



The Second Commandment—Honoring God’s Name

A WAR-HERO FATHER

Sandy was proud of her father, although she never knew him. About the time she was born, her father was fighting in a far-off war. A friend of his reported later that while they had been on patrol, all very frightened, they had heard enemy fire and had seen a hand grenade come flying toward them. Sandy’s father had thrown himself over the grenade as it landed, taking the entire explosion into his body.

At times, Sandy wished somebody else had done that, and that she still had her father. But she was still very proud of him and every once in a while told her friends the story of what happened. You could see her face glow whenever she mentioned his name, Clyde Fingerhat.

When Sandy’s classmates first heard the account of her father’s heroism, they were impressed. But as time went on, they weren’t amazed anymore. In fact, Ann even liked to tease Sandy about it. (She probably wanted to make herself look better than Sandy by getting Sandy to lose her “cool.”) Ann would say, “Aw, how do you even know all that stuff is true? You weren’t there. He probably ran off with some native girl.” Other days she’d say, “Clyde? How can a war hero be named Clyde? Private Fingerhat,” she’d mock, “here’s a helmet-hat for your finger. Now, don’t let your pinkie get hurt; you know how proud your little girl is of you.

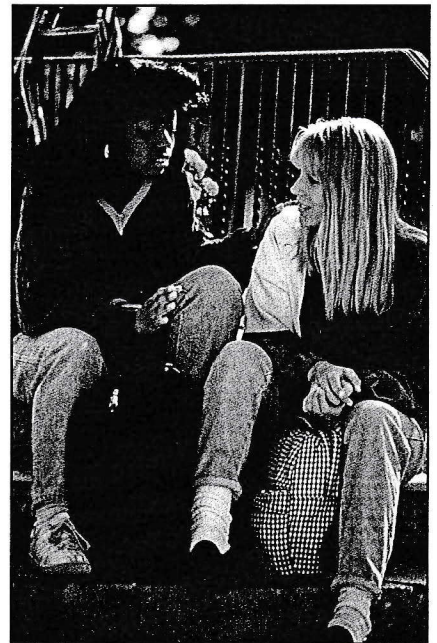
What’s her name? Sandy Finger-cap?” And when Sandy was just about in tears, Ann would say, “Sandy and Clyde Fingerhead. What a combination!” The rest of the class would break out in laughter when they heard Fingerhead.

But Sandy thought that Clyde Fingerhat was the most beautiful name in the world. He was her father, and he was a hero. Nobody could change that.

If you had been Sandy, what would you have done to show that you cared about your family name? Write your answer here.

POWER IN A NAME

Did you notice in the story that Ann was trying to get some power over Sandy by misusing her name? First, Ann was trying to show that she was “stronger” than Sandy by trying to get her to lose her “cool.” Second, by not caring about Sandy’s name, Ann was trying to show the others that her own name was somehow better than Sandy’s name. In both ways, Ann was trying to get something of benefit for herself.



When you were baptized, God took you into His special family of faith and gave you His name. Because God is holy, He desires us to use His name for coming to Him in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. He wants us to use His name to talk with others about His will for our lives and about His goodness to us. Sometimes, however, we misuse that name (or ignore it all together) if we think we can get something for ourselves rather than trust God to care for us.

What might you be trying to get for yourself if you misused God's name in the following ways?

Cursing: ordering God to send a person or thing to hell.

Swearing: asking God to witness to the truth of a statement.

Using satanic arts: sorcery, witchcraft, Ouija boards, horoscopes.

Lying or deceiving by God's name: telling a lie about God, or distorting God's Word; covering a sinful life with a pious attitude.

GOD HELPS US HONOR HIM WITH OUR USE OF HIS NAME

Our loving God has given all we are and have. Through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son Jesus, He has made us His children by faith. As His children He forgives our sins involving the misuse of His name and continues to shower His many blessings upon us. Circle the words from Psalm 103, printed as follows, that identify God's continued blessing to His people. Then in the space provided, write a paragraph telling what these blessings mean for your life.

Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise His holy name.

Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desire with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed. He made known His ways to Moses, His deeds to the people of Israel: The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

He will not always accuse, nor will He harbor His anger forever; He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him; for he knows how we are formed, He remembers that we are dust.

The Second Commandment

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do not curse, swear, use satanic arts, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.

