

Exodus 20:7

"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold *him* guiltless who takes His name in vain.

Taking the name of the Lord in vain is the third of the Ten Commandments. Yet it is the one that is broken most often by Christians, as well as unbelievers. According to the "American Dictionary", the word vain means: Light, empty, worthless, having no substance; value or importance. Could it be possible that a Christian would ever use God's name in such a way? Unfortunately, yes! I have even heard ministers speaking from the pulpit, who have used God's name lightly. As they were speaking, they would in the middle of their sentence say something like, "My God", or "Dear God" as filler between their thoughts or their next point. Some people may see this as spiritual, yet it is simply a bad habit that has spread into the pews as well. Jewish people are so cognizant of not taking God's name in vain, that they will not even write out the word God on a note, document, or letter. Instead they will replace the vowel with a hyphen (G-d). People also use the name of Jesus, as if its value is meaningless. More and more, you hear Jesus' name taken in vain all around you. Lately, I have heard this taken to an all time low! Having been in either the military or around construction sights for most of my adult life, I am still none the less shocked today, to hear people who have created new ways of degrading the name of the Living God. They have added letters to His name, as well as new middle names. Ironically, unless you are taking Jesus name in vain, or using it as a cuss word; then people are offended if you even speak it. Look at the filth and depravity in which films today are being produced in Hollywood. There are movies where God's name is cursed, blasphemed or taken in vain, every other breath. We have allowed these atrocities to pass, to where we are no longer offended when we hear them. When movies were first made, it was illegal to take the name of the Lord in vain. Today, it seems almost impossible to watch a movie where God's name isn't a curse word. Clearly, the Lord promises that the one who takes His name in vain will not go unpunished. So why would we even dare to tolerate such blatant disrespect? Look what has happened to the Swedish cartoonist who drew the Prophet Mohammed's head on the body of a dog. A man said to be the head of al-Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Omar al-Baghadi, offered a reward for the murder of the cartoonist. Here we see zero tolerance of Muslims towards their god, yet the world, as well as many Christians, holds a much lower appreciation for the name of the Living God!! I in no way advocate violence, yet I do believe in taking a stand against anyone who blasphemes, curses, or takes the name of God in vain. People are so afraid of the Muslim community, that you will not see anymore cartoons in your newspaper that are disrespectful towards the Muslim religion. Yet Christians have been quiet for so long, that the name of God is fair game to anyone around us.

If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, and you are guilty yourself of taking the name of the Lord in vain, or of using it lightly; then I exhort you today to repent. Ask God to forgive you of using His name inappropriately. Ask Him to help you speak His name only when it is done reverently and with respect. Just because the United States is removing God's Word from our court rooms and school houses; doesn't mean that the Lord has changed how He views them. **Proverbs 18:21** says it best, **"Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit."**