

MONTHLY BIBLE STUDY



TEN COMMANDMENTS #3 **Part 1**

Today's study is on Commandment #3 Exodus 20:7 (NIV) "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name."

Due to the proliferation of profanity and vulgarity in movies, TV, the media, and the population in general, the Holy Spirit has led me to go beyond taking the Lord's name in vain and discuss all nature of profanity and how the Bible addresses it.

The scope of this study makes it longer than normal. Consequently, your chapter may find it expedient to divide it into two monthly studies. Please give this topic more than just a cursory glance. May God speak to each of our hearts, convict us of any sinful and cavalier attitudes concerning our speech, and fill us with a Holy Spirit led determination to live in a manner pleasing to Him.

In this culture of relative morality, how do you identify "profanity"?

In a book written shortly before his death, TV celebrity Steve Allen railed against foul language and its inundation of today's airwaves. He said it was a breach of common "morality" and manners. "Vulgarians at the Gate: Trash TV and Raunch Radio – Raising the Standards of Popular Culture." Allen made that statement in 2001. He would be appalled to know it has continued to get exponentially worse with each passing year.

The Bible doesn't provide a prohibited vocabulary list, but it **does** contain guidelines that will assist any person in avoiding speech patterns that are displeasing to God.

Words become **profane** when sacred meanings are treated in trivial or obscene fashion. This could have many applications such as:

- Read Exodus 20:7; What do we see here? (Taking God's name in vain)
- Read Leviticus 19:12; What's the warning? (Falsely taking an oath in God's name)

Do you see the warning in these Scriptures against whimsically accentuating one's affirmations with expressions such as "by God." Could this warning also refer to crude expressions like, "Oh my God!" or "Jesus Christ!?"

Read Matthew 12:5 and Acts 24:6; Can you share what these Scriptures speak to you?

(Note: In these two Scriptures the word profane is translated from the Greek word "bebeloo" essentially meaning to take something highly revered and desecrating its sanctity by identifying it with what is common.)

In the Old Testament the Hebrews revered the name of God so highly they wouldn't even say His name; instead they would spell the Hebrew letters for YHWH.

Read Ephesians 5:4; These Scriptures prohibit "**filthy**" talking. Can you give some examples? (Note: Speech which involves telling obscene stories and coarse jokes).

Read 2 Peter 2:18; What does this Scripture say to you?

(Note: "Filthy" talking is any kind of speech that flouts moral standards. Prohibitions against similar forms of expression would include "lascivious" speech – expressions which are designed to conjure up unwholesome sexual images.)

Cursing and/or Cussing: "**cursing**" is to utter a malevolent imprecation upon someone. Wayne Jackson in "Profanity - A Biblical Assessment" writes:

"It finds a modern vent in such phrases as, 'You go to hell!' or 'Damn you!' It is important to note at this point that neither of these terms, 'hell' or 'damn,' is inherently evil. There is a proper context in which they are permissible. Jesus spoke of that sort of person who is 'a child of hell,' and the New Testament warns that those who believe not 'shall be damned.' It is the manner in which such terms are employed -- i.e. hatefully, vindictively, or in a pejorative fashion that makes the use of them wrong."

"**Cussing**" involves using derogatory, profane, slang, vulgar, nasty, and ugly terms for body parts or sexual acts or other people in an attempt to give emphasis or power or influence to speech.

Read James 3:9-12; Does this Scripture refer to cursing or cussing?

Read 2 Timothy 2:16; Does this Scripture refer to cursing or cussing?

END OF PART ONE