

Third River -- Profanity

by Martin Knapp

The sermon warns against the grave sin of taking God's name in vain and emphasizes the need for repentance and salvation through Christ.

Scripture: Exodus 20:7, Leviticus 24:15, Proverbs 4:24, Matthew 5:37, Colossians 3:8

Topics: "Revering God", "Repentance"

Description

Martin Knapp delivers a powerful sermon on the seriousness of taking the name of the Lord in vain, emphasizing that God will not hold guiltless those who do so. He shares the story from Leviticus of a man who blasphemed God's name and faced severe consequences, highlighting the importance of revering and honoring God in all aspects of our lives. Knapp warns against the various ways people can fall into the sin of using God's name in vain, stressing the need for repentance and salvation through Jesus Christ to avoid the eternal consequences of this sin.

Transcript

"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. xx, 7.

This is the third great Tributary whose waters help to swell the increasing flood of the River of Death. Multitudes tumble into it to rise no more forever.

Would you like to hear the story of one of the first persons who perished in its waters? Then turn to Lev. xxiv, 10-16, which is a vivid picture of the fall and death of one who plunged into this awful River. It says:

"And the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel: and the son of the Israelitish woman and a man of Israel strove together in the camp; and the son of the Israelitish woman blasphemed the Name, and cursed: and they brought him unto Moses. And his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan. And they put him in ward, that it might be declared unto them at the mouth of the Lord.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him. And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin, And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death; all the congregations shall certainly stone him: as well as

the stranger, as the home-born, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death."

God places a special emphasis against the violation of this Commandment, expressly declaring that its violator will NOT BE HELD GUILTLESS. Like God's other laws, it is for our good and His glory.

Human laws provide for the arrest of people for "contempt of court" who speak disrespectfully of their officers. Much more is he guilty who "takes in vain" the name of the King of kings.

Would you not feel justly and righteously indignant if you heard the name of your father or mother spoken of disparagingly or used in vain? Then how much more should you revere and love the name and character of Him who has created you, and given His Son to save you from your sins, and from whom you receive every breath you draw and every pleasure which you have!

O, the soul-defiling, death-dealing mystery of Sin, that will sink its child so low that he will be guilty of so vile a deed!

People become guilty of this Sin and expose themselves to its awful perils in the following ways:

By profane swearing, like the blasphemous words which frequently flow from the lips of the openly wicked.

By calling to God when you do not mean it.

By using "by-words" as substitutes for swearing.

By thinking "swear-words;" for, "as one thinketh in his heart, so is he."

By using God's name in prayer and songs idly.

Have you ever noticed that this Commandment prohibits, not only swearing, but "taking His name in vain?" So that whatsoever takes "His name in vain in any way breaks this Commandment, and whosoever habitually thus uses it is drifting on this Fatal River's poisonous waters.

Jesus says, for every "idle word" that man shall speak he must give an account at the Day of Judgment. If this is true of every idle word, truly it embraces idle words where the name of God Himself has been idly used. Religious blasphemers, who thus sin in songs and prayers and conversation, may be even more vile than those whose swearing is more vulgar. Jesus says:

"Again, ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: but I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by the heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one." -- Matt. v, 33.37.

Beloved, are you guilty? If so, stop and think. Remember that God hears you, reads you, sees you.

Do not forget that, while you may be thoughtless and gay about your work or play, that, if unforgiven, you are every moment drifting, drifting, drifting down this awful River; that you have insulted God and broken His law; that you have brought upon your soul the guilt of Sin and the righteous wrath of Him whom you thus have wronged; and that you have invited a fearful penalty, which your soul must meet and suffer for

ever and ever, unless you repent and leap into the Life-boat of Salvation.

Of all the sins which man commits, there is none more aggravating nor less excusable than this.

It is a senseless sin. No possible profit in it in any way.

It is an excuseless sin, as there is no reason why any one should commit it.

It is a devilish sin, as it shows that its possessor has the very nature of Satan, who hates God and insults Him and breaks His laws.

It is specially aggravating in the sight of God. All sin is loathsome in His sight; but this sin is the only one in the whole catalogue against which He expresses the intensity of His anger, by saying:

"The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

May it not be, this sin committed, opens the floodgates of the soul more fully to all others?

If Satan can get you to set sail in the Death-boat of Profanity, he will have little trouble in alluring you into all the other Tributaries of the River of Death.

Will not every reader of these pages stop here just a moment, and ask God to help him to see that every person who is guilty of this sin is like:

A criminal, who would break the righteous laws of his country, and then curse the kind rulers who made them?

Like a wicked boy, who would speak disrespectfully of his kind parents who love, clothe, and feed him?

Would you like to have me tell you what I seem just now to see?

I fancy that I see a boy playing by the side of this awful River, He goes close to its edge, where the bank is very steep, picking Sin's poisonous flowers, which abound on every side. Suddenly he becomes angry. For the first time an oath falls from his lips, and he falls headlong into this awful River. Devils and wicked men welcome him, and in the Death-boat of Profanity he is launched upon the Stream. At first he shrinks from the awful curses which he hears, but soon gets used to them, and is as wicked as those around him. False friends applaud him, so, smoking, gambling, and swearing, together they drift rapidly onward toward their doom. Frequently Christ and His servants approach him with the Life-boat of Salvation, but he says, "I am having so much fun; I can't give it up," and rejects it, and suddenly his boat strikes an unseen rock, goes to the bottom, and his soul, with shrieks of agony, is borne over the Falls of Eternal Despair. Lost! Lost! Lost forever!

O beware, beware of this River!

Christ only can save you. The Life-boat of Salvation waits to rescue your imperiled soul. It will bear you, amid songs of victory and everlasting joy, to the Land of Life, from which you may pass up to Holiness Heights, and from thence to the Eternal Glory of the Redeemed. God invites; Jesus will receive you. He loves you, O so tenderly! The Spirit is drawing you. Will you not yield just now?

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