

Lord's Day 36

Heidelberg Catechism

The Third Part – Of Thankfulness

Question 99

What is required in the third commandment?

Answer

That we, not only by cursing¹ or perjury, but also by rash swearing,² must not profane or abuse the name of God; nor by silence or connivance be partakers of these horrible sins in others; and, briefly, that we use the holy name of God no otherwise than with fear and reverence;³ so that He may be rightly confessed and worshiped by us,⁴ and be glorified in all our words and works.⁵

Question 100

Is then the profaning of God's name by swearing and cursing so heinous a sin that His wrath is kindled against those who do not endeavor, as much as in them lies, to prevent and forbid such cursing and swearing?

Answer

It undoubtedly is, for there is no sin greater or more provoking to God than the profaning of His name;⁶ and therefore He has commanded this sin to be punished with death.⁷

1 Lev. 24:11

And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name of the LORD, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses: (and his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan:)

Lev. 19:12

And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.

Matt. 5:37

But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

Lev. 5:4

Or if a soul swear, pronouncing with his lips to do evil, or to do good, whatsoever it be that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty in one of these.

2 Isa. 45: 23, 24

I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.

3 Matt. 10:32

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

4 1 Tim. 2:8

I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

5 1 Cor. 3:16, 17

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

6 Lev. 5:1

And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and is a witness, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity.

7 Lev. 24:15

And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin.