

The Second Commandment

A Person's Name

- Your name more than just title you're given when born; than sequence of letters on birth cert; than verbal designation to differentiate you from everyone else. Your name is statement, summary of who you are and what you're like. Carries with it your entire reputation, everything you've done, stand for and believe in. When people hear your name, immediately think of your character and personality, because your name like your banner you hold up to world. When people see that banner, hear your name, they associate everything they know about you with that name.
- I.e., my name, KL. Not especially common. When people in synod hear it, think: only pastor in WELS named Kirk (recently changed). When people at StJ hear, think: my pastor, loves, cares about, feeds God's Word and sacrament. When in school, classmates, thought: pretty nice guy, plays guitar, from MI. When little kid, people at church: oldest son of K&J; got name Kirk, dad liked ST; yeah, brother named Scott (true; know why funny?). Anyway, my name Kirk; when people know me, they associate what they know about me with that name.
- True for everyone's name. Take my son Sammy. Hear that name, think: blonde, curly-top kid, 1st grade, seen him grow up here last 6 yrs. Or take your name. Hear, think: where works, what likes, what kind of personality, what done for me in past. Maybe they remember good; maybe bad. Surely hope good. When people know you, they associate everything they know about you with your name.

God's Name

- That's true for God, too. God's name stands for who God is and what he's done. That's why God's 2nd Com is **vs. 7**. God has many names/titles (Messiah, Christ, Trinity, Jesus, HS, Sovereign Lord, Lord of Hosts, simply God). But as heard in First Lesson, name God revealed to people when gave 10 Coms, covenant name of God that he wants people to call him and know him as: the LORD. That's God's name – the LORD. More than just sequence of 4 letters, then title to distinguish him from other gods (Baal, Zeus). Name LORD is statement, summary of who God is, what he's done, what will do, everything about him, everything God wants people to know about him. God's name is his reputation, just like your name is your reputation. We associate who God is with his name.
- In First Lesson, we have what's sometimes called God's sermon on his own name: **Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin" (Ex 34:5-7)**. That's what God wants us to know about him: love, faithfulness, forgiveness. When spoke words, no one had met Jesus yet. But you have; seen God's love, faithfulness, forgiveness in action, personified in God's Son Jesus Christ. Love: healed diseases, fed bodies, picked up little children, preached kingdom of God. Faithfulness: faithfully obeyed God, never sinned, ever, so could be Savior, not just sinner. Forgiveness: (gets at heart of who God is), God sent Jesus to die on cross, to cancel our guilt and forgive us. So when Jesus died, LORD said, "You are no longer guilty; forgiven and can go to heaven!" And by faith in Christ, you know someday you will go to heaven. All that truth packed into God's name: **"The LORD...faithfulness."** That's God's name!
- More to that name: **"Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation" (Ex 34:7)**. That doesn't mean if grandpa unbeliever, you'll go to hell on technicality. Does mean God is just God, who's serious about law, does punish unbelief, hates it when Christians sin against him and break his coms.

Misusing God's Name

- Com talking about today is 2nd, **vs. 7**. KJV: **"Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain."** What mean to misuse or take in vain? Way describe in Cat: "uselessly, carelessly, for an evil

purpose.” Start with u&c (same). I want to be very clear on what this com teaches; so, use bold language, normally never use, just so that we all understand exactly what God is saying here.

- We break this 2nd com when use names like God, Jesus, Lord, Christ in context nothing to do with prayer, praise, worship, or teaching. Way too often hear people using God’s name u&c: “God, hot out. Lord, funny. JC, scared me.” Variation: “lordy.” Abbreviation in texting, FB: “OMG.” Or throw God’s name out in casual conversation: “God, Lord, Jesus.” Understand: c&u, in vain. Where’s the reverence for **“The LORD, the LORD...love and faithfulness.”** Do we not realize: when God’s name becomes part of informal vocabulary (“O my God!”), that’s mocking God! If that’s what you want to do – say “Jesus, where’s air conditioning?” – don’t fool self into thinking it’s okay. **Vs. 7b.**
- That’s u&c. For evil purpose: when we – Luther’s Expl. Again, bold language to teach this com. We sin when curse, “God dammit.” Realize what saying? Actually asking God to condemn whatever you’re mad at (hammer) to eternity in hell. What saying when say, “God dammit,” or throw word “damn” around like common adjective (car, dog). Evil purpose. Or swear, “I swear to God...As God is my witness...” That swearing is evil! Some appropriate times to take an oath: inauguration, court, wedding. But when swear about stupid, trivial things (“Swear come to party; swear bring chip dip”), again, taking God’s name in vain, misusing it in evil way. Always tell Cat students, unless taking serious oath or talking about Bible’s teaching on heaven/hell, really no reason to use words “swear, damn.”
- Could talk lying, deceiving in God’s name: not just careless oath but perjury with God’s name attached. Could also talk witchcraft, superstition (tarot cards, Ouija Boards, horoscopes, black magic – anything that seeks information from source other than God – basically calling on devil’s name instead of God’s name). All this activity, and all times use God’s name “uselessly, carelessly, for an evil purpose” (Jesus, hot out; God dammit; swear to God) – all breaks 2nd Com, misuses, takes God’s name in vain.

Proper Use of God’s Name

- The reason big deal to God, not because personality complex where doesn’t like people talking about him. Reason misusing name big deal to God, because, as said in beginning, God’s name stands for something; reputation; statement, summary of who he is and what he’s done. What God has done is saved all humanity from eternity in hell, which we deserve, but by grace sent Jesus to die and cross and rise from dead so we could go to heaven. That’s what God has done; wants to be known for. Wants people to know him as their Savior God. And if, by our vocabulary, only thing people know God for is use name when mad, hot out, car won’t start, then people never really get to know who God really is.
- Brings us to how we should use God’s name. Luther’s Exp. Use God’s name properly when worship and pray. What he wants: what doing here in church; in family devotions; in personal prayers – call upon God’s name. Not only; also, properly use God’s name when we tell others about him. When we proclaim God’s name and show people God’s name means their salvation, that’s never in vain! In fact, probably no higher way of honoring, revering name of Lord than two things mentioned: worshiping his name (personal, in heart) and proclaiming his name (public, teaching people real significance of what name of Jesus Christ means for them.)

Second Commandment – All About Respect

- 2nd Com: **vs. 7.** All about respect. If you respect God, then respect the way you talk about him. Service folder, p. 6, “Additional Scriptures.” Take bulletin home; read, ponder those verses, especially James: lot to say about speech. **“Same mouth...not be.” “All you need to say...”** We all have lot of room to improve in how we handle God’s name. But if we respect God for saving us, then let’s respect his name by using it reverently and by carrying it to world, so that others know what kind of God the LORD really is.

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.”