

Lesson 4 Commandment 3

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Date: 07 March 2024

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[0 : 00] As we start into looking at the third commandment today, I want us to think about the greatness of God and the holiness of God. You'll remember that in Isaiah chapter 6, Isaiah has a vision of the Lord in the year that King Uzziah died.

King Uzziah was a national hero. Everybody loved him. Isaiah loved him. Isaiah was distraught and uncertain what's going to happen next to the kingdom because Uzziah had died.

I mean, he really was a great king and under him, Israel or Judah, the whole nation prospered under him. And in this vision as Isaiah is distraught, he saw a vision of God, but really not of God himself, but of God's holiness.

And God's holiness was displayed in, he saw the throne of God. He saw the train of God's robe fill the temple.

So I want you to think about that. You start with the temple. This thing was a pretty massive structure and it was the train of the robe. So you've got a robe that comes around you and the train is the thing that hangs to the back.

[1 : 16] That back part back there is what filled the temple. So just a small portion of some clothing is what fills the temple.

It's filled with these angels are flying around, these seraphim with six wings. And they're singing a song that is, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty.

All right. So by saying holy, holy, holy three times, that is like saying good, better, best.

Right? It is the most holy that there is. Are you with me? No. God is holy.

God is holy. God is holy. God is holy. Okay. You just need to get the picture of this. You got the temple. You got the train of the robe. You got these angels flying around. You got them praising God, saying holy, holy, holy.

[2 : 25] And then there's smoke that fills the temple. There's the earthquake that shakes the foundations of the temple. And Isaiah says, woe is me. Woe is me.

Now Isaiah is a prophet of God. Isaiah knows the Lord. Isaiah loves the Lord. Isaiah is called from the womb to be a prophet of the Lord. And yet he sees this image of God's holiness that overwhelms him.

Because when you say woe is me, he's not talking to a horse. Woe means doom and destruction upon me.

I am doomed. That's what woe means. Well, that picture of God's holiness is captured. And we get to see and feel just how terrible God's holiness is in another story back a few centuries before Isaiah in the reign of King David.

King David, the temple wasn't built yet. It was just a tabernacle. God told him he's not going to build it, but his son is going to build it. But the Ark of the Covenant was at Abinadab's house.

[3 : 36] And so he was going to move it into Jerusalem, into the city. And when he does, he gets Uzzah, as well as his brother, to come and to get the Ark and to bring it into the city.

And as they take the Ark, they put it on a cart. And the cart is pulled by some oxen. Now, both of these men were priests. They knew how to carry the Ark.

And this was not how to carry the Ark. The Ark is supposed to be carried on poles. Okay? So as they're coming from Abinadab's house to the city, the oxen stumbles just a bit.

And as it stumbles, the Ark begins to teeter. And we have in 2 Samuel chapter 6, the passage that reads this way.

And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah put out his hand to the Ark of God and took a hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and God struck him down there because of his error.

[4 : 44] And he died there beside the Ark of God. You see, the point is, is that God is a holy God. And he is to not be trifled with.

Just think of this scene for a second. I mean, this is God's Ark. What does God care if it's carried by men or carried by a cart?

This is God's Ark. These are his people. What difference does it make that a man puts his hand on it to touch it rather than letting it tumble and fall to the ground? Well, the difference is, is that the ground has never rebelled against God.

It would have been far better for the Ark to hit the ground because the ground was not defiled and unholy like the people were because they had rebelled against God.

I bet they didn't realize it. I know. So I want you to have that sort of mental image and that feel of what that feels like because as we go through this commandment, this commandment, above all, is one of those commandments that it seems pretty simple to see other people violating this commandment.

[5 : 55] But in truth, we all violate this commandment quite extensively. And I want us to kind of see that. I want us to feel the weight of that so that when we get down to the end, we can understand the glory of the gospel.

So let's talk about what this commandment says and what this commandment is. It's in verse 7. It's very short. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes his name in vain.

So you don't see God attach the idea of punishment to too many of these commandments. But the last commandment, second commandment, and this commandment, he certainly has attached the idea of punishment.

So you've got the what. Don't take the name of the Lord God in vain. So let's talk about this word vain for just a second. Our modern society, okay, we use the word vain in a lot of different ways.

I think we use it in a lot of different ways. Maybe we only use it in one way because I can only think of one. How do we use vain in modern? I'm so vain. You are so vain, okay? Now, what do we mean about that person when we say you're so vain?

[7 : 09] You think they're above you or are prideful. Okay, so we're looking at them as somebody who's prideful. You're somebody that thinks you're better than everybody else. Okay, great.

That is what we tend to think. So now, when you read the book of Ecclesiastes and you hear Solomon say, vanity of vanities, all is vanity, he certainly doesn't mean prideful, right?

He means something a little different there. And one day we'll come back to the book of Ecclesiastes and read it. Basically, what he's talking about is an emptiness and something about the curse.

But this word here is not what's in Ecclesiastes either. This word vanity in Exodus 20 verse 7 is sometimes translated with the idea of false, with the idea of deceitful, deception, or worthless.

Having no worth. Having no worth, right. It is this idea that maybe, so it's a little bit like the way we would conceive of the concept of hypocrisy, right?

[8 : 25] I say I'm going to do one thing, but I do the opposite. I tell you, you ought not to speed, and yet I drive through town at 70 miles an hour, right? So it's that hypocrisy, that falseness that's there.

Then when we add to that and we think about how God thinks about his name, right, we begin to kind of get a picture of this.

So let's think about what God thinks about his name. How many of you ever told one of your kids or your grandkids to go get one of the other kids or grandkids and tell them to come in the house?

And how many times did the one outside come in because their brother or sister told them to? Never. Now how many times did you tell them, you go tell them, dad said.

Did that work? Sometimes. Yeah, yeah. Tell your dad and you. More likely they were to come in if mom and dad's name was given, right?

[9 : 27] That's because there's authority in that name. Sibling doesn't have authority over siblings, so they're not going to listen to each other. You're not the boss of me. That's going to be the response kind of a thing.

So there's a passage in Exodus. This is where Moses goes to Pharaoh. And notice what he says. He says, after Moses and Aaron came and said to Pharaoh, Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, Let the people go that they may celebrate a feast to me in the wilderness.

Notice what Moses doesn't say. I am Moses. And I'm saying, let the people go. He leans upon God's name to do so.

He wants to put forward God's name about all of this. And think about the name of God that he uses. He calls him the Lord, the God of Israel.

So you can see, okay, the God of Israel, that kind of identifies who he is, but he's telling him the Lord. That's Yahweh, right? That's Jehovah.

[10 : 31] And one of the things we've learned in Sunday school about the name Jehovah is that that means that he is the self-existent one. It means that he is the self-sufficient one.

It means that he is unchangeable and he needs nothing. He is the supreme, almighty God. And that's what Moses does is he leans upon God's name and says, God says, the Lord says, to let my people go.

Now, how do you think Pharaoh responded? I don't know him. That's exactly right. Who is the Lord that I shall obey his voice?

I do not know the Lord and besides, I will not let Israel go. He disrespects God's name here. He's disrespecting God's name. And in disrespecting God's name, he ends up disrespecting God's person.

And that's the point. When we disrespect God's name, we are disrespecting God. When we treat God's name as worthless, we are treating God as worthless.

[11 : 47] That's what this commandment means. We have to be careful how we treat God, how we treat his name, not just his name, but his name represents his person.

So it can be his name, but it can also just be his person. Now, here's what I want to do. I want to lay out for you kind of how this commandment is being kept, right?

If we're going to keep this commandment, we need to understand the negative and positive aspects. So we're going to walk through several ways that this commandment can be broken.

From these negatives, you should be able to figure out some positives. And the positive is almost always the same thing. Honor God's name, right? But let's just talk about a couple of things.

One of the big easy ways that everybody knows that this commandment is broken is what? That's right. Taking and using God's name as a curse word, right?

[12 : 43] As a matter of fact, that's my first one is swearing. So people will say GD, right? They will say God. And what they're saying, if you take what those words are, they're asking God to condemn something.

And if God condemns something, it means that God cast it underneath his wrath into hell. So when somebody says that, that's what they're saying. They're using God's name as a curse, right?

So we often say the word cuss word, which is really kind of derivative from curse word. And a curse, think about this, a curse from God is destruction upon you.

So when people say that, now they don't mean that because they're not even thinking about that. They're just using it because they're angry and they want to say something like this. And the question I would ask is this, well, would you ever use your mother's name like that?

Would you ever say your mother's name? Oh, Ann. Oh, my Ann. Would you say that? No, you wouldn't say that.

[13 : 53] That's my mother's name, by the way. And you ask people, just you ask an atheist somewhere and say, would you ever use your mother's name that way?

And they'll tell you no. And the reason is, why? Well, because I love my mother. I love my mother. Now, this is the primary way most of us have been taught and think about violating this commandment.

And this is a violation of that commandment. But it's just one of many ways that we violate this commandment. Another way is when we're careless with God's name.

If you're careless with God's name and you just sort of use God's name, but you're not really meaning to talk to God. You heard some of these people say, oh, my.

Or they'll put the initials OMG. OMG. The question is, are you talking to God? No, you're not talking to God. You didn't mean to talk to God.

[14 : 53] You didn't mean to go to him in prayer. Why are you using his name? It's careless. It's thoughtless. It's not trying to communicate with God. It's just saying something that just pops out.

Right? The Jews had this thing as they were copying scripture. They had what they would call the God pen. And when they would come to Yahweh's name, they would use that pen to write it and then put it aside and grab up another writing instrument and write the rest of it.

They had a respect for God's name. They weren't careless. God's name wasn't the little jacket to be tossed around. Right? You walk into a house. You've got your jacket on. It's hot.

You're ready to get it off. You just take it off and you throw it down. Maybe you might take care of it and put it in the closet if you're, you know, fastidious that way. But do we just throw God's name around?

Do we just say it when we don't really mean it? Are we using it with no purpose? Another way is to hate God's name. To hate God's name.

[15 : 53] Now I want you to imagine this scenario. You have just pulled through town faster than you were supposed to and Don pulls you over and he writes you a ticket because you're driving too fast.

And you look at Don holding this ticket and you go and just throw it on the ground. Now, how did you just treat Don?

Very disrespectful. Because there's no care for what's going on there if you were to do that. There's no, there's a hatred for the law.

There's a hatred for what he stands for in that moment. And that's what we're talking about here. When we treat God's name with a scorn or with mockery, we're violating this command as well.

That's what Pharaoh did, right? When Pharaoh was like, well, who's Lord? That disrespect of God's name, that scorning of God's name does that.

[16 : 54] There's a lot of people that make fun of God and the things of God. I can't tell you the number of musicians out there who've done videos in the last 10 years that have done things to mock the things of God.

I remember when I was a kid, how many of you know about the TV show MASH? You remember it came from a movie.

How many of you saw the movie? Don't admit it. So we were going to watch that movie. My dad was going to show us the movie and we had turned it on and we were not five minutes in.

And the main funny characters from the TV show were mocking Frank Burns and his religion. Now, there's probably reasons that they were mocking him.

But that mockery that they were making of God and of prayer and the solemn attitude towards God, they were mocking that. And my dad turned it off and says that is a violation of this third commandment.

[17 : 58] That's taking God's name in vain. We're not to mock the things of God. And yet, that's exactly what happens many times. Okay, now we're going to get to this next one.

And this is where it's going to start to kind of smack us around a little bit, okay? So let me just put it out there. A Christian's misbehavior or a Christian's sin is a violation of this command.

When we act in a way that brings dishonor to God's name, we're violating this command.

I mean, sometimes people are just out there and they just make fun of God and mock God on their own. But sometimes we live in such a way as to bring dishonor to his name. And I want to show you a couple of passages that get at this.

Proverbs 30 verse 8 and 9 says, Keep deception and lies far from me. Give me neither poverty nor riches. Okay? Feed me with the food that is my portion, that I may not be full and deny you and say who is the Lord, or that I may not be in want and steal and profane the name of my God.

[19 : 13] So you've got two things he wants to stay away from. He wants to stay away from poverty and he wants to stay away from riches. If he has riches, the temptation is to what?

To deny the Lord. And if he has poverty, the temptation is going to be to steal and then profane the name of God. And notice, because this is a proverb, it's written in parallel lines to talk about denying who the Lord is and profaning the Lord's name are held to be equal.

So if I profane his name, I am denying him. If I deny him, I'm profaning his name. They're synonymous in what they're pointing to. So if I can, as a Christian, do things that disobey God, that bring dishonor to his name.

Now, as a Christian, I can also bring glory to his name, right? Matthew 5, 14 through 16. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden, nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand.

And it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

[20 : 38] Just as our actions can bring dishonor to his name, our actions can bring glory to his name. We can act in ways that he wants us to act.

We can live in ways that he wants us to live. We can be obedient to him. And that brings honor and glory to his name. Now, let me just pause there and see if you have any questions about this one.

Hmm. This brings to kind of meddle in our business a little bit, right?

It starts to kind of get at us. Because here's what can happen. We can violate one of the other commandments, right? And let's just say that I get angry at one of you and I start, you know, yelling at you and saying all kinds of terrible things at you.

Not only have I broken the sixth commandment about murder, but now I've also brought shame to God's name because as a Christian doing this in public. You know, Michelle and I served in a church once.

[21 : 50] And it was during our college days. And the pastor and his wife of that church had brought dishonor to the Lord's name because they went to the local softball field where their girls were playing softball.

And because of their behavior and the way that they treated the umpires, they were kicked out of the ball field. Now, nobody ever said anything to them like, oh, that's wrong or what people talked about it because obviously we heard the story.

But that's a dishonor to God's name. Not only was it breaking this third commandment, but it was probably breaking the sixth commandment too. My point is this, is that it's very seldom that we break the third commandment by itself.

It typically comes as we break other commandments as well. And so they compound. Why didn't anybody say anything to them? That's all of our duties. Because Baptists live by the pragmatic mindset that says live and let live.

Rather than what the scripture says that if your brother is caught in sin, go restore him. Yet for years, Baptists have just not wanted to confront anybody in sin.

[23 : 00] And so they just haven't. We don't have to have a public assembly, but you can talk to somebody on the sly and say, hey. That's right. You're a poor example for your profession and good.

Right? Because he could have in that moment been like, you're right. And got up before the church and confessed and even gone to the ball field and said, you know, last time we did this and we are sorry.

I mean, that speaks volumes of the grace of God. But no, there wasn't that. Yeah. All right. Well, let's look at another one then. Complaining about what God is doing in our lives.

Complaining about what God is doing in our lives. So let's take this example. Numbers chapter 11. The rabble who were among them had greedy desires and also the sons of Israel wept again and said, who will give us meat to eat?

We remember the fish, which we used to eat free in Egypt. The cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, the garlic. But now our appetite is gone.

[24 : 08] There is nothing at all to look at except this manna. That is so ironic. So here's the lay of the land here.

They're set free from Egypt where they were in slavery for 400 years. They crossed the Red Sea. They made it to Mount Sinai.

At Sinai, we have most of the book of Exodus. We have the book of Leviticus. All of that's given there. And then they take off.

In Numbers 14, they go spy out the promised land. So chapter 11 is before the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness.

This is the first generation. They have only been just maybe six months out of slavery. And they're going like, I don't like what God is doing.

[25 : 05] He's giving us manna. We used to eat fish for free in Egypt. What audacity. Right?

To say, God, how dare you give me this in my life? I want what I want. When we're ungrateful for the things that God brings into our lives, it dishonors God when we complain about what he's doing in our lives.

It's like we're saying that God doesn't know what he's doing. It's like saying God has made a mistake. It's like saying God's being unfair. It's like saying God is unkind.

When we complain about what he's doing in our lives, we break this commandment. Okay. Now, I'm just going to be the first. I'm chief of sinners right here. Okay? That's a hard thing.

You asked my wife. She's always complaining to God that I'm complaining. Complaining about a complaint. There we go.

[26 : 10] That's an underhanded dig, isn't it? I'm just kidding. But like it's very easy for me to complain. Like I just, I have too many words, and sometimes those words just come out with complaints.

And so I don't want you to feel as though you're sitting there getting browbeat, and I'm up here going like, no, like I struggle with this. This is hard. But if we try to rationalize it and explain it away so it doesn't feel so bad, we've lost the glory of the gospel down the line.

We just need to feel the weight of it and just own it. Just own it. Because when we come to the gospel, we can see what Christ has done for us. Right? Right? I mean, it must have been pretty bad if they were ready to go back and eat it because they had it so good.

Yeah. Because the food was so much better. Right? Oh, man. They didn't like the manna. Can you just imagine miraculous food showing up every morning?

That makes you not want to do something for somebody. When they're going to complain anyway, it makes you say, well, what the heck? Right?

[27 : 23] You know, I don't need to do that for them because they're not appreciative of anything anyway. They're going to complain. Oh, my gosh. Eat bugs. Yeah. I was talking to him and got food one time, hot meals with keezers and coffee and stuff.

There was two people walking up the road. It was sleeting. I asked them if they wanted to ride. No, they were walking to somewhere. And I picked them up some dinners.

And you know what they said? Oh, I hope it doesn't have pickles on it. I hope there's not the ones on it. Did you bring sweetener and creamer? And I thought, come on. Yeah.

So it makes you not want to do when people... Can you imagine God... You know, if that's our take, and I feel that, can you imagine God's take when we are complaining and he...

You know, it's one thing. It's one thing for me to do something because sometimes I do things because of various reasons. But I'm human and I'm fallible and I might have made a mistake with this. You know, God never makes a mistake.

[28 : 28] He's always right. He's always good. And yet, look at the complaints that they do. And let me just say this so that we don't think too highly of ourselves.

I find it interesting because a lot of times we might look at the Israelites and say, well, I would not have done that had I been there. But the truth of the matter is, is we would have.

That's why Paul says in Philippians chapter 2, do everything without complaining and grumbling. Do everything without complaining and grumbling. Okay.

Well, let's look at another one. I think when we pray without faith, we pray without faith, we are violating this commandment. You can see in this passage here, this people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far away from me.

When we don't believe God in prayer, we're really not, we really don't have our heart set on who he is. Right? A lack of belief is a lack of distrust.

[29 : 25] I mean, a lack of belief is distrust of who God is, that he is good, that he's going to fulfill his promises, that he's going to do what he said. And so when we come to pray, when we honor him with our lips, but our hearts are far from him, then we're violating this command.

This even happens, let me just say it this way. This even happens as I'm teaching. If I'm teaching something that's untrue about God, I'm violating this commandment.

Even though I'm saying God's name, if I say something false about him, then I'm violating the third commandment, just the way we would if we prayed, but we don't believe who he is.

Praying without faith is a little bit like not seeing somebody for a long time. You're so excited to see them, and they walk in the house, and you greet them, and you say, well, tell me, how is life going?

And they begin to talk and tell you everything, and you pull out your phone, and you start texting somebody. You wouldn't do that because you long to see them.

[30 : 32] Yet, when we go to the Lord in prayer, we get so distracted by so many different things. And it's not being distracted in the whole that's the problem, but it's the fact that we stay there, and we don't try to wrangle ourselves in.

And there's another thing that's very parallel to this, and it's the idea of worshiping God without delight. Worshiping God without delight. The same passage from Matthew 15 is found in Mark 6, where he talks about, rightly, Isaiah prophesies, you hypocrites, as it is written, this people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far away from me.

But in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men. When we worship God, think about what your favorite hymn, your favorite worship song is.

Now, imagine that as you sang it, you were thinking about a grocery list.

It's hard to think about doing that with your favorite song. Now, if it's a song you don't know, or a song you don't like, it's a little bit easier to think about making a grocery list, because if you don't like it, it's really hard sometimes to connect in.

[31 : 50] But as we come to worship him in whatever we sing, we should have our minds focused upon him. We should, sometimes we have to wrestle our minds in worship because we don't know the song, we don't like the song, we can't sing the song.

Sometimes songs are placed in keys that are too high for me to sing. Because I'm down here in the basement with my singing, and so sometimes it's a little high for me. It would be easy for me to just kind of go like, well, I'll think about something else.

No, I can't. I can't think about something else. That's dishonoring of the Lord. Here's this thing that God's people are all singing together. So if I can't sing it, I will look at the words, and I will read the words and kind of hum a little bit, because I can't get the volume out and the melody out because it's too hard.

And so I'm trying to make my mind look at, think about, and relish who God is as I'm looking at those lyrics. The temptation for me is that I'm about to preach.

And so a lot of times there's a huge temptation to be thinking about what I'm going to say rather than what we're singing. And so what we want to do is when we come to worship God, keep our minds on what we're saying.

[33 : 10] What is it we're singing? And that's hard work. It's not, I mean, I would love for it to be a lot more simple, and there may be some things we could do to make it easier, but it's never going to be easy.

Because what we're fighting is our flesh that doesn't want to honor God. The sinful nature that still resides in us that hasn't been completely annihilated yet because we haven't gone on to heaven, it hates for us to think about God.

It hates for us to sing praise to God. It hates for us to listen to a sermon. That's why it's such hard work every Sunday to focus on the lyrics and to listen to a sermon because inside of us there's something fighting us.

So we have to be in prayer constantly, running to the Lord. As soon as we realize we're distracted, counting ceiling tiles, we go, Oh, Lord, I'm so sorry. Please forgive me. Help me focus.

Help me focus. Does anybody identify with that? It's when you preach about food. There it goes. Yeah.

[34 : 21] There's this scene in Pilgrim's Progress. And everybody in here knows what Pilgrim's Progress is. Yeah? Anybody not know, never heard of it?

It's a book. So John Bunyan was a Reformed Baptist pastor back in the 1600s or so. Pilgrim's Progress. And he was arrested because he was preaching without a license.

So while he was in prison, he wrote this allegory called Pilgrim's Progress of a person who gets saved. They live in the city of destruction, and they make it all the way to the celestial city.

And all along the way, it's the journeys that are there. And so you come across things like the slew of despondency, giant despair, which is actually a giant in the story. It's a really neat allegory.

And I usually recommend people to listen. You know what? We should do one Thursday for Bible study. We've got a Pilgrim's Progress as a short film.

[35 : 21] And we should show it because it will give you all kind of the basics of it. It's great. In the book, though, he, Christian, and another Christian named Hopeful are walking down the road.

And a gentleman by the name of Talkative comes over the wall and starts walking with them. And Talkative loves to talk about theology.

And he's talking about all of these big ideas about God and all these things. And when Hopeful begins to press him about, so what does that mean for your heart?

What should you believe? How should you act? Talkative says, I don't want to talk about that. Like, why are we talking about that? I thought you were somebody that really liked to talk about, you know, theology.

And he leaves them because he doesn't want to deal with his heart. He doesn't want that to affect his heart. He just wants to talk about the lofty things, get his, you know, end times chart all built, and just forget everything about his heart.

[36 : 20] And so it's another example of this kind of a thing. The last way that I'll put forward that this commandment is broken is using God as an excuse for our actions and decisions.

A big historical thing that I think falls into this would be the Crusades. The Crusades. The Crusades were this idea that we're going to honor God by taking back Jerusalem.

But that's built on a concept that God is worshipped in a place and by things. And none of that is true. Many times we can do the same thing because if we say God is sovereign over all things and nothing happens apart from God, we can then easily say, well, then it doesn't matter what I can do.

I can sin and do what I want to because God planned that. And it's like, no, that's a violation of this commandment when we use God as an excuse for our behavior. Okay, so that's sort of some ways and things to kind of think about in terms of how this commandment is kept, violated to help us sort of examine ourselves.

And that brings us to the application of this to think about this commandment as a light and a map and a mirror, right? As a light, it shines a light on the fact that God is highly concerned about his reputation.

[37 : 41] He's highly concerned about his name and about his person being honored and glorified. He loves his glory. He loves his honor.

He knows who he is. He knows that he's the best of beings. And so he should be loved and honored and adored and glorified and exalted and praised and worshipped.

And so that light helps us to understand what God thinks about himself, that his reputation is important. As a map, as a map, I think we've covered a lot of ground on the map, right?

By looking at all these ways we can violate this, as a map, it's all about how can a Christian live? How should a Christian live his life? So all of these things that I've told you about are ways that we violate this.

And so we just need to think, okay, I just need to do, I need to obey God and I need to do things that honor his name. And that's pretty much how we keep this commandment.

[38 : 42] But I want to put forward this idea as well that it's also important for us since God is after his reputation, we should be after his reputation and we should be concerned about our own reputations.

In Proverbs chapter 22 verse 1, a good name is to be more desired than great wealth. Favor is better than silver and gold. When we make sure that our reputation is a reputation that honors God, then we're also honoring the reputation of God.

When we say it doesn't matter what people think about me and what we mean by that is I'm going to sin and act the way I want to, no matter what anybody thinks, then that's a dishonor to God.

So we want to protect our own reputations by making sure that we are honoring God's reputation. Then the last thing is that of a mirror. Okay, so as a mirror, it helps us to see ourselves.

This law helps us to see ourselves. And we have often failed to keep this commandment. Again, I will just confess, I really feel like this is one of those commandments that I struggle with perhaps maybe the most.

[40 : 01] And because it seems sometimes like a small thing, and it's kind of wispy and it's a little difficult to find it tangible with some handles on that we can dig our teeth in with meat on this commandment, we can become, I think, a little flippant about our sin and go like, you know, I mean, it wasn't a big deal.

It's not like I touched the ark with my hand or anything, you know. But here's the problem. The problem is that when our lives are like a river, okay, not this river, but a river, okay.

Dare I say a real river? One that always has water in it, you know, that's always running. So the Christian life is like a river that's always running.

If you let it flow, it just keeps running. But if you build a dam on it, it backs up, right? And if it's not done right, like that's going to destroy everything.

It's going to destroy things downstream. It's going to destroy things here. When we live the Christian life, we should be always making sure that we take care of our sin. That we don't let sin pack up on us.

[41 : 12] We don't let sin back up on us. But we take care of it. And here's the thing. You either are doing something positive and moving forward and trying to add certain qualities to your life.

Or we're moving in a sinful direction. And it's interesting to me that Peter says in 2 Peter, he says that whoever lacks these qualities. And he's just talked about these qualities of self-discipline and faith and virtue and all these kinds of things.

He says anybody who lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he's blind, having forgotten he was cleansed from his former sins. When we let sin pack up on us and we're not doing the things we ought to be doing, we can get to the place, even as a Christian, that we forget that we were purchased by the blood of Christ.

I think that's where you have some Christians who became a Christian maybe when they were young. And as they get older, they walk away from what seems to be the faith.

Although they don't say, no, I deny all of that. But they're just like, yeah, I'll get back in church. I know I should. But I think sometimes it's because there's no positive qualities being built in their lives that they forgot that they were purchased by the blood of Christ.

[42 : 29] And what they need is they need to see that their sin is serious. And they need to confess that sin to break open that dam to have the river flowing again, right? And so as we look at this, don't take these commandments and just try to explain them away, but let every weight of these commands pile up on you so that you can then turn back to the Lord and say, Lord, please forgive me.

Because what is it that Christ has done? On the cross, when he paid for our sin, it was once for all.

And that's why Romans 8.1 says, there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

So as we said here today, you might be thinking to yourself, it's like, wow, I have violated this commandment. I had no idea. Well, just let it pile up and then realize it has already been paid for in the blood of Christ.

It's already been forgiven. It's already been washed away. And you are, you've been purchased by his blood and you are clean.

[43 : 44] But not only that, his death doesn't just forgive that. His death goes further. This is a part of the promises of the new covenant. It comes out of Ezekiel instead of Jeremiah.

And in Ezekiel, he says, moreover, I will give you a new heart and I will put a new spirit within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes. And you will be careful to observe my ordinances.

That's not a command. That's a promise. That's a promise that he's going to put his Holy Spirit in you to enable you to obey this command.

Whereas at one time you couldn't because you were not in Christ. But if you are in Christ, then you have his Holy Spirit. And if you have his Holy Spirit, you have the empowerment you need to obey this commandment rather than not.

[44 : 46] Because if you don't have the Holy Spirit, you can't help but break this commandment. And so in the cross of Christ, he purchased the promise to be able to pour out the Holy Spirit in our lives.

And so you feel the weight of all these things? Good. Now run to Christ. Accept the forgiveness that he's won for you. Live in the power of the Holy Spirit to keep from disobeying these commandments in the future.

And we give all glory to him. All glory to him. Let's pray and then I'll take some questions. Father, thank you for...