

3/23/12
W. W. W.

"The Lord's Name In Vain"

Worship
4/28/63
X 111

Scripture Lesson:-

Text:- Exodus 20: 7. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain"

Introduction:- Not so long ago, a certain man who was a devout Christian, heard a man whom he thought was a Christian, swear when he got somewhat angry. When he was asked about his swearing, he replied, "If you knew me, you would understand." I inherited my quick temper from my parents. My swearing comes only from my lips."

When God said, "I will not hold him guiltless that takes my name in vain", He meant what he said. I do not believe that anyone can be a true child of God and take the name of the Lord in vain. What is the grace of God for, if it is not to give me control of my temper, so I shall not swear and bring God's curse upon myself. When a man is born of God, God takes the "swear" out of him. Make the fountain good, and the stream will be good. Let the heart be right, then the language will be right; the whole life will be right. No man can serve God and keep his law until he is born of God.

I think it is shocking to use God's name with so much irreverence as is common today, even among

Christians. We are told that the Jews held it so sacred that the name of God was never mentioned among them except once a year by the high priest on the Day of Atonement, when he went into the holy of holies. What a contrast that is to the familiar use Christians make of it in public and private worship. We are apt to rush into God's presence, and out again, without any real sense of the reverence and awe that is due him. We forget that we are on holy ground.

Do you know how often the word "reverend" occurs in the Bible? Only once. And what is it used with? God's name. Psalm 111:9: "Holy and reverend is his name." So important did the old Jewish rabbis consider this commandment that they said the whole world trembled when it was first proclaimed on Sinai.

While this commandment is broken by taking the name of the Lord in vain, it is broken to a much greater extent by profanity. What is wrong with profanity? Well, it is a symptom of an inner sickness. It is a stream that flows only from a poisoned and contaminated fountain. To be convinced of this, one need only to realize what is indicated by a light and vulgar handling of other less sacred names than that of our Lord. There is, for instance, a coarse and dirty epithet that men sometimes hurl at each other, that reflects upon one's mother. It is an insult that no man is willing to take.

If we discredit those who speak in a slight and flippant fashion of wife or mother, how much more should this be the case for those who flippantly

take upon their lips the holy name of God. Such are profane. The word "profane" comes from two Latin words, "pro", meaning in front of, and "fane" meaning, the temple. These have let their fences down. They have allowed their hearts to become a common, rather than a holy place. Such a practice tends to kill that beautiful and fundamental virtue of reverence. Reverence is the doorway into the hallowed chamber of the King.

Yet, a few men will say, that there is nothing wrong in swearing. Bear in mind, that God sees something wrong in it. He says that he will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his name in vain. Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned!"

III.

In Jesus day, ^{they} did not feel that they were required to tell the truth, unless they had taken an oath. So they got into the habit of calling upon God to witness that they had told the truth. But little by little, they did not feel bound to tell the truth, even when God was called to witness.

By the time of Jesus, not only was a man's word not his bond, but this was equally true of most of his oaths. It was to correct this deadly evil that Jesus said, "Swear not at all, but let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil!" The habit of lying did not vanish with the distant day in which this

commandment was written. A lie was still looked upon by many as a very present help in trouble. A wise old proverb says, "Sin hath many tools, but a lie is the handle that fits them all."

The habit of swearing is condemned by all sensible persons. It has been called "the most gratuitous of all sins", because no one gains by it; it is "not only sinful, but useless." An old writer said that when the accusing angel, who records men's words, flies up to heaven with an oath, he blushes as he hands it in.

IV.
What is involved in the keeping of this commandment? It is evident that the keeping of it goes deeper than the refusal to take the Lord's name in vain, in profanity, and the mere refusal to tell a lie. This rule is a call both to live and to speak the truth. To help us to this high end, we need a new conviction of the worth and might of truth. It may win for one a temporary advantage to flirt with this commandment, but it will never bring an abiding victory. Some one said of Wayne B. Wheeler that he never lost a case before the Supreme Court. To what did this writer attribute Mr. Wheeler's success? It was not so much to his great ability as to his painstaking honesty. He declared Wheeler won because every judge knew that he would tell the truth in so far as it was humanly possible. That is, he believed in the might of truth. In so believing, he was but following in the steps of his Master. Jesus staked everything on his faith in the might of truth.

Conclusion:- But to make the right use of the name of God, to speak reverently of it always, to always tell the truth, we must be true on the inside. We must be sincere. You know that "sincerity" means "without wax". Sincerity is the fountain from which flow the springs of honesty, frankness, simplicity. This means that the best guarantee for living and speaking the truth, is to be set right at the center of one's being. We need to share the nature of Jesus that we may also share his sincerity. The sincere man will, as a rule, tell the truth spontaneously. He will tell it as a matter of habit. He will tell the truth from his convictions.

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Taking the name of God in vain is blasphemy. What would you do if you were put into the balances of the sanctuary, if you had to step opposite to this commandment? Have you been taking the name of God in vain? You cannot trifle with God in any way.

Is there someone here this morning, who would like to be set free from the sins that bind you? Jesus Christ can set you free? Will you come to him now?