

CARELESS LIVING A FORM OF PROFANITY

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."
– Exodus 20:7.

THIS command was not given to the Gentiles; for the Lord had no dealings with the world. It was given to the Jewish people, who had come into relationship with God through the Law Covenant. We have every reason to believe that many of the Jews tried very hard outwardly to keep the Ten Commandments, the keeping of which meant life, the failure to keep which meant death. All of their endeavors failed, and they continued to die. – Romans 7:10.

Notwithstanding the endeavor of many to observe this command of our text, St. Paul declared respecting them that the name of God was blasphemed *through them* amongst the Gentiles. (Romans 2:24.) We cannot suppose that the grosser meaning of blasphemy was the Apostle's thought. Blasphemy was a terrible thing among the Jews. Even a *parent* who heard his *own child* blaspheme was instructed to *stone* that child *to death* for so doing. We suppose the Apostle meant that the kind of living practised among the Jews really blasphemed God's name before the world. They were professedly *God's* people. And if under Divine instruction, Divine care, and Divine recognition, they did the things dishonoring to God, they were blaspheming His name.

While the Ten Commandments were not given to the Church, yet every feature of the Ten Commandments is a command; for by the character of our consecration we are bound to seek to know God's will, even beyond the mere *letter* of His Word. Hence, while the Church is *not under* the Law Covenant, we are under the general instruction of the Ten Commandments. Therefore the Apostle says that "the *righteousness* of the Law [the *true*

meaning of the Law] is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." – Romans 8:4.

It is not supposable that any real child of God, any consecrated follower of Christ, could have a desire to take the name of the Father in vain. Hence the *apparent* meaning of this command is not applicable to us; for since we have become His children, and have received His Spirit, it would be the farthest thing from us to wish to profane His name. But as the Jews profaned the name of the Lord by careless living amongst the Gentiles, so there is great danger of Christians profaning His name by careless living. And this is indicated in the Scriptures as being a danger.

Our Lord speaks of some who, at His Second Coming, will say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name done many wonderful works, and in Thy name cast out devils?" And He will say, "I do not recognize you." They have been deceiving themselves. (Matthew 7:21-23.) They did not come in by the door of the sheep-fold, and have never been recognized by the Lord as His sheep. Amongst them there will perhaps be a great many who have done philanthropic and reform work.

But the thousand years of Christ's Reign will be the time when God will institute the real Reform Work, through Christ's Kingdom. Now the Lord is working in the *hearts* of His people, through His promises, seeking the particular class who are moved and exercised by these promises. Thus He is finding a Little Flock, a peculiar people, to be joint-heirs with Christ in His Kingdom.

LET US TAKE NOT HIS NAME IN VAIN

From this standpoint, all of God's people should be very much on guard that they do not take the name of the Lord in vain when they profess to be His people, His children – when they profess to be the followers of Jesus and call themselves Christians. It would be far better if many professed Christians did not take the name of

Christian at all. The only ones who may properly take Christ's name are those who really become His disciples. The only condition under which any may become His disciple is to take up his cross and follow Him – give up his life, surrender his will.

Although this commandment was not given to Spiritual Israel, we can readily see how the *spirit* of it applies to [R5405 : page 56] us. We have taken the name of Christ as our name. We profess to be members of the Body of Christ. And the holy name of the Head belongs to all the members of His Body. The honored name of the Bridegroom belongs to His Espoused. What carefulness the thought of this should give us, and how appropriate it is that we should see to it that we have not taken that blessed name in vain; that we appreciate the honor, the dignity, the responsibility, of our position as His representatives and ambassadors in the world! Let us, therefore, walk circumspectly, taking earnest heed that we bring no dishonor to that hallowed name; but on the contrary, that we honor it in our every thought and word and deed.

"What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation [behavior] and godliness?" "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [behavior]; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." – 2 Peter 3:11; 1 Peter 1:15,16.

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