

Why the 3rd Commandment May Be the Key to Fixing Your Marriage

The third commandment states: “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold guiltless anyone who takes His name in vain” (Ex. 20:7).

The name of the Lord is to be held in high esteem. When God is the third person in your marriage, you hold Him in a respectful place. This is totally a heart issue. When we value who He is, we value His name.

I value Lisa and my children. If I hit a hammer on my hand, I don’t cry out “Lisa, Lisa, Lisa” in a derogatory or cursing manner as if she is to blame or is to be a curse word to me. No name we respect should be used as a curse word or in a derogatory manner.

Apply this concept to marriage, not just with God’s name but our spouse’s as well, even the names of our children. What if we valued them enough that even when we’re mad at them, we couldn’t bring ourselves to curse them? That’s the spirit God wants us to have toward Him and our spouse—a spirit that says, “I give you reverence and honor above all in my life.” That heart will find it difficult to curse God even on a really bad day. The heart of reverence toward our spouse because they’re God’s child, bought by the sacrifice of Christ, can stop many inappropriate thoughts or words to our spouse.

I think questions help us probe ourselves or our marriage in regards to this commandment. Do we put our spouse down? Shame them? Treat them in word or deed as though we are superior? Do we use foul language directly to them? Are they the brunt of our jokes? Is there a general attitude of resentment or disrespect?

A marriage honoring each other can easily be manifested by the tone of our love as well as the glares or words we use. God is calling us in this trinity to believe our spouse is worthy of honor, and to speak and behave as if their worth is innate and unchangeable.

So far, in these top three commandments, there is a theme. He is God; there is no other; respect Him. These commandments provide an atmosphere in a marriage. This is an atmosphere that loves God, knows both people are dependent and in anticipation of God with a great respect for Him.

I travel to churches all the time preaching and conducting various conferences. I have been to churches where the atmosphere is so charged with the worship, love and respect of God, you can feel His presence and favor in that place. I think the presence of God is what happens when a couple walks in this heart-attitude toward God and each other. You can feel God in their trinity, and that's a beautiful experience in a marriage. {eo}

Doug Weiss, Ph.D., is a nationally-known author, speaker and licensed psychologist. He is the executive director of Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and the author of several books including, *Miracle of Marriage*. You may contact Dr. Weiss via his website, www.heart2heart.org, or on his Facebook, by phone at 719-278-3708 or through email at heart2heart@heart2heart.org.