

Ten: #3 Don't Misuse God's Name

(Exodus 20:1-7)

Introduction

To be misquoted, taken out of context, or misrepresented is an extremely frustrating thing.

Whether it is your spouse, your children, a co-worker, or a neighbor, when someone twists your words or misrepresents your words, you get angry.

Why? It's a matter of integrity and reputation. Candidly, words are twisted for selfish purposes. The person tries to USE your words to say what THEY want or Get what they want.

Usually, the response is *"that be what I said, but that is not what I meant."* NO ONE LIKES THEIR WORDS USED AGAINST THEM.

Furthermore, NO ONE LIKES BEING USED IN GENERAL. That is, people do not like being a pawn or instrument that others use to accomplish their selfish goals, plans, or motives.

When someone takes credit for your work, makes you look bad in order to make themselves look good, or deceives you into doing their dirty work, you feel cheated and misrepresented.

Now, hold that thought.

Contextualize the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20)

Review the preceding commandments.

Often the 3rd commandment is reduced to “don’t use the term God in connection to any pronouncement, declaration, or statement of “condemnation or damnation” of another person or thing. In some situations you were forbidden to say “gosh”, “gosh dog it” or other pseudonym.

If that is true, God is giving the fundamental principles of life – 1) Be a One-God person, 2) Don’t limit me or put me in a box, and then 3) Don’t cuss? There’s got to be more to this command than that!

I. The Significance of A Name

God say, “don’t misuse my name.” Therefore, let’s talk about His name for a minute.

A) What is the significance of a name? A name is more than just an identifying label, when stated, it brings to mind the other person’s perception of you, your personality, your character, and your history with them.

For example, if I were to say “Rockefeller”, what comes to mind? Billy Graham? Mother Teresa? Ronald Reagan or Barack Obama? Wait, don’t answer that, we are in church.

The same is true of God. His name means something!!

B) What is God's name? (Exodus 20:13-15).
YHWH distinguished Him from other gods, describes His character, and defines who He is!

II. The Misuse of God's Name

Principle: We misuse God's name (use commonly) when we associate Him with something He has nothing to do with, use His name to get our way, or misrepresent who He is!

Note: To use God's title or name in a slang manner or profanity, may not be the intent of this commandment, but it is certainly disrespectful.

A) Don't reference to God in a common or irreverent manner.

B) Don't associate Him with something He has nothing to do with, particularly sin.

- "Jesus cleansed the temple because of this."

- It sounds like this, "I've made a deal with God."

C) Don't use God's name to validate something you want.

-“Bill and I were talking. I think we should do so-and so.”

-“I prayed about this and I think we should do so-and-so.”

-Be careful when you say, “God told me to do this or that.”

D) Don't misrepresent who God is.

To treat Yahweh's name with disrespect is to treat his gift lightly, to underestimate his power, to scorn his Presence, and to misrepresent to the family of humankind his very nature as 'The One Who Always Is.'"

III. Consequence of Misuse of God's Name

Conclusion.

- Don't use God, serve Him.
- Demonstrate Reverence Always.