Title: Honor His Name – Commandment Three  
Text: Exodus 20:7  
Date: September 15, 2019 at FBCW

INTRO. One of the first and most important things a parent does is give his or her child a name. A name means something! A name tells/describes the individual’s identity. A name – for the rest of their life – will be associated with the child’s personhood and character. You know this…but simply put: a name is how we are known.

Ezekiel = God is strong → coming off one of the hardest seasons of our lives.  
Madie = an old family name → we just liked it!  
Abraham = like in the Bible → son born in our only physical move at that time.

The Bible speaks often about the importance of God’s sacred name.

Psalm 8:1, LORD, our Lord, how magnificent is your name throughout the earth!

Psalm 20:7, Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.

Psalm 29:2, Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name.

Proverbs 18:10, the name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous run to it and are safe.

Matthew 6:9, “O Lord, Hallowed be your name…”

Acts 4:12, For there is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved.

Romans 10:13, Whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Philippians 2:10, So at the name of Jesus every knee will bow – in heaven and on earth and under the earth – and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord...

What names are attributed to God in the Bible?

Genesis 1:1, In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
- God = Elohim → He is powerful God.

Genesis 14:10, Blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.
- God = El Elyon → He is God most high.

Genesis 15:2, But Abram said, “Lord God, what will You give me, seeing I go childless?”
- God = Adonai → He is Lord.
Genesis 22:14. *And Abraham called the name of the place, “The Lord will provide.”*
- God = Jehovah Jireh → He is God our Provider.

Exodus 15:26. *I will put none of the diseases on you...for I am the Lord who heals you.*
- God = Jehovah Rophe → He is God our Healer.

**Many other names in the Bible** –
- Jehovah Nissi → The Lord is my Banner.
- Jehovah Mekadesh → The Lord who sanctifies me.
- Jehovah Shalom → The Lord is my Peace.
- Jehovah Rohi → The Lord is my Shepherd.
- Jehovah Shammah → The Lord who is present.

**The dearest, best, and most precious songs of the Christian faith are founded upon the Name of the Lord:**

O praise the Name of the Lord our God
O praise His name, forevermore
For endless days we will sing Your praise
O Lord, O Lord, our God

My hope is built on nothing less, than Jesus blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus’ Name!

All hail the power of Jesus name! Let angels prostrate fall
Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown Him Lord of all

O for a thousand tongues to sing, Blessed be the name of the Lord
The glories of my God and King, Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be the name, Blessed be the name, blessed be the name of the Lord (2x)

You were the Word at the beginning
One with God the Lord Most High
Your hidden glory in creation
Now revealed in You our Christ

What a beautiful name it is (2x)
The name of Jesus Christ my King

**The Ancient Rabbis Knew the Power of His name.** Orthodox Jews would not even speak or write the name of God for fear of not addressing it completely correct. They were afraid to even pronounce the name of God in speech.
When the scribes were making copies of the Holy Scripture, when they came to the name of God, they would place their pen down, rise, and go bathe themselves, and put on different clothes.

Then they would come with a pen that had never been used and with a brand-new pen they would write down the holy name of God.

That’s what this name represents!

God’s name is completely connected to the holy, sacred nature of God’s character.

- Isaiah 6 – when the seraphim sang of the holiness of God, they would cover their face and their feet as they mentioned His name!

**LESSON.** What an awful thought that someone would drag the name of God down into the mud! … What a tragedy to take the holy, saving, healing name of Jesus and use it in any form but praise!

Moses surely knew the power of His name –

**First, Moses knew the power of God’s Name because of his childhood.** The Israelites had been multiplying as a people rather quickly. Their population was booming, and Pharaoh/Egypt grew concerned they could politically lose the upper hand.

**Pharaoh harshly intervened.**
- Kill all baby boys that are born.
- All boys age two and under, throw them into the Nile River.

**But four people were very courageous in the face of this Egyptian genocide.**
- One set of midwives – Shiphrah and Puah (Exodus 1:17; 1:21).
  - They feared the Lord God more than they feared Pharaoh.
- One set of parents – Amram and Jochebed (Exodus 2:2).
  - They saw that their baby boy was beautiful.

At three months of age, Jochebed put Moses in a basket and floated him among the reeds of the Nile River.
- Just imagine – she put her baby on the water!
- Imagine her fear…her vulnerability…her prayer…
- “He’s all yours now, Lord God…”

Moses’ sister (Miriam) kept a close watch as she meandered near the riverbank.

**Exodus 2:5 tells us → Pharaoh’s own daughter goes to the Nile to bathe.**
- The young princess sees the basket.
- *What could be in it?* She sends a slave-girl to retrieve the basket.
- To her astonishment, a baby boy is in the basket. He’s beautiful. He’s crying.
- The princess feels sorry for the boy…it’s a Hebrew boy.
Miriam thinks fast – Excuse me mam, “Should I get a Hebrew woman to nurse him for you?”

The Narrator then tells us: Moses grows older.
• Young Moses is brought back to the Egyptian palace.
• He becomes the son of the princess.
• She named him “Moses” (for I drew him out of the water) (Exodus 2:10).

What a story! Only God could write this story of a boy’s life!
• Moses grows up with the access and education and privilege of the best of Egypt.

One day on a walk among his native Israelites, he sees an Egyptian beating a Hebrew.
• It stirs Moses to anger.
• Moses kills the Egyptian, and then quickly buries him in the sand.
• Exodus 2:14. Moses is fearful, he knows word of his crime will leak out.

Moses flees to the desert of Midian.
• There Moses meets a girl and marries her.
• He settles in the wilderness…starts a family.
• Lives as a full-time Shepherd, tending his father in law’s flocks.

Second, Moses knew God’s name because of his calling. One day when Moses is out tending his flock – something unusual occurs. He’s on the far side of the wilderness…the middle of nowhere.
• Interestingly, Exodus 3:1 says Moses is with his flock near Mount Horeb (Sinai). Wow at the symbolism here!

Moses notices a bush that appears to be on fire. It’s flaming. It’s burning. But it’s not consumed (Exodus 3:2).
• The bush begins to speak…it calls Moses by name!
• Moses replies, “Here I am.”
• Moses instantly removes his sandals and hides his face.

The voice from the bush is the Lord God of heaven – “I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!” God also says:
• I know my people are in misery/suffering (3:7-8).
• I’ve heard their cries.
• I’ll rescue them from Egypt.
• I’ll resettle them in Canaan, a land I promise you – it flows with milk/honey.
• And Moses, I am sending you as my messenger, to lead my people out of Egypt!

Moses replies in 3:11 –
• Who am I to go to Pharaoh?
• Who am I to lead these people out of Egypt?
God speaks again to Moses in 3:12 –

- Moses, be assured that I will be with you.
- ****This will be the sign that it will happen: when you bring them out of Egypt, you’ll get to this very mountain, and you and the whole nation will worship together right here at this mountain…

Moses then asks –

- What if they ask me what the name of my God is?
- In other words – on what authority will I do this? What should I say?

God very clearly answers Moses –

- You tell them, I – the Lord God – am the great I AM.
- I AM the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- The I AM is the One who sends you.
- This is me: I AM the great I AM.
- And you remember me this way – the great I AM – in every generation.

FACT. In other words, God wanted Moses to care less about the people’s response…and more about his own personal understanding of who God is and then obey!

- **Wrong questions**: what about the people? What about the government? What will others think?
- **Right questions**: Who is God? What does he want? How quickly am I obeying?

Third, Moses knew God’s name because of how God intervened when he was fearful and at his lowest point (Exodus 4-6). Though God is who He is – the great I AM – Moses, like us, still struggled at times with doubt.

Moses, “What if they don’t believe me? What if they don’t respond to me?” (4:1).

God then gives Moses three signs to demonstrate his divine authority (4:2).

- Throw your staff on the ground – it becomes a snake.
- Put your hand inside your coat – it becomes leprous.
- Take a cup of water from the Nile and throw it on the ground – it becomes blood.

Moses has one more excuse: but God, I’m not eloquent. I can’t speak well!

God begins to get a little frustrated. But God agrees to send Moses’ brother (Aaron) along to help (4:14).

LATER – what a reunion Moses & Aaron must have had when they reconnected after so many years. Just imagine their nostalgia and stories.

- Moses catches Aaron up on all the facts (and Aaron agrees).
- They make their plans to assemble the Israelite elders and confront Pharaoh.
In Exodus 5, we see Moses & Aaron confronting Pharaoh --- but it does NOT go well.

**Pharaoh announces to Moses** –
- Who is the Lord?
- I don’t know the Lord!
- I’m not letting the people go.

**Pharaoh then chooses to further oppress Israel** –
- Demands the Hebrews increase their work production.
- They work more hours.
- They produce their own straw for the bricks.
- When they fall behind, they are beaten mercilessly.

**Exodus 5:21.** The Israelites are exasperated, discouraged, and doubting.

**Exodus 5:22.** Moses pours himself out before the Lord.
- Lord, this is trouble!
- Lord, this is painful!
- Why’d you send me to do this job?

**Exodus 5:23.** (Moses) Ever since I announced our intentions in your name, it’s been trouble!
- You’ve not rescued us at all, Lord.

**Exodus 6:1-6.** God speaks to Moses –
- You will soon see what I will do!
- Because of my strength Pharaoh will soon let the people go.

**Exodus 6:2.** God reminds Moses again (a second time) –
- I am the LORD!
- I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as God Almighty…but I wasn’t known to them by my name, “The Lord”
- But you, Moses, step forward and announce to everyone, “I am the LORD, and I’m going to bring the people out of Egypt…”

**LESSON.** God is NOT revealing a new name to Israel. But God is now making His name more fully known. To a greater degree, God pulls back the curtain and lets the people know WHO he is…and WHAT is contained in His name.

**I love Peter Enns paraphrase of this text:**
- To Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob I appeared, but only partially in the capacity of El Shaddai.
- But who I am more fully – which is what my name Yahweh captures – I didn’t let them know.
- This name, Yahweh, is made first only now, to you, the Exodus generation, who will witness my mighty, saving power!
God’s character now as a SAVING GOD is about to be revealed!

God as Yahweh (the LORD) → this is who I am…this is what I’m going to do…this is who I’ve been…this is what I’ll be forever.

Fourth, Moses knew God’s name because of how God kept His word (Exodus 19-20). We are now brought within the story of Exodus to the full revelation of God’s plan!

- Moses was an Israelite raised in Egypt.
- Moses encountered a burning bush at Mount Sinai.
- Moses and Aaron heard from God at Mount Sinai.
- And now, all the people are gathered around Mount Sinai…and God is doing in their midst what He told Moses he would do years before!

And amidst the smoke, the fire, the thunder from heaven, and the sounds of the heavenly trumpets – what does God say?

1. Have no other gods before Me.
2. Don’t make idols…

But now Commandment 3 – “Do not misuse My Name…” – we must Honor His Name!

Do not take/misuse = word means, do not lift…do not carry…do not cast…do not burn. (Picture of someone lifting/taking something that does not belong to them for their own purpose.)

- God’s name is His name, not your name.
- Don’t take His name for your own agenda…Your name should be for His agenda!

Do not take His name in vain = to rush over, to deconstruct, to waste, to be useless, to be flippant.

- Don’t hijack His name and use it for your own agenda.
- Don’t speak of it casually as if Holy God is your chummy buddy.
- Don’t use God’s name in anger or in harsh moments.
- Don’t use it wastefully.
- Don’t use it so casually that you forget who you’re talking about.
- Don’t carry His name as if you personally are doing Him favors.
- Don’t throw His name around like it’s a ball for bouncing.
- Don’t air your frustrations out on His name with disrespect or contempt.

Application
First, let’s be honest about our failure to worship God’s name. Let’s repent of all misuse of His name.

- How worthy/holy is the name of God? (Heaven/earth adore Him)
- How thoughtless is so much of what proceeds from my mouth!

FACT. Before the Ten Commandments address murder, adultery, stealing, it addresses speech!

*Matt 12:36.* On the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak.

May my words 1) Exalt Christ 2) Encourage God’s people 3) Testimony to the lost – or maybe I should NEVER speak them!

Second, let’s be careful when we claim to speak for God or about God. Let’s not use God’s name to advance our own agenda.

- Be careful – *God told me to do this*... *God wants us to do that*... *God led me to tell you*...
- Let’s be slow to claim divine authority over our human plans.

Good way to check – test it against 1) The Word and 2) Fear of the Lord and 3) Godly friends.

What about our praying? *Matt 6:5, 7.* When you pray, don’t be like the hypocrites…and don’t babble like the Gentiles...

- Showy prayers?
- Sloppy prayers?
- Repetitive prayers? (like at mealtime)

Not empty phrases…not filler – but a sincere heart for God!

What about our singing? Do we mean it when we sing songs for Jesus?

Third, let’s be careful not to be trite, or silly, or unconcerned with God’s name. At the risk of you thinking I’m a legalist, just consider this: my parents were always super careful about this, and I’m grateful for their caution:

- Gosh…Golly…Jeez…
- How quickly/habitually/casually do you rattle off: “Oh my God!” or OMG?
  - You either haven’t been taught.
  - You don’t know how holy God is.
  - Or worse, you do know, but you don’t care.

This is also related – how profane, crude, and inappropriate is much of our language?

Question: oh preacher, just relax – I only cuss a little bit.

- What if I told you, I only lie, steal, kill, or commit adultery a little bit?
- Is a little bit of sin okay? Where do you draw the line?
How terrible for someone to use the name of God to condemn someone to hell or destruction.

- Did you know damn is an abbreviation for damnation?
- Is damnation funny? Is hell funny? To say, “Go to hell!” – is that really what you desire?

We have no conception whatsoever to speak of being separated from God…to speak of permanent, eternal torment in such a heartless, casual way. Tragic!

How inhumane, and non-Christlike, for one human being to tell another human being to go to a terrible place like hell.

- Or to laugh at jokes/film that make light of the words.
- Sad! We’ve lost our respect for His name!

**Ephesians 4:29.** No foul language should come from your mouth, but only what is good for building up someone in need, so that it gives grace to those who hear.

**Colossians 4:6.** Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer another person.

To use profanity…to be crude (any of these are bad!) →

We are very ignorant…We lack self-control…Mean as a snake…No respect for God

**Finally, a simple summary of the Third Commandment might be Colossians 3:16-17.** Let the word of Christ dwell richly within you...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.

- This is a positive, wonderful command that is intended for all of us!
- Obey Commandment Three by living as a Christian!
- Let’s Honor our Father’s Name...let’s Honor our Family’s Name!

**CONCL.** Why should I honor His name? Because of how the Bible ends!

**Revelation 19:13, 16.** He wore a robe dipped in blood, and his name is called the word of God...And he has a name written on his robe and on his thigh: King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Hallelujah, holy, holy
God almighty, the great I AM
Who is worthy, none beside thee
God almighty, the great I AM…The great I AM

The mountains shake before you the demons run in fear
At the mention of your name, king of majesty
There is no power in hell
Or any who can stand
Before the power and the presence of the great I AM