

# The Big Ten: What's in a Name?

We live in an age where many things have become less and less formal. Look at the way businessmen dressed years ago. A guy could sell ink pens door to door and would wear a suit and tie. Now if someone shows up at your door in a suit you assume it's the FBI!

People went out on dates, they wore their best. Guys wore nice pants and a collared shirt. Ladies wore dresses and jewelry. They made a big deal about going out, now it's typical for you both to wear the same shorts and shirt you already had on.

Even in our speech, we have become more casual. Unless you go to the south you don't hear much ma'am or sir around here. Everyone is on a first name basis, even some kids with their parents.....over time our culture has become less formal and more casual.....

In some cases that's ok, here at church we say wear what you are comfortable in. I like wearing jeans, I'm thankful that we can do that here. I think it's fine. But it's also fine if a church "prefers" to dress up, just don't require it....some people don't have nice clothes and they still need Jesus!

Being casual can make you feel closer and more like family because you might be more comfortable. So it's not all bad

Unfortunately we see this same mindset, less formal, more casual in regards to our people's view of God.....today we will look at what happens when we view God as a causal god and view His name as common, as we answer the question "What's in a Name?"

## **Exodus 20:1-2 (HCSB)**

1 Then God spoke all these words:

2 I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the place of slavery.

God Almighty Himself spoke these words. This is His heart. This is how He reveals His desire for His children and the standard by which we should live and love!

## **Exodus 20:7 (NKJV)**

7 "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.

Do not take God's name in vain! To the majority of the world this means we should not use the words God and damn back to back in a sentence!

Oh church, if only that was it. How easy would that be? Just don't say those two words back to back and BAM, commandment 3 is conquered! Move on to #4.....NO, not at all! If you do that, stop it, but listen there is much more to it....

First we must understand what is in a name. The Greek word for name here is *shem* (*shame*) meaning reputation, fame, glory. God is talking about way more than just His name. It includes what His name stands for....His reputation, what He is known for, and what is accredited to Him.

Next we must understand what it means to take His name in vain. The Greek word for vain is *shav* (*saav*) meaning emptiness, nothingness, lightly, casually.

When you use God's actual name or even what He stands for in a meaningless way or casually, you "attach it" to emptiness, in doing so you are taking His name in vain.

You are taking literally the most holy precious name and making it empty or common.

**Philippians 2:9-11 (HCSB)**

9 For this reason God highly exalted Him and gave Him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow— of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth—11 and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Does that sound like a name that should be made empty or common? It's the greatest word you can say! There truly is power in the name of Jesus! That word is more than a name, it is a name that is exalted above all else!

What's in a name? In this name....it's everything! Love, salvation, forgiveness, mercy, grace, peace comfort, healing, provision, too much more to list!

Name in the bible mean something.

Abraham - father of many (who our blessings were promised)

Enoch - dedicated (walked with God, was taken up)

Moses - deliver (who God used to free the Israelites)

Think about even when babies are named today. Often it is a loved family member like a grandparent or parent. Many times names from the bible are still used. Some of the most common names for men, John, Paul, Mark.

But when was the last time you heard the announcement of baby Judas or baby Jezebel?

Names have meaning, but no name means more than the name of Jesus.

Even in the OT before the name Jesus was known. The name Yahweh or the Lord were looked at as holy. They were only used with great honor and respect. The names of God represent who He is, they represent His character.

Our God is a god who takes things seriously. He came to this earth born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died a brutal death as a substitution for what we deserved, then rose from the dead so that we too may live. He takes us, His creation seriously. Shouldn't we take Him seriously and honor Him and His holy name?

So what are the ways we use God's name in vain.

**Profanity** - here is the easy one. It means to treat something sacred with neglect or disrespect. Have you ever thought about profanity in general? Most of the "four letter words" abuse the idea of sex or human's private parts. Our body was created by God and sex was also created as a great thing for MARRIED people. Profanity is wrong because it misuses things that God created to be good, beautiful, and holy!

Because we have become less formal and more casual, so has our speech. Cussing is common. How hard is it to find a movie or tv show without it?

Is it common from your mouth? At home, work, ball games, hanging out with friends?

Maybe you avoid using God and damn together. What about just "damn it"? Who exactly are you asking to damn it? And do you realize what you are asking? You are saying to an all powerful God, condemn this person or thing to hell.

I don't mean anything by it.....that is exactly the point.....you are using a holy name in an empty, meaningless way as though it were something common! STOP IT!

**Ephesians 4:29 (HCSB)**

29 No foul language is to come from your mouth, but only what is good for building up someone in need, so that it gives grace to those who hear.

Other translations say "no corrupt word" that is what profanity is, corruption of God's good creations.

**Irreverence** is another way we use God's name in vain. It's similar to profane but it's more disrespecting His name, the using it as common.

This would be when people say things like this:

- Oh my God
- Oh God
- God

- Jesus
- Jesus Christ

All of these variations are using God's name in vain. It doesn't matter what you are saying it in response to unless it's speaking directly OF or TO God!

\*\*\*\*Show the differences in saying them

### **Deuteronomy 6:5 (HCSB)**

5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

If you love your spouse, child, parent, friend, etc, would you use their name in a way that is dishonoring or disrespectful? Why do it to Jesus who has given you your very life?

When you use the name of God, you better do it with meaning. God takes every word you speak seriously even if you don't.....

**False Oaths** - making false promises or vows if you are a Christian, is also using God's name in vain.

### **Leviticus 19:12 (HCSB)**

12 You must not swear falsely by My name, profaning the name of your God; I am Yahweh.

I preached an entire sermon on this from the book of James. You can go on the fb page or website and listen to it. Basically you are a representative of God. You should live your life as though you are under oath, always telling the truth. Be known as a person who has integrity and is trustworthy and dependable and God honoring.

**False Follower** - this is when you as a "Christian" proclaim to be a believer but clearly are not a follower.....In doing so your take God's name in vain because your lips say I'm a Christian but your fruit is rotten....(that's church talk for you don't live like you follow Jesus)

### **Luke 6:46 (HCSB)**

46 "Why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and don't do the things I say?

When you do this, you are tying God's reputation to your empty words and this is where people get a bad view of the church and God's people.

You are to be an ambassador for Christ. This means you represent Him....thus doing what HE would do.

Christians are supposed to reflect God to others. When we don't yet we still proclaim Him as our God, we make a holy God look bad. We must take this seriously!

We are supposed to make Jesus famous! That means to have a widespread reputation of favorable or good nature.

Do you profess a life of Christianity or devotion to love Jesus?

Whether through profanity, irreverence, false oaths, or being a false follower, you can take God's holy name and attach it to emptiness or meaninglessness. Are you making the name of Jesus, that is above every other name, common?

In this name....is everything! Love, salvation, forgiveness, mercy, grace, peace comfort, healing, provision.....

How are you doing with the name of God? Are you taking it in vain through your language or your lifestyle? Are you taking this command lightly? God does not.

I hope that any of us who call ourselves by the name of Jesus will represent Jesus in such a way that it brings honor and glory to Him.

On some level we all struggle with some part of this. The path we need to take is to recognize the problem and repent. What's in a name? Everything!

Church.....Jesus is calling us to a place of holiness! We are to be set apart and it starts with loving Christ above all else....Don't have other gods besides Him, Don't make an image of God for yourself, and don't treat His name casually.

Not because it's a list of rules, but because you love Him. Because He loves you, He died for you, He defeated death for you, He's coming back!