

The Patio Pulpit for July 22, 2020
The Ten Commandments
The Third Commandment

Greetings.

We are now in our fourth week of our study in Exodus 20 where we have focused, for sometime, on what the ten commandments were about and why they were given to Israel in the first place. And now for the last two weeks we have been studying the individual commandments. We are now coming to the third commandment. Exodus 20 and v.7:

⁷ *"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain. (Exod. 20:7 NAU)* I will tell you up front, there's more to this commandment than meets the eye.

Remember, the ten commandments and all the laws given to Israel were given only to the Jews, so keep that in mind whenever you read them or hear someone teaching on them. To the pagan nations that Israel would pass through during their years in the wilderness, these laws wouldn't mean anything. Without knowing Yahweh, the laws were just so much hot air. However, anyone in the pagan nations who heard about Yahweh and feared Him and wanted to join the Hebrews could do so. It was just a matter of telling Moses or Aaron that they wanted to worship their God and then submit all their males to circumcision. **Exodus 12:48** *"But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it. (Exod. 12:48 NAU)*

Leviticus 19:34 *'The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the LORD your God. (Lev. 19:34 NAU)* Judaism was never a closed religion. God has never closed His door to anyone.

Here's my first observation tonight:

Every disciple of Christ must assimilate into the body of Christ.

It goes without saying that the stranger who joins himself with the Hebrews, he and his family, will be instructed in the law. ²² *"There shall be one standard for you; it shall be for the stranger as well as the native, for I am the LORD your God."* (Lev. 24:22 NAU) And now that God and His people have welcomed them into their assembly, they will be expected to conform to this new way of life.

You're probably familiar with the word "assimilation." "...to absorb into the cultural tradition of a population or group." In the US we hear it used in reference to immigrants who come into our country and then set about adapting to our ways and our laws. They assimilate into our culture, our society. That's what we expect to happen. That's what God expected the strangers living with the Hebrews to do and He expected the Hebrews to love them and welcome them to worship God with them. It doesn't always happen that way these days in our nation. Some immigrants refuse to assimilate into American culture on cultural grounds, they just refuse to make America their country. They refuse to learn and speak English and get bank accounts. Some refuse to assimilate on religious grounds, like many Muslims who hate our country and our way of life. I will tell you now, there are many things about life in our nation that I hate and refuse to bow down to such as our horrible adult entertainment industry and our propensity for living in sexual immorality and drunkenness.

When by the grace of God I came to faith in Jesus, I knew I had to repent about how I had been living and what I had believed, which was nothing. I knew I had to assimilate into the church and adhere to the teachings of the Bible. I never expected the body of Christ to adapt to Johnny Helms. I assimilated into the body of Christ and embraced the life-changing demands found in the word of God, albeit, not perfectly or even close. I had never understood why sin is sin and why I wasn't supposed to live the only way I ever knew of living. That's what repentance means, a change of mind about who Jesus is, who I am and how I've been living. Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of life. I changed my mind about Jesus and saw Him as my

Savior, the Christ, the Son of the living God, and my Lord. I changed my mind about my living for myself and my gratifying every urge of the flesh that came along. That's repentance.

Beverly and I talked with a couple this week and we shared our concerns about family members who are going to church but living in fornication, i.e., they're shackin' up. They have not repented of how they're living. They have not assimilated into the body of Christ but fully expect the visible church to give them the ok on how they're living. The four of us agreed that we can't and won't do that.

Second, One way human beings take God's name in vain.

I know we have all heard people "cussing" in a store or a restaurant so loudly I guess everyone heard them. I kinda shudder when I hear it and wonder how in the world anyone can talk like that when there are children around. Of course, I'm not naïve, I know the times have changed and children hear that kind of language on tv and the radio and at the movies a lot these days. That doesn't legitimize profanity. If everyone else is jumping off skyscrapers will you jump off as well? But we must admit that it is as common in our day as eating at MacDonald's.

I also know that many people simply don't care if kids hear their filth. Do you remember when we used to get upset if a man cussed in front of a lady? I do. And I think a lot of people still do.

But nothing is quite as cringe worthy for yours truly as hearing someone take God's name in vain," as we usually understand it; and you know what I mean. That really bothers me. It disturbs me. It is more offensive to me than hearing someone just cussing in general. Using God's name as a cuss word is pretty bad. That is one way we can take God's name in vain. There is another that is, I believe, what the third commandment is alluding to.

Third, A second way human beings take God's name in vain.

⁷ *"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain. (Exod. 20:7 NAU)*

If we want to understand what God had in mind in this commandment, we need to ask, “what does it mean to ‘take the name of the Lord?’” The Hebrew word translated “take” is pronounced nisa.

נָסָה

And it means “to take up, to lift up, to raise, to carry.” This definition coming from The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament compiled by Harris, Archer and Waltke. The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon. And Wilson’s Old Testament Word Studies. So, it means “to take up and carry the name of the Lord.” It means to identify oneself with the name of the Lord, יהוה, Yahweh. It means that those around you will know that you identify yourself with Yahweh and that you profess to be one of His chosen ones, His child. And better, it means that we identify ourselves with the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that’s why we’re called Christians.

Who does that? Who takes the name of another and identifies with another by taking their name? A bride does this. When a couple marries the bride usually takes the name of her husband and from now on, she is no longer known as Lorraine Schmuell but as Lorraine Limeburger. She has taken the name of her husband.

But what if Lorraine Limeburger turns out to be a sexually immoral person and commits adultery with her neighbor or a co-worker? What then would be the point of her taking the name of her husband when they were married? Lorraine has taken the name of her husband in vain by committing adultery. And that is the deeper meaning of the third commandment.

We take God’s name in vain when we profess faith in Jesus but reject His commandments. 1 Jn. 2:3-4; 5:2-3.

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We take God's name in vain when we profess faith in Jesus yet embrace this world with its lust of the eyes and lust of the flesh. When we love darkness instead of light. 1 Jn. 2:16

We take God's name in vain when we profess faith in Jesus yet deny Him by how we live and behave while others watch our behavior. Eph. 5:3-6

We take God's name in vain when we profess faith in Jesus yet pursue materialism instead of holiness and righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance *and* gentleness. (1 Tim. 6:11 NAU)

But I am persuaded better things of you, my beloved. Hebs. 6:9.
In Jesus' name, amen.