

3rd Commandment

GraspingGod.com: Bible Study Lesson 5.03

The 3rd Commandment Bible Verses:

God spoke all these words, saying, "*You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.*" Exodus 20:1,7 NHEB.

Previous Bible study lesson: 2nd Commandment #5.02.

Preliminary Bible Study Questions:

- 1) What is the Third Commandment?
- 2) Why does the Third Commandment exist?
- 3) How do you obey this Commandment?

Have you ever misused God's name?

Yes, me too. Who do we think we are, anyway? We've been foolish, that's for sure.

It's time, then, to stop the madness. We have control over our sinful tongues. So we can stop vainly babbling God's most precious, holy Name, the Name above all other names.

Let's say an opening prayer before beginning this lesson:

Dear Lord God, Holy One of your Chosen Nation, Creator of the heavens and earth, and all things on them, both living and non-living... Righteous King of the Universe, we are SO very very SORRY for using your name in vain. We are guilty of blasphemy. We are guilty of the foolish use of your name. Help us, Lord. Clean out our dark hearts and filthy mouths. Come to the forefront of our minds, so we never utter a blaspheme again as long as we shall live. O, God, make us spotless and innocent before you. Let Christ's blood run over our sins, and make us white as snow. Show us how important You and your Name are in this lesson. Use your third commandment to teach us how to speak about you. O, Christ, our Savior, forgive us for using your name in vain, as well. I pray none of us have used the Holy Spirit's name in vain. God, save us. In Christ's Name, Amen.

Hopefully, we'll be taken to a new level of understanding, commitment, and behavior through this strong, worshipful lesson on the 3rd commandment. God would have it no other way.

What Is the 3rd Commandment?

The start of the 3rd Commandment says, "*You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.*" Useless utterances of his name will bring severe consequences to the offending party. God never changes and sinful humans never change, therefore, all lawbreakers of this command will be punished.

Why does the 3rd Commandment exist? Quite frankly, a creature is NOT allowed to misuse the Holy Name of his Creator God. Makes sense, doesn't it? Of course, God always makes perfect sense.

A righteous and just God has all authority to hold his creatures to a standard that protects his Name. God's Name is holy and must be revered as such.

What's involved in the Name of God? Here is a partial list of things at stake in God's Name:

- **His rule and authority:** Psalm 148:12-13 proclaims, "Both young men and maidens; old men and children: let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted. His glory is above the earth and the heavens."
- **His power:** Psalm 20:1, "May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble. May the name of the God of Jacob defend you."
- **His character:** Psalm 5:11, "Let all those who take refuge in you rejoice, let them always shout for joy, because you defend them. Let them also who love your name be joyful in you."
- **His moral standards:** Deuteronomy 28:58, "If you will not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and fearful name, The Lord your God."
- **His moral judgment:** Jeremiah 25:29, "For, behold, I begin to work evil at the city which is called by my name; and should you be utterly unpunished? You shall not be unpunished; for I will call for a sword on all the inhabitants of the earth," says the Lord of hosts."
- **His reputation:** Exodus 9:16, "But indeed for this cause I have made you stand: to show you my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."
- **His glory:** Exodus 20:24, "You shall make an altar of earth for me, and shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your cattle. In every place where I record my name I will come to you and I will bless you."
- **His blessings:** Numbers 6:27, "So they shall put my name on the children of Israel; and I will bless them."

The 3rd Commandment also protects the spiritual and moral authority of God. His name and his character are inseparable. To use his name in such a way as to bring his character or deeds into question is to irreverently misuse his name.

Using God's holy name lightly and in a vain and empty manner is an attack of his being. The improper use of his name insults and degrades him.

The 3rd Commandment Promise

Part 2 of the third commandment says, "*The Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.*"

Almighty God will not be ridiculed, demeaned, or misrepresented by his creatures. The blasphemer may appear to get by with the terrible sin for a time, but (s)he will soon be held

accountable.

Most people who daily work in the secular world hear God's name flippantly tossed about in normal conversation. God's name used wrongly burns the ears of a person who loves Him, and it stokes the burning anger of our Holy God. **God will remember each sin against his name, unless they're forgiven by Jesus Christ** (2 Corinthians 5:19).

The 3rd Commandment is high on the list of the Ten Commandments because humans don't obey the first two commands. There's a severe lack of reverence and right behavior towards God in our world.

The Lord's holy name is NOT to be used unless a person is praying, teaching, reverent conversation, or preaching. That's an excellent, easy-to-remember rule for this commandment.

Paul realized the dreadful consequences of blasphemy against God so much, that he practiced church discipline on two guilty men. Paul kicked them out of the church because they made a habit of blaspheming God's holy name. "Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I delivered to Satan, that they might be taught not to blaspheme" 1 Timothy 1:20. Hopefully, they learned their lesson, repented, and were forgiven - that was Paul's goal for the men. We need to learn this lesson, too.

This is such a serious offense that God will never forgive a person who blasphemes the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:24-32). Attributing the evil works of Satan to the Holy Spirit, or attributing the divine works of the Holy Spirit to Satan is the one and only unforgiveable sin that a human can commit. All other sins can be taken to Jesus and forgiven, but of course, each act of forgiveness is up to Christ alone. He calls the shots. Your job is to repent and trust in him alone.

Duties of the 3rd Commandment

The requirement placed on us in the 3rd Commandment is that we think, meditate, write, and discuss God accurately and reverently. It goes much further than just his name, though some people seem to think it's only our words we have to measure.

We are commanded to accurately and reverently think about, meditate upon, and write and speak appropriately about the following things:

- The names and titles of God, in full, *i.e.* all biblical names for the three member Godhead (Hebrews 10:29).
- God's word, the Holy Bible (Psalms 138:2).
- The holy attributes of God (Psalms 29:2).
- The ordinances of God (Malachi 1:14).
- The Sacraments: Baptism & Communion (1 Corinthians 11:24-29).
- Prayer (1 Timothy 2:8).
- Works of God (Job 36:24).

Again, the rule still stands: Our thoughts and words of God and his heavenly things are to be accurate, pure, and honorable at all times and in all activities.

Sins of the Third Commandment

These forbidden sins are mostly implied by our duties (see above), but let's clarify them for better understanding and application purposes. This is a partial list, not meant to be exhaustive.

- The abuse of God's Name & Being in unholy thought and word. This is blasphemy (Malachi 2:2).
- Misinterpreting, misapplying, and perverting God's Word, the Holy Bible (Matthew 5:21-48; Acts 13:45-46).
- Backsliding from God and his word (Hebrews 6:6).
- Foolish living (1 Corinthians 6:5-6; Ephesians 5:15-17).
- Unfruitful religion (2 Peter 1:8-9).
- Religious hypocrisy (2 Timothy 3:5; Matthew 23:14; Matthew 6:1-2,5,16).
- Establishing false religion (1 Timothy 1:4,6-7; 6:4-5; Titus 3:9).
- Mistreating people, God's created ones (Ephesians 4:29; James 3:8-10; 1 John 2:9).

If you love the Lord these sins should make you drop and repent. He is holy and we sinful creatures think, talk, and act like he, God Almighty, doesn't even exist.

Are you starting to understand how incredibly important Bible knowledge and application is to our obedience?

There is so much more to say about how we live our lives to honor God, but space limits us.

Response to the 3rd Commandment

The most eye-opening, jaw-dropping word from God in this lesson is Psalm 138:2, which finds King David proclaiming, *"I will bow down toward your holy temple, and give thanks to your Name for your loving kindness and for your truth; for you have exalted your Name and your word above all."*

Think about the fact that God raises his word above all else. The Bible is God's word, so when we neglect it by not reading it, not studying it, not applying it, and not teaching it, we are guilty of breaking God's 3rd Commandment.

Consider all those people who blaspheme the Scriptures by not believing it, and worse, by attempting to prove that it's only a human document. That's the ultimate blasphemy. To think that our ruling, righteous, relational God who created everything from nothing, cannot give his creatures a perfect document is the worst offense. How arrogant can man be?! (2 Peter 1:20-21).

Fruit of the Spirit response to the 3rd Commandment:

Jesus says in Mark 8:38, *"For whoever will be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous*

and sinful generation, the Son of Man also will be ashamed of him, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Loving God, his Son, their Spirit, and their holy word is step #1 in fulfilling the 3rd Commandment.

Our attitude should... actually, let me be more precise, our *obligation* is to espouse the highest thoughts of grandeur towards God and his word ([Romans 12:2](#)). Let's start right now.

Grasp This!

The 3rd Commandment tells us to NOT use God's name vainly, or in a useless manner. You've broken this command many times and you'll break the command in the future. That's a fact. Your own power and efforts have led to your personal condemnation ([Romans 3:9-12](#)).

Fortunately, for you, me, and all others that God saves, Jesus perfectly carried out his duty to God for this 3rd commandment. He never once blasphemed God's name, and he never blasphemed the Holy Spirit. He was falsely accused of it several times (e.g. [Matthew 26:64-65](#)), but never guilty of the deadly sin. Praise God!

Jesus cherished God's Word - always studying it, applying it, and teaching it. He used God's word to fight off the devil and temptation; and he used God's word to form his mind, speech, and actions.

You can have Christ's perfect fulfillment of this command and ALL Ten Commandments applied to your personal account before God, if you so wish. That's right... the ONLY way you can stand holy and blameless before God Almighty is by deciding to follow Jesus Christ ([1 Peter 1:2,9](#); [1 Corinthians 1:8](#)).

Repenting of your sinfulness will give you a second chance of obeying the third commandment. This means repentance will bring forgiveness from God. He will perfectly forgive and forget your sins and all your failures. Saving faith in the work, life, and death of Jesus Christ will give you a new lease on eternal life ([1 John 2:17b](#)). Praise God! Pour out your soul to him now: (click) [Sinners Prayer](#).

Next Bible study lesson (click): [4th Commandment #5.04](#).

Third Commandment Bible Study Questions:

- 1) Our proper handling of the Holy Bible is critical to obeying the 3rd Commandment. Why?
- 2) Why does our mistreatment of fellow humans fall under the prohibitions of the third commandment?
- 3) How come the way we Christians act brings glory or shame to God's Name? Isn't it simply what we "say?"

More 3rd Commandment Bible Verses:

But I tell you that every idle word that men speak, they will give account of it in the day of

judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned. Matthew 12:36-37.

You also once walked in those, when you lived in them; but now you also put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemies, and shameful speaking out of your mouth. Colossians 3:8 NHEB.

But the things which proceed out of the mouth come out of the heart, and they defile the man. For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual sins, thefts, false testimony, and blasphemies. These are the things which defile the man. Matthew 15:18-20a.

But know this, that in the last days, grievous times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, hateful of good, traitors, headstrong, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof. Turn away from these, also. 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

Read more: <http://www.graspinggod.com/3rd-commandment.html#ixzz2HjDhkwVr>
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