

Guard God's Reputation

Scripture: Exodus 20:7
(10-04-26 Pastor Tony Hao)

What exactly is forbidden by the third commandment? The word “misuse” can mean “empty,” “nothing,” “worthless,” or “to no good purpose.” Our name is not tangential to our being. It marks us and identifies us. Over time, as people get to know us, our name embodies who we are. Think of someone whom you love deeply—your child, grandchild, parent, friend, or spouse. Names are precious, which is why we don’t like our name ridiculed, twisted, or made fun of. We are forbidden, therefore, from taking the name of God in a manner that is wicked, worthless, or for wrong purposes.

Whenever we attach God’s name to lies, half-truths, or ill-conceived purposes, we break the third commandment. We also break this commandment when we use the Lord’s name carelessly. We can also violate the commandment by being phony. The Bible does not want us to forget the holy importance of the divine name.

We obey the third commandment by living as Christians, by speaking and doing everything according to the family name. When we do all that we do—and do it in Christ, for Christ, and through Christ—we show that his is the name we value, the name we love, and the name that is above all names.

GROWING DEEPER (Reflection & Application)

1. How does Leviticus 24:16 expose the serious nature of the third commandment? Why is the commandment so serious? In what ways is the third commandment deeper than mere words?
2. Read Exodus 3:1–15. What does this incident reveal about God, and how does it establish the significance of his name?
3. How should the third commandment inform our prayers? How about our worship?