

# Honouring the Lord's Name

BORN TO GROW

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

STUDY 4

*The Born to Grow series is designed to give you a good basic understanding of what it is to be a Christian and how to live a powerful and effective Christian Life.*

It consists of six sets:	
Foundations	6 studies
First Principles	7 studies
Kingdom Living	8 studies
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Ten Commandments	11 studies
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## **RULE**

### **Exodus 20:7**

*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.*

This commandment deals with respect for the name of God. Great responsibility is required because great authority is vested in the Lord's name

### **The Principle of the Name**

All power in heaven and on earth resides in the person of God. Another way of saying this is that this power resides in His name. Those who are called upon to exercise the name of God are therefore called upon to exercise this power.

There is nothing greater than the person of God Himself. There is, therefore, no authority above His name. Even goodness must bow to Him. God is not good because there are some abstract or universal principles of goodness by which He is to be assessed. If this were so then these principles would be above Him. Nothing is above God. Good, and for that matter evil, have no existence in themselves. Good and evil are nothing more than God's assessment of things. There are no ideals to which God ascribes neither is there anything to which He must give account. It is He that determines what will be the ideals and what must give account to Him.

He is totally and absolutely above everything. This is what is meant by the idea that God is sovereign. It is God that decides what is good. Good is what pleases God. Pleasing God is therefore exercising the highest goodness possible.

There is no "goodness" that can decide He is God. Nothing can judge or assess God. Only he is the judge. In fact even the very word "good" is an Old English accent on the word "God". Good means "of God"! Without realising it every time we use this word we are ascribing His name to something.

All power in heaven and earth therefore resides in Him personally and Him alone. Respect for His name is, therefore, respect for Him.

### **Abuse of the Name**

There are three main ways that the name of the Lord may be abused. Two of these are blasphemy and carelessness in the testimony of the lives of those who are God's people. The third (and possibly the most common) breach relates to the way we seek to gain endorsement for our own reputation rather than to be content with who God has made us to be. In this we are seeking to be our own source of goodness, to build our own name rather than to be submitted to the name that is above all names.

## **REASON**

The reason this commandment is needed as a rule in our lives is to cause us to create respect for the name of God. This respect helps create the atmosphere necessary for true faith in God to be nurtured. When this happens and God is properly enthroned in our hearts, true worship and adoration is released. God is then able to move amongst His people in the true exercise of His love might and power.

This commandment is also necessary to challenge His people to walk worthy of His name and to check any seeking of endorsement for our own name.

## **REACTION**

People that have failed to honour God as God and given Him His rightful place in their lives are condemned to live in various forms of reaction. These reactions become the sin patterns for each commandment. When respect for the name of God is not present in a person's life at least three problems appear. These are blasphemy, disorderly living and the seeking of endorsement.

### **Blasphemy**

Blasphemy is the vulgar or disrespectful use of the Lord's name. This is often motivated by anger or rebellion.

### **Disorderly Living**

As Christians we bear His name. Therefore our behaviour and speech should honour Him who is our head. Many passages of scripture challenge us to walk worthy of His name. Disobedience in this aspect of the commandment therefore involves behaviour that brings reproach upon God or his people. Paul admonished the Roman Christians for this in Romans 2:23-24.

#### **Romans 2:23-24**

*You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonour God through breaking the law? 24 For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,"*

### **Seeking Endorsement**

Seeking of endorsement for our name is motivated by insecurity which is the end result of disobeying the second commandment in building images. This offends the principle of this commandment by seeking to abuse the principle of the name in our lives. This may be done by rejecting the rightful honour we should give the name of God, or it may involve seeking endorsement for our own name. This seeking of endorsement for our own name is really the seeking of endorsement for the self images we have been building. The self effort required in this is one of the great stress producers in our lives. This area of reaction takes at least two forms:

## **Presumption**

The presumer is outwardly pious and delights in impressive testimonies. He claims faith and an effervescent hoe and is always seeking prominence. This futile posturing is seen by the Lord as vanity for the Lord desires obedience and not sacrifice. (Psalm 51:16-17, Isaiah 66:1-3).

An example of this is Saul who sought to use his name as King of Israel for his own glory. It was presumptuous rebellion that caused his downfall.

### **1 Samuel 15:22-23**

*Then Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king."*

Like Saul, the presumer is often self-deceived into believing he is obedient to God when his service is tainted with his own drive for honour. Also like Saul, when confronted with his sin, the presumer will often make a show of repentance which is false. Even this show of repentance is motivated by the desire for endorsement and honour. Saul revealed this when he said to Samuel.

### **1 Samuel 15:30**

*Then he said, "I have sinned; yet honour me now, please, before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may worship the LORD your God."*

## **Politicking**

The politicker seeks for power as the answer to his insecurity. He sees power as providing for him control over others that affect his life so that he feels secure that they will not interfere with his image. He will even use them to bolster his image.

The politicker takes to himself the credibility and influence of the name and uses it to manipulate others. He will, under this false covering, resort to bribery, flattery and opportunism. He will often side with brother against brother for advantage.

An example of this is David's son Absalom who used his father's name to politic for the throne of Israel.

### **2 Samuel 15:1-6**

*Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and spoke, saying, "Indeed we are your bone and your flesh. 2 "Also, in time past, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and brought them in; and the LORD said to you, 'You shall shepherd My people Israel, and be ruler over Israel.'" 3 Therefore all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD. And they anointed David king over Israel. 4 David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. 5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah. 6 And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who spoke to David, saying, "You shall not come in here; but the blind and the lame will repel*

*you," thinking, "David cannot come in here."*

The result of disobedience to this commandment is that our life resources and energies become directed towards securing endorsement of our name. The product of this is stress.

Again Saul is the example whose obsession with prominence produced such stress in his life that it drove him to insanity and eventual suicide.

### **1 Samuel 31:4**

*Then Saul said to his armorbearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised men come and thrust me through and abuse me." But his armorbearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell on it.*

## **REMEDY**

There are three aspects of the remedy. These are rod, revelation and release. The rod refers to the hand of God upon us in discipline. The revelation is that aspect of the truth which is in Christ that can set us free in each particular situation. The release is the living freedom that is experienced as the soul is set free to obey.

### **Rod**

An example of the use of divine discipline where the principles of this commandment were transgressed is in the case of Saul at Gilgal. Here Saul was humiliated by having his endorsement withdrawn publicly. It may be then, that the hand of God will come upon all who transgress this commandment to bring about some loss of reputation or endorsement.

### **1 Samuel 15:24-28**

*Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. 25 "Now therefore, please pardon my sin, and return with me, that I may worship the LORD." 26 But Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you, for you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel." 27 And as Samuel turned around to go away, Saul seized the edge of his robe, and it tore. 28 So Samuel said to him, "The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and has given it to a neighbour of yours, who is better than you.*

## **Revelation**

To be free of the pressures that lead to sin against this commandment, we need to have a clear understanding of the greatness and awe of God. This will help prevent both blasphemy and reputation seeking.

### **Deuteronomy 32:3-4**

*For I proclaim the name of the LORD: Ascribe greatness to our God. 4 He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He.*

With respect to the issue of seeking endorsement we must also see that it is futile to attempt to increase our stature by securing for ourselves a reputation. Jesus said:

### **Matthew 6:27**

*Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?*

## **Release**

As we open our hearts to honouring and revering the name of God we come to know what it is to experience the pure joy that can only come from the adoration of God. Through this we grow and learn to count our own reputation as of no significance. We enter with Jesus into being able to cast our own reputation aside. This frees us from all ungodly ambition and enters us in to one of the most free life experiences it is possible to know.

### **Philippians 2:5-9**

*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,*