

20PENT10MyLife2 (August 9, 2020)

Exodus 20:7

MY LIFE, HIS WAY – SECOND COMMANDMENT

USE MY NAME, DON'T ABUSE IT

*You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name. Exodus 20:7*

Intro: I greet you in the name of the LORD God who said **“The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.”**

(Prov18:10) It was Thanksgiving dinner with the whole family at Grandma's and Grandpa's house. And even before everyone arrived they knew what the table would look like. Out would come the special china that had been given to grandma by her parents. It was expensive when it was bought and still beautiful. Also, out would come the silver plated serving platters and grandma would have cleaned up the silver eating and serving utensils, too, and carefully set them. It was all grandma's way of saying that the day was special and everyone getting together was special too. We didn't dare use it for anything else and while grandma had dishes for the kids to play with out in the sandbox you didn't dare ask to play with the china or the silver.

God has given us something extremely valuable for our lives too. His name. He wants us to use it often. But there are ways to abuse it, too, just like there were ways to abuse grandma's china and silver. “Use my name. Don't abuse it”, God says.

### 1. His name is a powerful heavenly gift

You can all probably think of someone in your life that is really special to you now but that at one point you didn't know or maybe even at one point had misjudged or let someone else taint your view of them so that maybe you didn't even like them at first. Thank goodness you learned differently about them and now have the joy of their friendship and all that means – their help, their kindness, their honest counsel, the surprise things they do for you without you even knowing it, just because they care about you.

The Lord God of the heavens and the earth is very much like that. When you don't know him you grossly misjudge Him. And when He isn't important to you, you miss out on huge benefits that you won't get anywhere else.

The way we get to know our God is through his name. God's name is every expression that he uses in the Bible to refer to himself and also everything that he teaches us about himself in the Bible. Both of those things paint a picture of God just like our name and our reputation paint a picture of us. So God's name is not only extremely valuable to us, but it is important to God to protect that name.

Just think about some of the things that we learn about God from the titles he uses to name himself in the Bible. Its just like the titles that are attached to our names and how they describe us. Chef Smith or Dr Kinkaid or Officer Brown, to name a few. God has names in the Bible like (and I'll use the English translations): God Almighty (El Shaddai) – think about that when you are facing something beyond your ability in your life. The Lord our Righteousness (Jeremiah 23:5,6)– think about that when your guilt before God is troubling you and God by this name is telling you that Jesus hides the sins of his believers with the covering of his righteousness. Everlasting God – Bible asks, **“Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable”** (Isaiah 40:28).. Yahweh Yireh – the God who provides. The Faithful God – think about that when it feels like every other pillar in life that you rely on has crumbled. The young woman and believer, Mary, rejoiced in God her Savior. (Luke 1:47) There is so much more. The Bible sums it up and says **“God is our refuge and strength an ever present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains be carried into the heart of the sea.”** (Psalm 46)

Have the name of the true God on your lips to praise Him. Praising Him proclaims his greatness, and love, and majesty to others so that they can learn about him and so that we do not forget what he has done. **“Bless**

**the Lord, O my soul, all my inmost being praise his holy name. Bless the Lord O my soul and forget not all his benefits – who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases...**” (Psalm 103) One of our hymns expresses the Christian’s eagerness to do that *“Oh, that I had a thousand voices to praise my God with thousand tongues. My heart which in the Lord rejoices would then proclaim with grateful song. To all wherever I might be, what great things God has done for me.”*

One of the best ways to proclaim all his benefits is to teach people about Jesus using his Holy Scriptures. You can do this with one another. Parents, take care to do this with your children. Ministers of the Gospel do this by faithfully teaching the amazing truths of Holy Scripture and doing it rightly. In every sermon and every Bible Class and every Catechism class and so much more, God’s servants are proclaiming God’s name to you.

We use God’s name in prayer. Prayer is an unbelievable gift of God. Imagine having a key to a warehouse that has anything you could want or need. God is greater than even that and he invites us to tap into his power and blessings by praying to him. **“Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you”**, he says. Its almost unbelievable that we don’t use this invitation more than we do and that sometimes we might even go days and months in laziness without using it. God reminds us: **“You have not because you ask not.”** () So invoke God using his name in prayer, and if it will truly be a blessing to you, he will give it to you. Use that name too, to confirm the truth of what you testify to in a court of Law and to respectfully seal a solemn promise.

## 2. Misusing God’s name is a serious mistake

Use it. Be careful, though, don’t abuse it! As much as it is a blessing to have God’s name to use, so it is also a serious mistake to misuse God’s name. God adds this solemn threat to those who misuse his name. **“The Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses His name.”** (Ex 20:7) So when do we misuse his name? When we swear falsely, or needlessly or to uncertain things. When we use God’s name to curse people who

God has not authorized us to curse. When we use God’s name in petty vulgarity.

We misuse God’s name when we preach or teach in his name and by that invite the people to trust what we say and then betray that trust by teaching and preaching things that are false. That is a terrible misuse of God’s name.

We misuse God’s name when we claim anyone or anything to be that God other than the Triune God of the scriptures or worse yet elevate Satan to the status reserved for God.

Concl: God’s name is a magnificent blessing to be used liberally in our lives. It is also very dangerous to us and others when we abuse it. Prayer: Thank you Lord for keeping this commandment perfectly for us and through faith making that ours. Forgive us our sins against it and guide and inspire us to make proper use of this powerful gift. In your name. Amen.

(“I am against the prophets who wag their own tongues and yet declare, “The LORD declares.”)