



# THE THIRD COMMANDMENT: YOU SHALL NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD YOUR GOD IN VAIN

*The Third Commandment teaches us that we are not to misuse His name*

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## OBJECTIVE

To understand the meaning of and how to apply the Third Commandment in your life today.

## SUMMARY STATEMENT

*Read or summarize the following:*

“In the Third of God’s 10 Commandments, He tells us that we are not to misuse His name. God’s name is special, and we must never be disrespectful to God or use His name in a way that is disrespectful or thoughtless. We must show honor and respect to God. One of the ways we do this is through our words. We also honor and respect God by doing what He says we should do. By respecting God and not misusing His name, we are showing God that we love Him.”

## HELPFUL SCRIPTURES

**Exodus 20:7** – God gives the Third Commandment at Mount Sinai.

“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.”





**Psalms 20:1-2** – We are to give glory and honor to God and His name. We do this by acknowledging how wonderful, perfect, loving, and wise God is in all that He does for us.

“Give unto the LORD, O you mighty ones, give unto the LORD glory and strength. Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.”

*“O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, who have set Your glory above the heavens.”*

**Psalms 8:1** – God’s name is the most excellent name because He is the one, true God! He created everything that is good!

“O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, who have set Your glory above the heavens.”

**Colossians 3:17** – Everything we do should be to honor and respect God because we are to do all in His name—we are named Christians after Christ! Part of how we honor God is by giving Him thanks for all the wonderful things He does for us.

“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

**1 Corinthians 10:31** – Another scripture encouraging us to glorify God in all we do! Glorifying God means that we honor Him by never using His name carelessly, swearing, or using unkind words.

“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

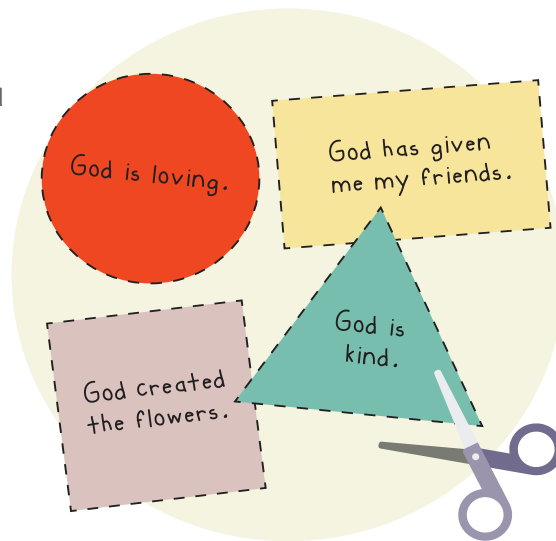
## ACTIVITY

Praise God’s Name Scavenger Hunt

### Part 1:

If age appropriate, take a stack of cardstock or construction paper and draw, or have your children draw, four large shapes, one or two per piece of paper. (Note: You can use all the same shape or have each paper be a different shape.) Then have your children cut out each drawing. You and your children can make as many cutouts as you would like. On each shape, work together to complete one of the following sentence starters:

- God is ... (loving, kind, merciful, etc.)
- God has given me ... (my family, my friends, my pet, etc.)
- God created ... (the flowers, the planets, the animals, etc.)



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When this is finished, tape the shapes in different places all over the house, but without your children knowing where you have put the signs. Then, have your children go on a Praise God's Name Scavenger Hunt. Tell them to look around the house to see if they can find all the shapes. When your children find one, have them say, "I will praise God because..." and then have them read aloud the sentence that they found. You can even time your children to see how long it takes them to find all the signs!

### Part 2:

Have a stack of papers and a small trash can (or use your regular household trash can). Anytime your children accidentally show disrespect to God by taking His name in vain with their words *or* actions, have your children write it down on a piece of paper. Then help your children pray to God that they are sorry, that they ask for forgiveness, and that they need His help to never say or do that again. Last, have your children crumple up and throw away the paper to show that God is helping them to remove the sin!



### Supplies needed:

Cardstock, construction paper, or fun, colorful cut-outs from the store

Pens, pencils, or markers

Tape

Paper

*Optional:* Small trash can

## DISCUSSION

Below are some examples of discussion starters to help your children understand more deeply the meaning of the Third Commandment and how to apply it in their own lives today.

**Question:** Why doesn't God want us to take His name in vain? Does it matter if we say things like "OMG" or "Gee"?

**Hint:** Remind your children that when they say God's name, or any form of God's name, in this way, they are not showing respect to God. They are using His holy name like any other word. People often use phrases like "OMG" when they are surprised, annoyed, or angry. This does not honor God but treats His name carelessly. Have your children imagine if someone used their names in angry, annoying, or surprising situations. Ask your children how they would feel if people used their names in a disrespectful way.

**Question:** Why shouldn't we want to take God's name in vain?

**Hint:** Have your children imagine that they give a really nice gift to a friend, but then the friend throws the gift aside and calls them a bad name. Ask your children how they would feel. That is what it is like to disrespect God and take His name in vain. It is like calling someone who has given them an amazing gift a bad name. Ask your children to think about all the things for which they are thankful. Then, ask your children who made it possible for them to have all those things, experiences, and people in their lives.

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*God, of course! Not only that, but He loves us so much He wants us to be a part of His family forever. Discuss with your children how we would never want to show disrespect to God, who has given us so much and loves us so much.*

**Question:** Why is it important to be respectful to God?

**Hint:** Ask your children to describe God. Some examples might include: He is loving, He is kind, He is wise, He is the Creator, He is mighty, etc. Also ask your children to think of what God has done for them. Your children may think of examples such as: God makes it possible for them to travel to new places for the Feast; God healed them when they were sick; God has let them go to camp; etc. We should want to respect and honor God because He is all these things and does all these things for us.

**Question:** How do we glorify, honor, and respect God (the opposite of taking His name in vain)?

**Hint:** Ask your children to think about how they show respect to the adults in their lives (parents, grandparents, teachers, ministers, etc.). We show respect to others by thanking them when they do something nice for us, by listening to them and doing what they tell us to do, by saying kind words to them and about them. This is also how we glorify, honor, and respect God.



## FURTHER STUDY

The following Bible stories from Life, Hope & Truth show examples of biblical heroes choosing not to take God's name in vain, but instead they honor Him with their words and actions.

- **Daniel and His Three Friends in Babylon** (article)
- **David and Goliath** (article)
- **Paul and the Road to Damascus** (article)