up the name of God?

b) Carefully (7c)

- As Christians, we fear God. So when God says He will not "leave Him unpunished" who breaks this commandment, we should take it seriously, and watch ourselves diligently.
- How seriously does God view this sin? In Old Testament law, Lev. 24:10-16, He prescribes the death penalty as a just punishment for this offense.
- How does this punishment uphold the principle of *Lex Talionis* (punishment is proportional to the crime)? Why was this a just punishment for both murder and blasphemy?

Questions to Consider:

- How careful are you to give honor and reverence when speaking of "God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, words, and works?" (Westminster Shorter Catechism Q 54)
- Are you ready to give an account for "every careless word" that you speak (Matt. 12:36)? Have you confessed and repented of any particular sins in this area?
- How does the work of Christ intersect with your careless use of God's name?