

**Text:** Exodus 20.7

**Series:** 10 Ways to Be Perfect

**Sermon #3:** The Third Commandment

**Date:** 6.16.2019

#### Commissioning Drew & Tiffany Terry

- Our vision – See a gospel awakening here in CLT that is carried to the ends of the earth. And a core value of ours is that everyone who is a member of Mercy Church, recognizes we are sent by God with this wonderful message of the gospel into our everyday circles of influence. We are united together in that belief, we encourage each other in that belief. And as we do that, we keep our eyes open to what God is doing not just here in Charlotte, but also around the world. We say YES, I will Go wherever you tell me to go &. Do whatever you tell me to do.
- Because we believe this should be every believer's posture, we help plant churches in strategic areas that need the gospel all around the world. We are a part of a network of churches called the **Summit Network** linking together to do that. In the past 8 years our network has planted 42 churches including Mercy. One of those strategic areas is Brooklyn, NY. In fact a little later today we are commissioning a short term team to go to Brooklyn. Our second this summer. Over the past year, your financial generosity to the mission of Mercy has allowed us to be one of just a couple of sending churches to help plant **Park Slope Community Church**.
- Today we are Commissioning two of our own members to go to join the Park Slope family. Drew & Tiffany Terry have been with Mercy for a long time. They were both baptized here at Mercy on June 5, 2017 and we asked them when we baptized them...are you willing to go wherever God tells you to go? Because that's what it means to be a part of the Mercy family. And they said yes. And then over the past two years and through getting to know Pastor Logan and the vision for Brooklyn...God took their yes and put it on the map in Brooklyn, NY. Together this means 7 members of Mercy Church have been sent out to live as a part of one of our ministry partners. Two in LA, One in Kenya, Two in Germany, and now these two in Brooklyn.
- And listen Sending people like the Terrys will be a sacrifice for us. They were members of the A/V team here. Of the tear down team. Ya'll they gave faithfully. And we believe that God is calling some of you to step off the sidelines and take their place here at Mercy. We trust that as we send our best God will supply our need and maybe YOU are his answer to that.

Drew & Tiffany – Joshua 1.9 – Pray

THANK YOU from Mercy Family for all of you have given to so many of us. We love you.  
APPLAUSE.

Ok, with that said I'm going to transition into our passage I'll be preaching from this morning. Make your way over to Exodus 20. We are in the 10 commandments this summer. The 10

commandments are this beautiful summary of God's design for how his creation is to flourish in the world. They are divided up so that they deal with both how we relate to God and then how we relate to others. Not surprisingly they start with how we relate to God. Which is why this first part of the series is so crucial. The first four commandments are all about our relationship to our creator. Because you'll never get your relationship with others right if your relationship with God is wrong. You gotta know who you were created BY to understand what you are created for.

THEN, the next 6 are about how you relate to others. So the month of June is largely about getting the vertical right. And July we get into a ton of what will feel like topical sermons but they are just the application of the vertical relationship to all of our different horizontal ones.

Quick Review –

Follow me on this. I'm going to say "Do you remember the first one?" then reveal it

- First Command: 3 Do not have other gods besides me. -- Exodus 20:3
- Second Command: 4 Do not make an idol for yourself, -- Exodus 20:4 (CSB)

The first command we said was about worshipping the Right God. and the second command we said was about worshipping the right God the right way. We said that making an idol, according to the second commandment, is fashioning the one true God into something he isn't. we said we must **not imagine the one true God to be who we prefer him to be, we must worship him as he has revealed himself to be.**

That brings us to the third commandment. Verse 7 of Exodus 20. Let's look at it. We'll do the same thing we've been doing. What does it say, how do we break it, and how do we go forward from here.

#### What it says

7 Do not misuse the name of the Lord your God, because the Lord will not leave anyone unpunished who misuses his name. -- Exodus 20:7

The third commandment. All about the name of God & how we use it. A lot of times people don't take this one as seriously as the first two. Like the first two are so big, so important. And there is that big warning at the end of the second one that God will punish generations after you if you get this wrong...So those are a big deal. And then we get to the third and you hear...hey watch what your language... and for some it doesn't ring as weighty. It feels like we can let our guard down a little because the first two are bedrock foundational principles and this feels like a... good reminder. Although it is the only other one besides the 2<sup>nd</sup> commandment that includes a warning if you ignore it.

But in fact I think asking WHY is this such a big deal that it made it into the 10 commandments is actually a helpful path to get to it's importance. I mean you've got foundational pillars of rest, marriage, parenting, God's purpose for you, how you can get over greed and fear of man...and foul language makes it in!? I want to show you a big big big idea you may not realize about the

name of God as seen in scripture that makes this commandment not only make sense, but also will deepen your day-in-day out relationship with God.

See when it says do not misuse the name of God, or maybe your translation says to not take the name of the Lord in vain, it's revealing a deep connection between God's name & God himself. A connection that I think you and I operate with pretty regularly in everyday life. Like when I hear the name Charlie King...immediately my mind is flooded with images of that flowing hair, I think of the music he's written, I think of how he aspires so much to dress like me. I cannot separate Charlie from his name. A name is much more than a label. Over time it as people get to know us, it embodies who we are. Think about a person close to you, now think of their name... their name represents SO much more than markings on a page right.

This is why I went to such great lengths in naming my kids. Being a dad is a big deal. HAPPY FATHER'S DAY DADS! And one of our biggest tasks as dads is naming our children. Because their names will follow them the rest of their lives. I have a 5 part criteria.

- **Strong Meaning:** Doesn't have to be biblical but it better have good meaning. I want them to hear a message from me to them even in their own name. Something that can inspire & strengthen them. Ezekiel – Strength of God.
- **Family Tie:** Want them to feel a part of something bigger than themselves. To know, for better & for worse, where they've come from. Help give them encouragement towards taking the next steps.
- **Flexible:** Kids go through things where they want to change their names so we just built that flexibility in. Elizabeth can be ellie, liza, beth...whatever.
- **Southern:** Like family tie, want them to have a little splash of sweet tea in their names. So their names all remind them of home. Ellie Mae, Haddie Lou, etc.
- **Presidential:** I fully expect at least one of my children to be in the oval office for a good 8 years of their lives so I made sure all four of them had names that you and I could say "Ah president Benjamin Graham Shelton..." Why have you declared war on every country at once?

Names matter! And nowhere is this more true than in the name of God himself. To know the name of God is not merely to know something about God, it is to know God himself.

- Exodus 3: I AM – the covenant name of God. Maybe you've heard it pronounced YAWEH. It is God's name for himself. So simple and foundational to all things. Before all things and after all things...God simply..IS.

This is way more than God just wearing a nametag so that Moses remembers who he's dealing with. This is God saying there is something holy embedded into the name of the Lord. And everywhere...everywhere scripture mentions the name of the Lord it is exalted in the highest possible terms. You cannot understand the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment until you see what the NAME of the Lord is in scripture

#### In the Psalms

- the name of God defends us - **May the Lord answer you in a day of trouble;**

**may the name** of Jacob's God protect you -- Psalms 20:1 ;

- The name of the Lord saves us - God, save me **by your name**, -- Psalms 54:1 ;
- The name of God is eternal **13 Lord, your name endures forever**, your reputation, Lord, through all generations. -- Psalms 135:13
- **His name is holy and awe-inspiring**. -- Psalms 111:9
- God Guides us for his namesake -- he leads me along the right paths **for his name's sake**. -- Psalms 23:3 (CSB)
- His name is magnificent-- **Lord, our Lord, how magnificent is your name** throughout the earth! -- Psalms 8:1
- Psalm 29 – **2 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name** -- Psalms 29:2
  - God is very, very clear that we are to give glory to him alone. Which means, that to give glory to his name is to give glory to him. Scripture is equating the name with God himself

**His name represents his very presence**

- **11 then the Lord your God will choose the place to have his name dwell**. -- Deuteronomy 12:11
- Exodus 33: Moses asks to See God's glory and God says go hide in the face of that rock and **19 He said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim the name 'the Lord' before you...."** -- Exodus 33:19
- Exodus 34: God comes down and again inscribes these 10 commands but when he first appears to Moses look what he does: **5 The Lord came down in a cloud, stood with him there, and proclaimed his name, "the Lord."** Exodus 34:5

When we pray, we pray Jesus says - **Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Matthew 6:9.** Jesus is building on the Old Testament reality that we hold God as holy when we hold his name as holy.

**One of the evidences that Jesus claimed to be divine and that his followers believed him to be so was that Jesus took up the name of God.** And when they performed works in his name, power was released and things happened.

- **17 The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."** -- Luke 10:17 (CSB)
- **12 There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved."** -- Acts 4:12
- How do we find salvation?
  - **13 For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.** -- Romans 10:13
  - **12 But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name,** -- John 1:11-12 (CSB)
- **What happens at the end of days? 10... at the name of Jesus every knee will bow — in heaven and on earth and under the earth —** -- Philippians 2:10

I could go on and on because this isn't something that just pops up a couple of times in scripture. In scripture the name of God reflects his control, his authority, his presence, his goodness, his mercy, his forgiveness, and his unyielding love for his people. The bible is taking a megaphone and loudly and clearly saying the name of God is HOLY!

Now come back to Exodus 20.7 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment. You can maybe begin to see why the command is so important. Because it is so holy, so sacred that we must only use it in a manner consistent with its holiness. Leads us right to our next section in our sermon.

### How do we break the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment?

I want you to see how much the weeds of misusing God's name have grown into our lives. Let me show you three ways we break this commandment.<sup>1</sup>

#### We misuse God's name when we use it in service of what is false

- When you say something about God that isn't true...that's breaking the 3<sup>rd</sup> command.
- There is a reason the court used to demand before giving a testimony that you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth...So help you God. It was the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment. More explicitly laid out in **12 Do not swear falsely by my name, profaning the name of your God; I am the Lord. -- Leviticus 19:11-12** – When you went under oath you were invoking God's name into your testimony. To then **lie** would invoke a penalty far worse than anything the state could do to you. You would be subject to the punishment of God clearly warned of in the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment.
- But it's more than just oaths. If we use God's name to ascribe a false sense of authority to something God has not told us to do. We break the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment. It means we should be a little more slow to use the phrase "God told me to do this..." – Because of the WEIGHT you are putting behind that. God spoke in scripture. Beyond that, you are reading the holy spirit's leading and even the apostles used the language "It seems God is leading us this way." **Seems**. I've had people tell me God told them to leave their spouse cause they weren't happy. No he didn't and that's misusing the name of God
- And listen to me, this brings up a very real and current issue I felt led this week to speak to. I need to get real and it's going to go to a little bit of a difficult place for a minute ok. Earlier this year a report in the Houston Chronicle came out that cited some 700 cases of sexual abuse that occurred over the last 20 years INSIDE of local churches. And the consistent story was a pastor or person in leadership used their position of power to convince a minor that it was GOD'S will that they engage in this behavior that I will call satanic. And I use the word satanic intentionally because what could be more satan like than preying on the weak and innocent. And in the aftermath of these horrific acts, where people were blatantly misusing and misrepresenting the name of God to satisfy evil desires in a place that should have been a place of refuge...many victims have left the faith. In fact one survivor said about a pastor who did this "he murdered my faith." And she was right.

<sup>1</sup> These 3 ways taken from Kevin DeYoung's *The 10 Commandments* (Crossway Wheaton, IL 2018) 56-62.

- Jesus says it is better for a millstone to be hung around your neck and you thrown into the depths of the sea than to cause a little one who believes in me to fall away. If that's you, be warned. Jesus says his people are the sheep and elders are the shepherds and so my top job is to hunt wolves.
- From the start mercy has been committed to being a safe church because we don't believe people can worship if they can't trust. So every staff member is background checked. Every kids team member is back-ground checked. The protocols & procedures in our kids ministry were built with an abundance of caution in mind and are held to with the utmost fidelity. We have officers here during our weekend services out of an abundance of caution. Never forget when we first scheduled them and somebody said "oh did something happen?" And I said "no, nothing has ever happened and they are here to keep it that way."
- We are not stopping here. We are working to become an even safer church for those who have suffered abuse in their past. We want the church to become a place of healing for you and we know that we have to earn that trust. More will be coming in about 2 months on a plan that a group of members in our church are going to be helping us build.

Again I know that's a heavy topic but the statistics are far too alarming to just sit by and we will most assuredly stand adamantly against such evil, especially when perpetrated in the name of a good and gracious God.

There are a couple of other ways we break this 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment.

#### **We misuse God's name when we use it flippantly**

- The sacredness to the name of God means we should be careful to employ it in a casual or irreverent manner. There's a story in 2 Samuel 6 where the ark of God is being carried on a cart to the temple. Now there were very clear instructions that NO ONE was to touch the ark. When it was built there were poles & stuff fashioned so it could be carried without ever being touched. It was so holy because it represented the presence of God. Well, the oxen hits a bump in the road and Uzzah, who is walking next to the ark, reaches his hand out to steady the ark. And the second he touches the ark he dies. And 2 samuel says it was for his irreverence that he died. Uzzah thought, under the circumstances, it was no big deal to break the command of God. In fact, he'd be helping God. And God said no, you cannot be casual with something that HOLY!
- Listen this one has really done a number on me this week. When we use God's name casually...I think it is searing our conscience as to who God really is. He's our creator & king, our savior. The alpha & omega.
- When we say "Oh My God" in response the taste of a good chocolate pie...I don't think we really know the God we are talking about. When we use it to express shock, outrage, or anger...like in a cuss word...we are misusing it. And every time we misuse it, the enemy further hardens our hearts from the combination of power, holiness, and love that name is supposed to evoke when we hear it.
- When we use it in humor. And Ya'll I love humor. But invoking God's name for a laugh doesn't take into account that God's name isn't frivolous. Kind of like you wouldn't use

9/11 or Auschwitz because we understand those things must be set apart because of the weight they carry...surely That's even more true of the holy name of God.

### We misuse God's name when we fake using God's name

- My baseball team used to have this practice in high school of saying the Lord's Prayer before every game. Which I now realize probably would NEVER happen on a public high school baseball team. But, such was my situation in the bible belt. Anyway, most of these guys wanted nothing to do with God and in reciting something they didn't mean, they were actually hardening their hearts to the one true God they were invoking.
- Now I'm not saying when we don't FEEL it. Because you think your way into your feelings, not the other way around. That's what we covered last week. What I'm saying is when we knowingly sing about a God we actually openly defy...or maybe when we do it like Matthew 6 says and we pray empty phrases just to be heard but not because we are going to the God we need help from.

In short: maybe the way we break this the most is when we pretend to be a follower of Christ when we are not. This happens a lot in the bible belt so if this is you listen you almost certainly aren't alone and you definitely have a way forward today. But a lot of times what happens is people are Christians by CULTURE rather than by Conviction. That's when you have a faith that admires Jesus but doesn't really submit to Jesus...When amazing grace is a song you sing but you can't explain why that grace is so amazing...when the Lord's prayer is a chant and not a cry from your soul...you are Christian by culture not conviction.

"Self-proclaimed Christians who worship a god that requires no self-sacrifice, no obedience, no submission, and no surrender are not worshipping the God of the Bible, no matter how much they claim they love Jesus."<sup>2</sup>

See Jesus says that WE, Christians, are now his primary agents for advancing his name across the world. So when we live out our lives in a way unworthy of who he is, we actually break the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment because to bear the name of Christ but act contrary to Christ...is misusing his name!

### Where do we go from here?

It shouldn't surprise us that the consequence of breaking this command is severe. Do not misuse the name of the Lord your God, because the Lord will not leave anyone unpunished who misuses his name.

What is the punishment? It is separation from God! See the more we cheapen God's name, the more we grow a callous around our hearts towards God himself. The smaller we make him, the more casual we make him...the less we feel we need him. This is what makes breaking the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment so spiritually corrosive for our lives: When we break the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment we

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<sup>2</sup> Inserra, Dean. *The Unsaved Christian* (Moody Chicago, IL 2019) 38.

attempt to dethrone God. We distance ourselves from feeling like we need him. After all, he isn't that big of a deal.

And God says the wage of that sin is spiritual death. And we all BREAK IT! We all mess this one up! There's just no way around it.

But not Jesus. Jesus lived it out perfectly. He carried the name of God perfectly. He spoke of the name of God perfectly. He fulfilled this command perfectly. That's why his death on the cross is so remarkable. Because there on the cross he is dying for your sin and my sin of breaking the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment. When we treated God's name like garbage...he STILL loved us. And he got up and paid for our sin. The penalty we owed!

SO NOW...get this: how do we obey the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment? Paul says we do it in the name of Jesus...and we do it in a constant state of thankfulness.

**17 And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. -- Colossians 3:17**

Because he did what we couldn't DO! So we DO in thankful response for what he did! The 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment is a negative...here's what not to do. Colossians 3 is the positive. Here's what to do. You seek to bring honor and glory in EVERYTHING YOU do to the NAME of the one who brought you up out of the grave you were destined for. And you do it not to EARN God's favor, but in THANKFULNESS because you have RECEIVED God's favor THROUGH Christ!!!

So we serve one another – that's an act of obedience to Christ....all the one anothers in the new testament...we do it because HE FIRST SERVED US! We do it thankfully and we do it in the name of Jesus!

We give generously to God's mission – That's an act of obedience to Christ – but we don't give hoping this will make us look Good to God. We give because of the NAME OF Jesus! And what he has done for us! It's an act of joyful thanksgiving!

We share the good news of Christ – IN JOYFUL RESPONSE to what has been shared with us.

We WORSHIP – IN JOYFUL RESPONSE to the one who came for us. Who fills our hearts with joy as we give ourselves fully to him.

CLOSE IN TIME OF RESPONSE – The NAME OF GOD