Dear Reader,

I am new to producing reading sermons. So, if you have any suggestions as to how I might improve my format or what I include – please email me at cdanielwilson@gmail.com. **I will warn you, that I do not use short sentences**. I will endeavor to work on this over time, but I don’t naturally write that way. However, you can easily break most of my longer sentences into 2 or 3 smaller ones where I have “…” or “–“ or commas. If you do the work on making it into smaller sentences – feel free to email it to me, and I am happy to share your work with others. I do have some of these available which people have sent me. I will eventually make them available as part of the normal manuscripts.

I have left my sermon manuscript formatted the way I normally write and read my sermons. They are colourful and written in conversational English. If you are a grammar nazi – then you will be frustrated with my punctuation and phrasing. However, once you read it out loud, you will normally be able to tell what I meant to say. SERIOUSLY, READ IT OUTLOUD. You will also see that I use a good bit of bold, italics, underlining and different colours to signal what are the most important things to say, and also to make it easier for my eye to pick up my place in the middle of paragraphs. I would recommend that you keep as many of those things as possible to help you keep your place. However, you will probably want to increase the spacing between lines. I highly encourage you to commit as much of the introduction or children’s illustrations to memory as you can, so that these can be delivered to the congregation with maximum eye contact.

**Where possible, I highly recommend that you listen to the sermon as I preached it at either the Nelson website or the website of North Shore.** I recommend that because that will also help hear the places where I added or skipped over material in the manuscript, and the places where I clarified my meaning. I have edited bits and pieces which I thought most important, but I have not sought to include all the additional material that comes to me while in the pulpit. I would practically have to use a transcription service for that. However, I hope and pray that this sermon will be a blessing to you and to your congregation. To God be the Glory!

Blessings in our Lord, Pastor Daniel Wilson

**My Suggestions for the Order of Service**

Song before the service: #509 **Heidelberg #44 Law #5**

Bro & Sis: ***Our only Hope is found in the Lord our God, the Creator & Sustainer of all Things & Savior of those who trust in Him!*** Grace be yours in abundance, with Mercy and Peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ***Amen.***

We will sing: Song. **#191 “How great thou art”**

***We will profess our faith using Heidelberg Catechism Lord’s Day #1*** *pg. 10 Please be seated*

***NOW FLIP OVER TO PAGE 839-840 as we Read Heidelberg Lord’s Day 36-37***

We come now to our time of Congregational Prayer.

**Song of remembrance for the persecuted church: 119:153-160: Look on my suffering…**

**God has given us such a great salvation - so** let us respond to His grace, by generously giving to support God’s kingdom work through His tithes and our additional Free-will offerings! ***( Deacons)***

*Let’s cont. to worship as we* **Sing #477 "O Master, Let me walk with Thee"**

***Sermon Text:* Ex. 20:1-7 *Sermon Title: Hell or Heaven through a Name!***

***Let us now sing a* song of Response*–*#479 “Fill thou My Life”**

***May God the Father*** *bless you & keep you,* ***May God the Son*** *turn His face toward you & be gracious to you,* ***May the Holy Spirit*** *lift up his countenance upon you & give you peace!* ***Amen***

***Doxology*: Psalm #146 *vs.4***

# Evening Sermon: “Hell or Heaven thru a Name!”

Text: Exodus 20:1-7 Reading: LD36-37

**Introduction:** Children, Do you ever see your dad working on things around the house? I am sure you have all seen him with a screwdriver or hammer fixing something… And whenever you work with tools there is a risk that you will get hurt, like pinching your hand or hitting a finger with the hammer – and those sorts of things happen so suddenly that we are tempted to say things that express our pain and frustration… And the things we might say in those times are most often not very nice…

What would you think if you were watching your dad hammer a nail in and you weren’t doing anything wrong or distracting him, and suddenly he hit his finger, and yelled out your name! OH Vincent! Or... Annalisa! … what would you think? You might say, “Why are you yelling at me… I didn’t do anything wrong!” *You would most likely be quite upset that your dad had taken his pain out on you!*

***And I believe that illustrates a part*** of the insult and pain we cause God when we take His name in vain… Because we are the ones who hit our fingers with the hammer and yet we are tempted to curse God OR His providential plan! Even though the majority of the time, we are not consciously aware of doing either!

(**Review**) Thus far in our series we have seen that God forbids worshipping/serving/trusting anyone or anything in His place – **in the First** commandment we are called to Worship only the True God of the Bible. *Over the last 2 weeks*, we have seen that God restricts **HOW** we worship and view Him… He forbids us from worshipping Him as we see fit, and commands us to follow only His instructions in His Word – Because He is Jealous, Just and Merciful!

This week we come to the 3rd commandment… You know, I personally used to think that this commandment was one that wouldn’t bother very many of us in the church. I thought that sermons on this topic would be more relaxing, where our focus is more “out there” than looking at our own hearts! Perhaps you have thought the same?! But NO! When you look deeper, you see that this is a powerful commandment which is far more reaching than I realized. It actually affects **ALL** of life!

***Here in the 3rd commandment, we learn that:***

***Thesis: The name of the LORD your God must not be Misused, for God defends His Holy Name.***

*We will examine this commandment under 3 headings:*

1. **God’s Name must be Honoured**
2. **God’s Name must not be Misused**
3. **God Defends His Name**

*We begin with our first point:*

# God’s Name Must be Honoured (REPEAT)

 ***Really, the first question we should answer is:***

* 1. **WHY?! Why must God’s Name be Honoured?**

It all comes back to How God reveals Himself to mankind. **The Children’s catechism makes it clear: What is God?** *God is a Spirit and does not have a body like men*. From the Garden of Eden to the birth of Christ, God didn’t reveal Himself as a bodily person **– He spoke to men, and revealed His name**. From the very beginning of the Bible, when people came to worship God, we are told they “Called on the Name of Jehovah – the Name of the Lord”. God’s name was the focal point of worship, it was the closest that men could come to knowing God. He had no form. He wasn’t a creature to look at, **He is an Invisible Spirit.** When Moses wanted to see God, God told Him this: *I will make all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence*… And we read on to learn that God showed Moses the “back” of His glory and He declared His Name and Character. The most powerful, Awe-inspiring thing that Moses experienced at that moment, was to hear God Himself, proclaim HIS NAME! This is what He said: “The LORD (YHWH), The LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression & sin, yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children & on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.” ***What power!*** The Great “I AM” The Magnificent self-existent Creator of Heaven and Earth spoke His Awesome name before Moses!

We see a taste of that power in the Garden of Gethsemane in John 18… There Jesus asked the soldiers and officers who came to arrest Him, Who is it you want? – They replied, Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus than said, **“I am”** and all those men drew back and fell to the ground. When Jesus said those words – He was revealing His name as God and it had a powerful impact on all who stood before Him – it was like those words produced a sonic boom, a shockwave which blew them to the ground. ***The NAME of God holds incredible power.***

***In ancient cultures names held HUGE value… I***t was said that if you knew the true name of a “god” that you could get Him to do what you wanted. If you knew a man’s name then you could do him harm or good – If you destroyed a man’s name through mockery or lies, then you destroyed the man! Destroying or mocking a person’s name is an attack on the person themselves.

*I Believe that ULTIMATELY… All such ideas of the importance of names come back to this Biblical emphasis on the Name of the Lord God.* We even practice this emphasis every SUNDAY! Have you never noticed that every week we say our Help is in the NAME of the Lord, the maker of Heaven and Earth! If God has revealed Himself in this way, and there is such power in God’s Name – WE MUST HONOUR GOD’S NAME AS WE WOULD HONOUR GOD HIMSELF!

* 1. **BUT: HOW!? How are we to Honour God’s name**

***There are 3 ways that God’s name must be Honoured/Respected, which are clearly seen in Q/A #99:***

 **By What we think, By How we speak, and By what we do *(REPEAT)***

I will expand on the negative side of these categories under the second point, but allow me to summarize:

When you think of God: You must be respectful /grateful. You can’t think ill of Him because something didn’t go your way. God’s plan is perfect and we need to honour Him in ALL circumstances – Proverbs 19:3 is really helpful: “*A Man’s OWN folly ruins his life, yet his heart rages against the Lord.*” Your frustration with life comes from your own folly… from how you live and how you view life! But, God deserves your honour/worship.

*we will expand on this in a moment* **BUT,** **When you speak** (in all of life, not just religious speech) **you must speak reverently – as Jesus taught**:, “*Let your yes be yes, and your no No; ANYTHING beyond this comes from the evil one*!” Even Further – When you speak: Speak the Truth in Love, for this reflects the Love/holiness of the Lord!

Indeed, you must live in a way that brings honour to God’s name! As Jesus said: *let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven.* What you do in life, either honours or blasphemes God’s Holy Name! ***Hypocrites/gross sinners in the church make pagans curse God!***

*Now those principles bring us to our Second point:*

# God’s Name Must Not be Misused (REPEAT)

* 1. **How is God’s name misused? *The Lord’s Day particularly speaks of oaths, because that was a big issue in that day – it is less so today – and so we won’t dig into that as much.***

The commandment literally says, you shall not use God’s name in vain – but what does that mean? The obvious meaning is that you shouldn’t curse God. You shouldn’t swear or blaspheme God’s name… Which means when you hit your hand with a hammer, you don’t ask God to damn/condemn something, and you don’t suddenly say the name of Jesus Christ. Perhaps more prevalent among the women, is the tendency to say “O my God” when something bad happens. In some situations, that phrase is the beginning of a genuine reaction of prayer (if so, I and the Bible do not condemn you). But if you are not praying or worshipping, then to say, “O My God” or OMG is to take God’s name lightly/vainly. It has become an interjection like Wow! Or Whoa! – God’s Holy Name deserves far more respect than such meaningless words!

 ***You and I MUST NOT TAKE GOD’S NAME LIGHTLY…***

NOR, should we allow others to do so…

*In the 6th commandment, we are forbidden to murder.* We all easily understand that not only are we not to murder, but we are not to sit idly by while someone else murders! That commandment promotes life, and we get that we should both NOT do it, and Prevent others from doing it!

In much the same way, this commandment promotes the Honor of God’s Holy Name. THEREFORE, we cannot sit idly by while others profane God’s name. As I just mentioned, we can dishonor God’s name by what we think, say and do. You can’t necessarily rebuke someone for the way they think about God, unless they tell you – at which point, you have an obligation to correct them according to God’s Word (the Bible). And if a brother or sister in Christ dishonors God’s name in their speech or in their actions, you MUST loving confront and rebuke them! For to refuse to do so is to condone their blasphemy! *The same is true of the blasphemous or hypocritical actions of a Christian.*

***At this point, you might want to say: Alright, I understand my duty to fellow Christians, but How do I speak to a non-Christian?*** *If a friend/co-worker is saying*, JC or GD or cursing up a storm using God’s name – You have an obligation to say something, But **WHAT!?** What you say depends on how well you know them… **If they are a friend**, simply ask, Please don’t say that, you are mocking God and that is offensive to Him and to me… I had several friends in university who stopped taking God’s name in vain around me simply because I asked. **If that request doesn’t help:** you can follow that up later when they do it again: Excuse Me! Please stop cursing God’s name, *I would rather you use my name for a curse word than God’s! Next time use my name.. Just say, “Daniel Wilson” and while they might laugh, I think they might begin to get the point…*  and you will be witnessing by showing your love For God’s name*)*

***NOW:***If the person is an acquaintance/stranger, you could do what Ray Comfort has done and ask: “Excuse me is this a religious meeting? You keep saying God’s name, Are you praying…” It’s somewhat mocking, but most of the time people will chuckle. Perhaps a more serious approach would be to say– “Wow, you’ve got guts… Why? Because you curse like that, God says He won’t let anyone get away with abusing His name and you just don’t seem to care… You must be very brave!” I will warn you, SUCH comments can be offensive, but they can also open the door to explain who God is, What He requires, and Why we need a Savior! ***When you take sin seriously (****not in a judgmental condemning hypocritical way – “you sinner”****) but you take sin seriously by being offended by others’ sin against God – then that is a witness! And that is important Because God takes sin seriously, especially this one…***

*And that brings us to our Third point:*

# God Defends His Name (REPEAT)

* 1. **This is a serious sin!**

Consider that last phrase of this commandment: *the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.*

***What does that mean?*** It means that if you abuse/misuse God’s name, You will be guilty and you will not be excused from your guilt. The Scriptures talk about God overlooking sin, or dismissing sin… and yet God is explicitly saying that this is one that He takes more seriously! (HC #101) In OT Israel, this offence carried the death penalty! The Scriptures tell us of a young man who took God’s name in vain & the whole nation was called out to stone him! ***This is a massive sin!***

 And perhaps you are thinking, *Well, I never say such things, so I am ok…* But as I mentioned before, this commandment includes your actions. If you act in such a way that you betray the Lord, or you are a hypocrite – you bring dishonor on the name of Christ. A Christian who acts like a pagan is guilty of breaking the 3rd commandment! Just think about King David: when he sinned with Basheba – God rebuked him for his sin, and do you know why?! **Because pagans had mocked and blasphemed God as a result of David’s sin, so, God punished him by killing his illegitimate son!!** Even your sin which causes others to blaspheme/mock God leads to serious consequences…

 ***THINK of it in another way…*** In many eastern countries they protest by taking a straw man and putting their enemies’ name or picture on it… they then beat it and burn it – we call that burning in effigy… When they burn a figure labeled as some American or British figure – they are essentially saying that they would kill him/her if they could. **When you misuse God’s name,** you are essentially burning Him in effigy. And when people mock the name of Jesus Christ and make it as filthy as a four-letter word, they are saying that they would like to see God dead! **And God takes that offense seriously! If your hypocrisy leads people to mock/curse God, then you are guilty!**

* 1. **Perhaps you want to ask: Have we *all* broken this commandment…? YES!**

**NOW:** Perhaps you will respond by thinking, as I did before… that you are innocent of breaking this command:

***But I ask you simply:* Have you** ever done something hypocritical as a Christian? Then you potentially blasphemed God’s name or led others to do so!! **Have you** ever thought ill of God when something went “wrong” and belittled Him in your mind? Then you have broken this commandment!

Or perhaps even more pervasive: **Have you** ever cursed using a silly replacement curse word? The Popular one when I was a kid was Gosh-Darn it… instead of God Damn it! There are tons of euphemisms that stand in the place for the name of God. Saying Jiminy Cricket isn’t significantly different from saying Jesus Christ. Now, perhaps you think that there is a big difference between the two things – but not as much as you think … The Puritans called them “minced oaths” although they were just as bad even though chopped fine. Just think about what you are doing when you say such things… You are bursting out in emotion in an angry or exasperated way = Against whom is that outburst directed? In the local area, it might be yourself or another person or a frustrating situation… but ultimately all such explosions are outbursts against GOD! The sentiment of getting angry when something small goes wrong is the foundation of blasphemy – for you are not living a life in submission to God’s plan and will. You are fighting against it in anger! ***You see…*** **We have all broken this commandment!**

**So, I ask you: What hope is there?**

EVERY ONE OF US ARE sinners who stand guilty before this 3rd commandment, which means you and I need some resolution! The Lord has said that He will NOT leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain! THAT IS YOU, and THAT IS ME!! Your guilt can’t just be wiped away or swept under the carpet. The Penalty for your crimes against God’s name and His Honor MUST be Paid! AND they will be!

That penalty of God is naturally paid through infinite torment in Hell Forever! BUT… I beg you – don’t go there, ***for*** ***there is*** *another way…*

 ***God sent His Son, to take your place and pay your debt if you would but turn to HIMand believe!***

**HERE IS THE AWESOME IRONY OF GOD’S GRACE*…. JUST AS YOU HAVE SINNED AGAINST GOD’S NAME –***

 ***God even now offers you HOPE & Salvation thru the Name of His Son:* Jesus Christ! Your hope is found in HIS NAME!** The Name of Jesus Christ *is the name at which ever knee shall bow, on heaven and on earth – and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.*

So, How do you accept His Offer?

 Quite simply, RECOGNIZE your Sinfulness and guilt before God! *He will not leave you unpunished!*

 *Second, REPENT!* Turn to God and confess that you need His forgiveness! Ask Him to place your sin on Christ, and Christ’s perfect obedience on you… And HE WILL! If you truly turn to Him in FAITH… HE WILL SAVE YOU!

  **HAVE you Put your faith in Jesus Christ?**  *Do not delay, today is the day of salvation – Seek His mercy at the foot of the cross!*

 ***And when you have done that, Than you can* REJOICE!**

**For thru faith in Christ, the Law no longer condemns, but instructs!**

If you have hidden your life in Christ this evening, then this law guides you to how you might show gratitude and joy for your salvation! AS we have said in recent weeks, true love doesn’t ask, “How far can I go until what I have done is sin?” TRUE Faith in and True Love for God will lead you to ask, “How can I best please my Lord and my God?!” And in answer to that question this commandment answers:

 **Honor the Lord’s name!**

Honor Him in the way you think about Him!

Honor Him in the way you speak to Him and about Him!

Honor Him in all of life – that all who meet you might praise the Lord For His Work in you!

***Praise the Name of the Lord, and May the name of the Lord be blessed both now and forevermore!* Amen.**