

Westminster Shorter Catechism Study

Session 26

The Third Commandment

How Should We Speak About God?

Q. 53. Which is the third commandment?

A. The third commandment is, 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.

Q. 54. What is required in the third commandment?

A. The third commandment requireth the holy and reverent use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, Word, and works.

"In Scripture, "name" expresses nature and character and that by which these are manifested. The name of God includes, therefore, his titles, attributes, ordinances, word and works. "In vain" means either irreverently, as in profanity, or falsely, as in perjury. The meaning is the same, for perjury includes all that leads to it—deception, lying and irreverence toward the God of truth. We are required to treat with great reverence everything whereby God maketh himself known." – A.A. Hodge

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.

Titles

Deut. 10:20 "You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name.

Psalms 29:2 Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

Matt. 6:9 "In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.

Attributes

1 Chron. 29:10 Therefore David blessed the LORD before all the assembly; and David said: "Blessed are You, LORD God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever.

11 Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, The power and the glory, The victory and the majesty; For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, And You are exalted as head over all.

12 Both riches and honor come from You, And You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; In Your hand it is to make great And to give strength to all.

13 " Now therefore, our God, We thank You And praise Your glorious name.

Rev. 15:3 "They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: "Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints!

4 Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, For Your judgments have been manifested."

Ordinances

Acts 2:42 "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."

1 Cor. 11:27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

Word

Psalm 138:2 I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.

Rev. 22:18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book;

19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Works

Psalm 107:21 Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men!

22 Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, And declare His works with rejoicing.

Rev. 4:9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever,

10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."