

# The Third Commandment

by A.W. Pink

---

*The Third Commandment teaches us to reverence God's name and to use it only in a way that is true to its meaning and implications.*

**Scripture:** Exodus 20:7, Deuteronomy 28:58, Psalm 109:17-18, Isaiah 48:1, Isaiah 65:16, Jeremiah 23:10, Zechariah 8:17, Luke 6:46, John 1:12, Romans 3:13-14

**Topics:** "Reverence for God's Name", "The Weight of Worship"

---

## Description

A.W. Pink emphasizes the gravity of the Third Commandment, which instructs believers not to take the name of the Lord in vain. He explains that this commandment calls for sincere, humble, and reverent worship, highlighting the importance of using God's name with the utmost respect and for His glory. Pink warns against the casual and hypocritical use of God's name, urging that it should only be invoked in truth and righteousness. He also addresses the sin of profane swearing and the cultural disregard for God's name, asserting that such actions provoke God's wrath and lead to severe consequences. Ultimately, Pink calls for a deep reverence for God's name, reminding us that it reflects His majesty and holiness.

---

## Transcript

### THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

### THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain" (Ex. 20:7). As the second commandment concerns the manner in which God is to be worshipped (namely, according to His revealed will), so this one bids us worship Him with that frame of spirit which is agreeable to the dignity and solemnity of such an exercise and the majesty of Him with whom we have to do: that is, with the utmost sincerity, humility, and reverence.

"Fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD" (Deut. 28:58). O what high thoughts we ought to entertain of such a Being! In what holy awe should we stand of Him! "The end of this Precept is that the Lord will have the majesty of His name to be held inviolably sacred by us. Whatever we think and whatever we say of Him should savor of His excellency, correspond to the sacred sublimity of His name, and tend to the exaltation of His magnificence" (Calvin). Anything pertaining to God should be spoken of with the greatest sobriety.

Let us first endeavor to point out the scope and comprehensiveness of this commandment. By the Name of the Lord our God is signified God Himself as He is made known to us, including everything through which He has been pleased to reveal Himself: His Word, His titles, His attributes, His ordinances, His works. The Name of God stands for His very nature and being, as in Psalm 20:1; 135:3; John 1:12, etc. Sometimes the name of God is when it is used without propounding to ourselves a proper end.

And there are but two ends which can warrant our use of any of His names, titles, or attributes: for His glory and for the edification of ourselves and others. Whatever is besides these is frivolous and evil, affording no sufficient ground for us to make mention of such a great and holy Name, which is so full of glory and majesty. Unless our speech is designedly directed to the advancement of the Divine glory or the promotion of the benefit of those to whom we speak, we are not justified in having God's ineffable Name upon our lips.

He accounts Himself highly insulted when we mention His name to idle purpose. God's Name is taken in vain by us when we use it without due consideration and reverence. Whenever we make mention of Him before whom the seraphim veil their faces, we ought seriously and solemnly to ponder His infinite majesty and glory, and bow our hearts in deepest prostration before that Name. How can they, who think and speak of the great God promiscuously and at random, use His Name with reverence when all the rest of their discourse is filled with froth and vanity?

That Name is not to be sported with and tossed to and fro upon every light tongue. O my reader, form the habit of solemnly considering whose Name it is you are about to utter. It is the Name of Him who is present with you, who is hearing you pronounce it. He is jealous of His honor, and He will dreadfully avenge Himself upon those who have slighted Him. God's Name is used in vain when it is employed hypocritically, when we profess to be His people and are not. Israel of old was guilty of this sin: "Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth, nor in righteousness" (Isa. 48:1).

They used the Name of God, but did not obey the revelation contained therein, and so violated this Third Commandment (compare Matthew 7:22, 23) . When using the Name of God, we must do so in a way which is true to its meaning and to its implications. Therefore He says to us, "Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). In like manner, we are guilty of this awful sin when we perform holy duties lightly and mechanically, our affections not being in them.

Prayer without practice is blasphemy, and to speak to God with our lips while our hearts are far from Him is but a mocking of Him and an increasing of our condemnation. God's Name is taken in vain when we swear lightly and irreverently, using the Name of God with as little respect as we would show to that of a man, or when we swear falsely and are guilty of perjury. When we are placed on oath and we attest that to be true which we do not know to be true, or which we know to be false, we are guilty of one of the gravest sins which man can possibly commit, for he has solemnly called upon the great God to witness that which the father of lies has prompted him to speak.

"He that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of Truth" (Isa. 65:16), and therefore it behooves him to consider well whether what he testifies is true or not. Alas, oaths have become so excessively multiplied among us-- being interwoven, as it were, into the body politic--and so generally disregarded, that the enormity of this offense is scarcely considered. "Let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his

neighbor; and love no false oaths, for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord" (Zech. 8:17) And what shall be said of that vast throng of profane swearers who pollute our language and wound our ears, by a vile mixture of execrations and blasphemies in their common conversation!

"Their throat is an open sepulcher. . . the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness" (Rom. 3:13, 14) . Utterly vain is their thoughtless plea that they mean no harm, vain their excuse that all their companions do the same, vain their plea that it is merely to relieve their feelings! What a madness it is when men anger you, to strike against God and provoke Him far more than others can provoke you! But though their fellows do not censure, nor the police arrest, nor the magistrate punish them, yet "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain."

"As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him . . . as he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water" (Ps. 109:17, 18). God is dreadfully incensed by this sin, and in the common commission of this Heaven-insulting crime our country has incurred terrible guilt. It has become almost impossible to walk the streets or to enter mixed company without hearing the sacred Name of God treated with blasphemous contempt. The novels of the day, the stage, and even radio (and more lately television, the cinema, and the press) are terrible offenders, and without doubt this is one of the fearful sins against Himself for which God is now pouring out His judgments upon us.

Of old He said unto Israel, "Because of swearing (cursing) the land mourneth; the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their course is evil" (Jer. 23:10). And He is still the same: "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His Name in vain." Sore punishment shall be his portion, if not in this life, then most assuredly so, eternally so, in the life to come.

---

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-pink/the-third-commandment/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**