

END-TIMES ISSUES



#64 Commandment #3 – The importance of God's name.

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1

The importance of God's name.

It's not just a group of syllables, used to distinguish him from other entities.

- ⇒ **God's name represents who he is.** It sums-up his essence, character, reputation, authority, attributes...
 - It is his *self-revelation*, and is recorded in the Bible.
 - Each of his names/titles/attributions reveals something about him.
- ⇒ **God's name is sometimes used as being equivalent to God himself.**
 - When he gives us his *name*, it is like giving us *himself*.

Finding out about God – who he is and how we are to relate to him – is one of the reasons why studying the Bible is *so important*.

2

1 God's name is sometimes equivalent to God's *presence*.

⇒ **When God reveals his name to people, he is revealing himself.**
The *invisible* God reveals himself with *words*.

- There are several psalms that place the *name* of God in parallel with the *person* of God.

Now therefore, our God, we give **You** thanks, and we praise **Your glorious name**.
1 Chronicles 29:13 (BSB)

Another example: Psalm 7:17, the *name* of the LORD (Yahweh) parallels *the LORD*.

Hebrew poetry often expresses the *same* concept in two ways. When this happens, they are called "*parallel concepts*."

- God's *presence* with his people is a common O.T. theme.

Wherever I cause **my name** to be honored, **I will come** to you and bless you.
Exodus 20:24 (NIV)

3

- The temple was to be the place *where God would reside*. It was also said to be *the residence of God's name*.

I have consecrated this temple you have built by **putting My Name there forever; My eyes and My heart will be there for all time**.
1 Kings 9:3 (BSB)

- According to verses 6-7, the "forever" aspect of the promise was contingent on their willingness to remain loyal to their God. Unfortunately, their sin eventually resulted in the destruction of the temple. See 2 Kings 23:26-27.
- Today, Jesus tells us:

As a *human*, Jesus is located in heaven (Acts 7:55). But as *God*, he is present with his people *everywhere*.

"For where two or three gather together **in My name, there am I with them**."
Matthew 18:20 (BSB)

"And surely **I am with you always**, even to the end of the age."
Matthew 28:20b (BSB)

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2 God's name is associated with God's life-giving *power*. It makes us who we are (as saved people).

✓ **The connection between God's name and God's power.**

- Expressed as parallel concepts.

Save me, O God, by **Your name**, and vindicate me by **Your might!**
Psalm 54:1 (BSB)

- Jesus recognized the connection between God's name and power. He prayed...

Holy Father, protect them by **the power of your name**, the **name** you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that **name** you gave me.
John 17:11b-12a (NIV)

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- "Believing in the *name* of Jesus" means accepting the Good News about *Jesus and his power to save us*. Salvation is based on what *Jesus* has done, not what *we* have done.

"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other **name** under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."
Acts 4:12 (NIV)

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the **power of God** that brings salvation to everyone who believes:
Romans 1:16 (NIV)

God's POWER is ...

- Power over all creation – to make it and to sustain it.
- Power to save and change us, through what Jesus accomplished by his death and resurrection.

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✓ For us who "believe in Jesus' name: Its power makes us who we are. It *changes* us.

- **God gives us new names.** These names define our identity— *who we are*, as the community or family of God. (We saw some of these names last time.)
- Our new name(s) reflect who we really are, and what God intends us to be! At the same time, we aren't there yet: We haven't reached 100%; but we're in the *process* of getting there.

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, **but I press on** to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

Philippians 3:12 (BSB); see also v. 13-14.

- **We also bear God's name.**

... as a **Christian** ... glorify God that you bear that **name**.

1 Peter 4:16b (BSB)

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3 By this power, we enter into a relationship with God.

✓ When God/Jesus reveals to us his names...

- He's offering us a deep personal relationship with him, based on those names. *Some passages describe this relationship as a union with Christ.*
- As Christians, we bear the name of Christ. We are responsible to learn to live appropriately: "like Christ."

✓ The power that accomplishes this change is so great, that we are even described as "new creations."

- God *transforms* us; he gives us a new *identity*, a new *purpose*, a new *meaning*.

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creation**. The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come!

2 Corinthians 5:17 (BSB)

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✓ In this relationship, God and his name are present with us.

IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The LORD is my shepherd ...

He guides me ... for the sake of His **name**.

... I will fear no evil, for **You are with me** ...

Psalm 23:1a, 3, 4b (BSB)

ONE OF GOD'S NAMES... THIS IS WHY THE REST OF THE PSALM IS TRUE.

- "I AM WITH YOU" – Isaiah 41:10; 43:5; Jeremiah 1:8, 19; 15:20; 30:11; 42:11; 46:28; Haggai 1:13; 2:4.

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them **in the name** of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you. And surely **I am with you** always, even to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20 (BSB)

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✓ This relationship is described several ways – being in Christ, united with Christ, sharing with Christ, etc.

- **Two ways** we illustrate this relationship in the church:
 - ❖ **Water baptism.** Romans 6 says we are *united* with him in his death and resurrection... symbolically represented by water baptism. (See Matthew 28:19-20, previous slide.)
 - ❖ **The "Lord's Table"** – the bread and the cup.

When we bless the cup of blessing aren't we **sharing in the blood of Christ**? When we break the bread aren't we **sharing in the body of Christ**?

1 Corinthians 10:16 (GW)

- **Sharing** in his holiness; disciplining us, if necessary.

... God disciplines us for our good, so that we may **share in His holiness**.

Heb 12:10b (BSB)

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- **Sharing** in his suffering (now) ... and also in his glory (later).

[We are] heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ—if indeed we **suffer with Him**, so that we may also be **glorified with Him**.

Romans 8:17 (BSB)

- **We have a reason to rejoice**, even during our suffering – not because of the suffering itself, but because:
 - ❖ Encouragement is available – 2 Corinthians 1:5.
 - ❖ Our future hope includes resurrection from the dead – Philippians 3:10-11.
 - ❖ God may use our suffering for the good of his people – Colossians 1:24.
 - ❖ When Christ's glory is revealed, we will share in it – 1 Peter 4:13; 5:1b.

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Do you have this relationship with God?

✓ **We all need to ask** "Whose name do we bear?"

- Are you a "child of God" (genuine Christian) or a "child of the devil" (John 8:44)? The difference has *eternal* significance.
- *Many people pretend; but only those willing to turn FROM wickedness (as God defines it) are GENUINE.*

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

James 1:22 (NIV)

"Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy **in your name** and **in your name** drive out demons and **in your name** perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"

Matthew 7:22-23 (NIV)

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✓ "Are we identified as followers of God?" *And if so, is our identity as a 'follower of God' legitimate... or fake?"*

- If it is *genuine*, there are significant implications for our life and behavior!
- For instance: **We represent Christ!** His character is to be seen in our character:

Therefore, **we are Christ's representatives, and through us God is calling you. We beg you on behalf of Christ to become reunited with God.**

2 Corinthians 5:20 (GW)

THIS IS THE "CALLING" THAT GOD MAKES THROUGH US!

Entering into a relationship with God has consequences!

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4

If we bear Christ's name, we can live in a way that honors his name.

✓ **We have an obligation to live in a way that reflects the glory of his name – i.e., a way that honors/glorifies God in all that we do.**

- Any time we try to do this in our own power, we will fail. But God has given us the *power* to do this, *in the power of Jesus' name*.

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do it all **in the name of the Lord Jesus**, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Colossians 3:17 (BSB); see also 1 Corinthians 10:31.

- (God is also at work in us, giving us both the desire and the power to do this – Hebrews 10:16; Philippians 2:13; etc.)

For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

Philippians 2:13 (NLT)

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✓ **We can honor him in worship. As we praise God in Jesus' name, his presence and power are with us.**

- When we gather together *in his name*, it's like inviting him to join us.

Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing and make **music** in your hearts to the Lord, always giving **thanks** to God the Father for everything **in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ**.

Ephesians 5:19-20 (BSB)

✓ **We can honor him even in the midst of suffering for him.**

If you are insulted for the **name** of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

... if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but glorify God that you bear that **name**.

1 Peter 4:14, 16 (BSB)

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5

If we bear Christ's name, we have authority to act on God's behalf.

As his representatives, he has given us the POWER of his name!

✓ **Speaking the Good News in God's/Jesus' name ... and refusing to stop, when the world wants to silence us.**

Then they ordered them never again to speak **in the name of Jesus**, and they let them go. ... [But the apostles] continued to teach and preach this message: "Jesus is the Messiah."

Acts 5:40b, 42b (NLT); see also Acts 4:19-20.

✓ **Dealing with sin in the church – Jesus' power will be present.**

When you are assembled **in the name** of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, along **with the power of the Lord Jesus**, hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the Day of the Lord.

1 Corinthians 5:4-5 (BSB); also Matthew 18:15-17.

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6

If we bear Christ's name, we have direct access to God himself.

But it is only "in Jesus' name."

Because of who Jesus is, we can **communicate** with the Father... **with Jesus' authority**. We call this "prayer."

✓ **What is prayer?**

- It's MORE than just asking for things.
- Its #1 focus is on HONORING God – which is why we pray "**hallowed** be your name."

"So then, this is how you should pray:
'Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be Your name.'"

Matthew 6:9 (BSB)

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✓ **What is the purpose for prayer "in Jesus' name"?**

- What it is NOT:**
 - ❖ Not a magical incantation.
 - ❖ Not for manipulating God into granting us what we demand. *He is not our servant!*
 - ❖ Not for selfish gain or personal interests.
- What it is:**
 - ❖ Indicating a desire to align our prayer with *Jesus' will*, so that we are praying the way *he* would.
 - ❖ A desire to honor God in what we ask for.
 - ❖ It is a reminder of our dependence on God for all things

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- When our *values* are the same as Jesus' values, only then are we asking *in Jesus' name*. Only then is this promise guaranteed to be fulfilled:

And I will do whatever you ask **in my name**, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything **in my name**, and I will do it.

John 14:13-14 (NIV)

- A good example: Here is the reason that the apostle Paul prayed for the Christians at Thessalonica:

We pray this [= in the previous verses] so that **the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you**, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 1:12 (NIV)

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[SUMMARY]

God's NAME:

[SUMMARY]

- ✓ Reveals who God is.
- ✓ One of the ways that the *invisible* God conveys his presence and power to his people.
- ✓ The means by which God enters into a relationship with us.
- ✓ And when we have entered into this relationship ...
 - We can live in a way that honors him.
 - We have authority to act on his behalf.
 - We have direct access into his presence, through prayer.

**GOD HAS GIVEN US HIS NAME...
BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU DO WITH IT!**

"You shall not take **the name of the LORD your God** in vain, for the LORD will not leave anyone unpunished who takes His name in vain."

Exodus 20:7 (BSB); also Deuteronomy 5:11.

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OUR MISSION?

Use God's name... but use it CAREFULLY!

- ✓ God has revealed to us the greatness of his name – which represents him and who he is.
- ✓ **BE CAREFUL HOW YOU USE IT! Make sure you don't misuse it!** After all, our attitude toward God's NAME reflects our attitude toward God himself.

**GOD'S NAME IS "HALLOWED" – SO TREAT IT THAT WAY!
**Otherwise, the "negative" part of Commandment#3
will apply to you.****

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Credits

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