

# IMPACT

**I** **M**ust **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday  
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; *in all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.  
Proverbs 3:5-6

**Passage:** 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.”

**Quote:** “O LORD, our Lord, *How excellent is Your name in all the earth*, Who have set Your glory above the heavens!” Psalm 8:1

**W**hen you see or hear a name, it reminds you of good and bad qualities about the people, places or things that it represents. The names of God represent His glorious and holy perfection. “No one name God employs states all that can be said by God about himself; in fact, all the names taken together do not reveal all that God is. God is infinite; he cannot be fully known. But he has revealed much concerning himself, so much that if one studies the names of God one is struck by the greatness, holiness, majesty, glory, indescribable goodness, and justice of God.”<sup>1</sup>

If the name of God is not to be held in the utmost esteem and viewed with awe and adoration, then, pray tell, what is? To take His “glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD,”<sup>2</sup> in vain is to misuse it wrongly, lightly or irreverently. “The primary meaning of ‘misuse the name of the LORD’ (literally, ‘raise up Yahweh’s name for no good’) would appear to be invoking his name as guarantor of one’s words.”<sup>3</sup> In other words, saying something along the line of “I swear to God that I am telling the truth.” One sobering example of God’s reaction to prophets speaking falsehood in His name is found in the book of Jeremiah (14:14-16).

Practically speaking, we should be troubled to hear God’s name used in the following ways, let alone to do it ourselves!

- ▶ Without the reverence due to “the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy.”<sup>4</sup>
- ▶ As an oath: “I swear to God, if he does it again, I will hit him.”
- ▶ Claiming to be His child, but not honoring Him.
- ▶ Making a promise to God and then breaking it.

- ▶ Using substitutes like “gosh,” “geez.” “as a mild oath or introductory expletive to express surprise.”
- ▶ Sinfully using His name to express frustration or excitement. “Oh my God!” [OMG] “Lord have mercy!” “Good Lord!” “Lord above!” “For Christ’s sake!” “Christ almighty!”

While the Bible does not tell us specifically what the punishment for taking God’s name in vain will be, we must be warned about any form of frivolousness when it comes to the things of God by texts such as Hebrews 10:29-31. “Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified *a common thing*, and

## Proper Reverence for God’s Name

*insulted the Spirit of grace?* For we know Him who said, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the

Lord. And again, ‘The LORD will judge His people.’ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” To be sure, the common or profane use of God’s Holy name is an insult to the Spirit of grace and should be avoided at all times!

The proper use of God’s name is to praise Him, to plead with Him as our Provider and Protector, to proclaim Him as Savior to those who are not Christians, and as “the Father of mercies and God of all comfort” to those Christians who are experiencing severe trials. May we proclaim the greatness and the glory of God like David. “Make a joyful shout to God, all the earth! *Sing out the honor of His name; Make His praise glorious.* Say to God, ‘How awesome are Your works! Through the greatness of Your power Your enemies shall submit themselves to You. All the earth shall worship You And sing praises to You; They shall sing praises to Your name.’ Selah Come and see the works of God; He is awesome in His doing toward the sons of men.”<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps the scoffers of this world do not fear God because they do not see true fear of God displayed in those who claim to do so!

1. Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible 2 Deut.28:58 3 New Amer. Commentary 4 Isa.57:15 5 Psalm 66