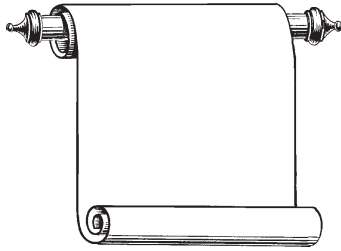


1. Have no other gods but Me
2. Do not bow down to anything
3. Do not misuse My Name
4. Keep the Sabbath
5. Honor your father and mother
6. Do not kill
7. Do not commit adultery
8. Do not steal
9. Do not lie
10. Do not covet

# The 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment

You shall have no gods before me.



## A SHORT HISTORY OF IDOLATRY

The Lord's instruction to worship only him went right against the grain for the Israelites. Their ancestors had worshiped many gods, and so did all the other nations. It made sense — safety in numbers. Even when they settled in the Promised Land, they were surrounded by other multi-god religions. Often they got sucked into those ways. So God had to keep sending prophets to remind them of the commandments. "If you keep this up," they warned, "God will send foreigners to destroy you." Sure enough, the country was eventually conquered, and they were taken off into captivity abroad. The prophets explained, "It's all because you went running after these other gods. But if you repent — again — God will forgive you — again — and take you back." They had the sense to follow this advice. The Old Testament ends with them coming back home and rebuilding the land. When we meet them again in the New Testament, you'll notice that there's never the least problem with worshipping other gods. They finally learned their lesson.

## "Quotes"

### WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID

*It seems that something has happened that has never happened before: though we know not just when, or why, or how, or where. Men have left GOD not for other gods, they say, but for no god; and this has never happened before.*

- T. S. Eliot

*Thou shalt have one God only; who would be at the expense of two?*

-Arthur Hugh Clough

*Man is quite insane. He wouldn't know how to create a maggot, and he creates gods by the dozen.*

- Montaigne

*So many gods, so many creeds,  
So many paths that wind and wind  
While just the art of being kind  
Is all the sad world needs.*

- Ella Wheeler Wilcox

## WHAT DO YOU SAY?

### Questions for Discussion

- 1) Before God states the rule (“You shall have no other gods before me”), he reminds them who is he and what he has done. Why, do you think? What difference does it make?
- 2) Why is the law necessary? Why do you think the Israelites would want to have any other gods anyway if they have the Lord?
- 3) You might assume the Israelites felt restricted by this command. But Adrian suggests it was liberating:

Imagine the relief this message brought. After all, their only experience with gods up till now was with the gods of the Egyptians, and that experience led them to only one conclusion: gods are bad news. Yet the first direct message they get from this new God is “I am your God. I am for you, not against you.”

Do you agree with this interpretation? Does it misunderstand the faith of the Hebrews in Egypt that would have been preserved from the patriarchs? Do you think the Israelites found it restrictive or liberating or both?

- 4) “Do not let anyone rule you but God.” What other things can rule us? What is the difference between enjoying the good things God has put in the world and letting them rule?

## WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

### Psalm 96:1-10

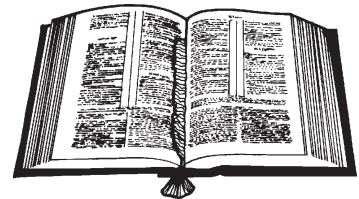
- 1) How is the Lord different from other the nations’ gods, according to this Psalm?
- 2) Do you think singing hymns like this would have helped the Israelites live in obedience to the commandment?

### Jeremiah 3:1-3, 12-13

- 1) The prophet uses a shocking image to depict Israel’s relationships with other Gods.
- 2) What does he compare Israel to?
- 3) How do you think the Israelites would feel to hear themselves described like this?
- 4) What is God’s attitude to Israel in this passage?

### 3) James 2:19

So “having one God” means more than just believing in one God. How does James say we have to back up our belief, if it is to be worth anything?



**SCRIPT FOR THE FIRST COMMANDMENT**

The Little Girl  
Who Was Left Alone



Have no other gods but Me.

THE LITTLE GIRL WHO WAS LEFT ALONE

For as long as she could remember, she was in control of her own life. Even as a little girl she took charge of things. Her sister was two years younger than she was. Well, their father just never seemed to have time for them. They didn't remember much about their mother. Except that she always seemed to be unwell. Then she eventually died, and her father just buried himself deeper and deeper in his work. And the sisters felt as though they were left all alone. They were each very different though. Her sister was always sensitive and spiritual. But she loved to work, to achieve things. Her sister spoke of God as if she knew Him, while she never had time even to think of Him. So while the little sister dreamed, she worked. And when she had worked hard enough and studied long enough, she went to work in her father's business. And international shipping became her life. Finally her dreams were beginning to come true.

Presenter



PRESENTER

The story of the ten commandments began one day when a man named Abraham heard the voice of an unknown God. Now this God called him to leave his home and travel to a faraway land where he and his offspring would live, prosper and become as numerous as the stars in the sky, if Abraham would trust Him, that was. Well, he did. And four generations later we find his descendants, called Israelites, in Egypt. Not exactly the place Abraham understood to be the Promised Land. But there was food in Egypt, and there was none at that time in Canaan. They stayed there for many years, and Abraham's offspring grew into a people so numerous the Egyptian pharaoh began to fear them. In order to keep them subdued he took increasingly drastic measures. and finally devised a plan to annihilate them all together. These people needed some help, big time. But who could they ask? Well, they could pray, but to whom? The gods of Egypt? Well, they represented everything the Israelites would call oppression. The God of Abraham? Maybe. But all they knew about Him was from the bedtime stories they told their children —

NOTE: The contents of this script are chronological as they appear in the program. However, for your ease in isolating any one of the three strands, we have put all of the first strand, FEELINGS AND MEMORIES

**in bold typeface**

All of the second strand, THE BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

in regular typeface

And all of the third strand, MODERN EXAMPLE TESTIMONY

in a shaded box.

tales of how their forefathers had heard this God speak  
and how He had led them to a wonderful land called Canaan.  
But these were just stories from long, long ago.  
But they were getting desperate, so that they didn't really have any idea  
whom they were calling. Well, they called anyway.  
And the answer came in a person named Moses.  
He appeared out of nowhere  
and told Pharaoh in the name of this unknown God  
who called Himself "I Am" to let his people go.  
Then before they really knew what was going on,  
Abraham's children found themselves in the Sinai desert  
with Egypt far behind them on the other side of the sea.  
After a while they came to a mountain called Horeb,  
where Moses told them to set up camp.  
And it was there that for the first time they really got a glimpse  
of this unknown God.  
One day the mountain started to shake violently  
and a thick cloud covered it.  
Everyone ran away in terror except Moses.  
And he went up onto the mountain to meet with this God  
and came back some days later  
with two large stone slabs.  
But carved on them were the ten messages from this unknown God.

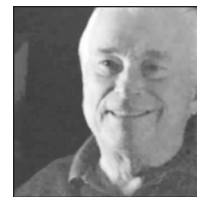
#### THE SELF-SUFFICIENT MAN

Here I was going to look for a job at the largest possible,  
arguably most powerful, magazine in the world at the time.  
They printed seven million copies a week,  
and they claimed a readership of 40 million people a week.  
That's a lot of people!  
Most TV-shows don't get 40 million viewers a week.  
And I was going there to present myself to them for a job.  
And I didn't have the smallest doubt that they were going to hire me.  
And the first time that I walked in, I was told flat out,  
"No, we're not hiring anybody.  
We're not hiring you.  
We don't want anybody. We don't want you.  
Please go away and don't come back."  
And that had absolutely zero effect on me, none whatsoever,  
and finally they hired me.  
I went around the world and did some work for them in Japan while I was  
gone.  
I arrived back, and my boss told me that in my absence they had decided  
to start a new department at the magazine  
and that I was going to be editor of it and "wasn't that wonderful?"  
Because it was a huge promotion. It's a very important job.  
Everybody would like to be editor of their own department.  
And I said, "No, I don't want to do that."  
I got a telephone call from the secretary of the managing editor.  
The managing editor was god, basically.  
He was my boss's boss's boss's boss,  
and we sat down, and he ordered drinks and he says,

#### NOTE TO LEADER:

This is a section where you may wish to challenge the interpretation. Some would disagree with this historic recapitulation and assume a much more mature faith among the Hebrews in Egypt that would have been inherited over generations from the Patriarchs.

#### The Self-Sufficient Man





**NOTE TO LEADER:**

Here is another place where you may wish to challenge some of the emphases of the interpretation given in this section of the program.



“Jim, I understand why you don’t want to take this job, and I’ve been thinking about it . . .” I didn’t say a word.  
“I’ve been thinking about what you might do for the magazine. And an idea I’ve had is that maybe you could do major articles directly under me and just work for me.”  
I remember walking out of the Time and Life building onto Fiftieth street and walking up the street, just on a high of who I was and thinking: I’m just invulnerable. Nothing can touch me. Nobody can touch me. I’m just invulnerable.

**PRESENTER**

The first message that was on these stone tablets was this:  
“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.  
You shall have no gods before Me.”  
Imagine the relief this message brought.  
After all, their only experience with gods up until now was with the gods of the Egyptians, and that experience led them to only one conclusion: gods are bad news.  
Yet the first direct message they get from this new God is,  
“I am your God. I am for you, not against you.  
I am the one who took you out of that land of slavery.”  
Well, it certainly looked like they were free now.  
And then there’s the second part of this message:  
“You shall have no other gods before Me.”  
It sounds like He’s saying,  
“Don’t put your trust in anyone but Me from now on.”  
Well, let’s face it. There they were, free at last and safe, but with a huge desert in front of them and no real idea of where to go. So their best bet was to do just that: Trust this unknown God who just might be the God their ancestors had been talking about.

**THE LITTLE GIRL WHO WAS LEFT ALONE**

**A few years after she joined the company,  
her sister was involved in an accident.  
After she came out of the coma, it was difficult for anyone  
to get through to her.  
Now it was as if the sister she’d grown up with  
didn’t even remember who she was.  
And that was hard for her.  
She just couldn’t bear to see her sister like that,  
so she worked even harder.  
She didn’t visit her often.  
She had no time, she said.  
But their father went to see her every day.  
And as he did, he began to change.  
His priorities seemed to shift somehow.  
And he didn’t feel the need to be in the office so much.  
She didn’t like that at all.  
As a child the photographs in her father’s office fascinated her.**

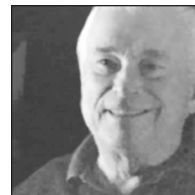
In those pictures she saw a world of adventure.  
And she told herself that one day that was going to be hers.  
She was going to rule that world just like her father had.  
Well, three years after her sister's accident the father passed away,  
and she took over for him.  
Then she was the first woman president of the company.  
Now she was getting somewhere.

PRESENTER

One thing became very clear, though.  
Almost at the start of their journey through the desert,  
after centuries of slavery in Egypt,  
the Israelites needed not just a change of place  
but a change of heart, spirit and mind  
in order to relate to this God.  
In Egypt a whole bunch of very unlikely gods were worshiped,  
and a lot of occult power was used.  
Even Pharaoh was considered a god.  
And in his name the Israelites had endured terrible slavery.  
Crocodiles, frogs, even locusts were considered divine,  
and yet the Israelite people were treated with lower regard than animals.  
The only gods they had known represented oppression and cruelty.  
So why should this One be any different?  
To associate God with freedom was a completely alien concept.  
Why should they give Him first place in their lives?  
Unless, of course, He was threatening them.  
You see, the problem was, although they were well away from Egypt  
and their bodies were free, their hearts were still enslaved.  
It proved less difficult to get Israel out of slavery  
than to get the slavery out of Israel.  
In fact, it took one whole generation  
before this nation even began to understand true freedom.

THE SELF-SUFFICIENT MAN

I'm not suggesting that I was ever very self-aware, but I do know that while  
I had a lot of awareness of what my capabilities were —  
what I could do; I just knew that I knew that I could do something;  
just don't get in my way and I'll do it —  
I had a really pathetic lack of awareness of the kind of person I was.  
I thought it was wonderful.  
I thought I was just a terrific person.  
I mean, who would not want to know Jim Mills?  
Who would not want to spend time with Jim Mills?  
What a wonderful guy!  
I had no idea of really — I don't want to say it, but —  
what a terrible person I was.  
One of my bosses who was at *Life Magazine*,  
who was one of the most tenacious guys I've ever met in my life,  
said to me once,  
"Jim, why do you always have to win?"  
Because I was known as being somebody who didn't want to struggle against.





And I said, "I usually don't win."  
I said, "I usually lose."  
The thing is that when I lose, nobody knows I've lost.  
They don't see me lose  
because I don't engage in a struggle unless I know I'm going to win.  
I do all my homework. I think about it very carefully.  
I think if there's any possibility of losing,  
I capitulate at the beginning before the fights,  
and nobody sees me quit.  
I ended up getting an agent and I got a contract to write a book  
that later became a novel called *Panic in Needle Park*,  
which later became a film with Al Pacino. Then I went on from there to  
write other books.  
I gave up sort of magazine type of journalism  
and became a writer of books.  
I wasn't married. I didn't have any children.  
I didn't need any money. I had tons of money. I had a very good salary.  
But in any case I didn't mind sleeping in the street.  
I'd be perfectly happy to live in a refrigerator car in the street.  
I've never cared about possessions.  
I didn't care about possessions, and I don't care about them now,  
which is another form of arrogance —  
so self-centered, so in control that you don't even need a bed to sleep in.  
I couldn't think of any way anybody could hurt me if they wanted to.  
I mean, if you wanted to hurt me, you could shoot me.  
The only way you would have been able to hurt me  
would have been through physical violence,  
which, ironically, is what finally got my attention.



PRESENTER

Now this first message was not just a message to the people of Israel  
about slavery in Egypt;  
it is just as relevant for us today.  
The Bible tells us that mankind is almost divine, but not quite.  
Yet that very fact is incredibly important  
if we want to understand what God is saying here.  
You see, in the beginning God gave the first man and woman  
authority over his creation,  
his whole creation.  
That is the order of command that God set for his world.  
In this commandment God is saying to each and every one of us:  
Do not accept any ultimate authority over you  
other than the One who really is above you.  
Every other so-called god is no more than a created being,  
and every creation is inferior to its Creator.  
Don't accept any other authority than that of your Maker  
because you are too godly for that.  
God invites us to work with Him,  
and yet so often we choose to become subjects  
of the very things we are supposed to govern.  
We can't mix love for these gods with love for the one God  
however hard we try.

It's not a matter of them being incompatible  
like oil and water are incompatible.  
The fact is that there is absolutely no comparison between the almighty God  
and something He has made.  
Of course this beautiful world is for us to enjoy.  
He created things and people for our delight, appreciation and care.  
The problem comes when we give them prime place in our lives.  
When we focus on them, they begin to control everything we do.  
That is when we've crossed the line,  
and they start to become idols, and we start to lose our freedom.  
But in spite of God's warning and endless numbers of sorry examples,  
you and I seem capable of worshipping just about anything.  
Take ideals or philosophies for instance.  
We turn them into absolutes and immediately they start to rule our lives.  
And what about the stuff of daily life: status, career, the car, sport,  
the erotic, fashion?  
Well, they can all become major idols.  
There is a peculiar thing about the idols we choose.  
Often it's the things that have some sort of relationship to physical security  
that become our greatest idols:  
To have a career that pays adequately  
and which will provide for us throughout our lifetime;  
To have a house, which is an investment for the future;  
To have a secure relationship;  
To have enough money to buffer us from any calamity.  
It seems that we do anything, bow down to anyone  
who would give us this kind of security.  
And then we hear God's message,  
asking us not only to love Him, but to trust Him as well.  
But is God God enough?  
Can we risk putting all our faith and all our confidence in Him  
for every part of our lives?

#### THE LITTLE GIRL WHO WAS LEFT ALONE

**She hadn't seen her sister for a long time.  
But one day she realized that she missed her.  
She missed her a lot. So she decided to go and see her.  
And she was nervous.  
To be honest I think she was afraid of what she was going to find.  
But what she found was the girl she had known long ago —  
memories that lived on and eyes shone like they used to.  
And mirrored in those eyes she saw herself:  
her dreams, her ambitions,  
a life that had no room for love or people or God.  
She'd squeezed it all out and was left with a worthless, empty shell of her  
life. And she always thought that she was the fortunate one.**

#### PRESENTER

To get to the land He had promised them,  
God let the Israelites through a desert  
where there were no resources to depend on





and no markers for orientation.  
It was vital at that time that they had very clear direction.  
God was willing to lead them through the desert  
to the land He had already promised to Abraham  
but only if they were willing to follow.  
As it was, because they kept looking back to Egypt  
and the good things they'd left behind,  
in a sense they walked around in circles,  
and it took them forty years to get to Canaan.  
God has vision for our lives.  
He longs to lead us into good places,  
to accomplish great things in us and through us.  
But unless we are willing to let go of the things  
we so desperately cling to for security  
and allow Him to have prime place,  
He'll never be able to lead us anywhere.



#### THE SELF-SUFFICIENT MAN

It's a long story, but I'll shorten it and just say that I found myself  
in a hospital bed, experiencing something that —  
the word that one would use for it is "pain," but it wasn't pain.  
Pain is when you put your hand in a fire.  
Pain is when you hit your kneecap with a hammer.  
That's pain. This wasn't pain. This was plateau above pain.  
I never had the smallest doubt about anything I wanted to do. Ever.  
But now, incredibly,  
I was aware of the possibility that I might have to kill myself.  
If you had to pick the one person in the world  
who would be the least likely to consider, you would have picked me.  
But this was so intolerable.  
This pain was. . .  
it was something bottomline that could not be allowed to happen.  
That was just it, that was a given.  
This cannot be allowed to happen.  
So if there was no other way out I was going to have to kill myself.  
I knew that.  
I didn't know it then, but God really had decided,  
This is put up or shut up time for James Mills.  
I felt so completely in control that  
I wouldn't have said this, or articulated it this way, but —  
to all intents and purposes, I was God.  
I would have been appalled if anyone accused me of that.  
If anyone had said to me: "You're not a Christian.  
You're a pagan. You think you're God.  
You're behaving in a way that is absolutely anathema to God."  
Any thing like that I would not have known how to respond.  
I would have been absolutely floored.  
But in fact looking back now, I can see that that's true.  
For the first time James Mills just flat out capitulated.  
I said, "God, I give up.  
It's all over. It's finished. I don't have anything else.  
There is nobody else I can call on the phone.

There are no other doctors I can see.  
There is nobody else I can ask help from.  
I've had it. It's over.  
Everything has been exhausted.  
I'm finished, I'm through.  
Whatever happens now, live or die, pain or no pain, whatever, it's going to be You. Because I'm through. I'm just through."  
When you drive into the countryside, the really poor countryside of the southern United States you sometimes see barns.  
And on the side of the barns very, very poor 8:00s who have nothing, they've used whitewash to paint some words on the side of a barn.  
And the words often are "Jesus saves" or "Christ is risen."  
And you see this driving along and you think, that's really kind of tacky — this run down barn and the white wash splashed up there.  
And that's all.  
At that moment, in the hospital, the first thing that came to my mind was those signs.  
And I saw that Jesus saves and I felt that's true.

PRESENTER

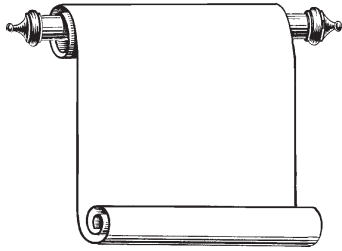
There is a very unique quality to the way God seems to introduce Himself in this message as Liberator and Savior. Though this comes to us as a command, God does not force Himself upon us. Even though as our Creator He would have every right to do so. Instead He presents us with a choice. It has to do with loving God without reserve and having Him at the very center of our hearts. Jesus said: I no longer call you slaves, but friends, if you do my will. Two apparent opposites — the obedience of a servant and the freedom of friendship. But they go together well if this obedience comes by choice, out of love and gratitude. Here is Someone who loved us so much, He was willing to die for us. In this relationship based on Jesus' sacrificial love, it's very natural to want to do what He asks. It's a joy to please Him, not a duty. And this is where real freedom starts. That is why this commandment was given first. In it God is calling our attention to who He is and to our unique relationship with Him. In other words, God picks us up, sets us on our feet, restores our freedom of choice, and then says, "Look at Me. I am your Creator. I'm the One who can set you free. Will you let Me?"



# The 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment

1. Have no other gods but Me
2. Do not bow down to anything
3. Do not misuse My Name
4. Keep the Sabbath
5. Honor your father and mother
6. Do not kill
7. Do not commit adultery
8. Do not steal
9. Do not lie
10. Do not covet

## Do not bow down to anything



### A SHORT HISTORY OF IMAGES

The early church was reluctant to use any visual images. For one thing, the church didn't need decorating as they met in people's houses. Then there was this commandment to worry about. Once they started building their own churches, crosses and pictures of Jesus and the saints started creeping in — to remind them of their past and help their worship.

In 726, the Christian Emperor smashed them all up, saying they were idols. After a century of debate, it was agreed: the images stay. In the Old Testament, you don't depict God because he was invisible; but now that Christ has come in the flesh, we must depict him.

Come the Reformation, many Protestants banned images again. They smashed statues, whitewashed church paintings, broke stained glass windows and threw out crosses. These days, things have calmed down a bit.

## “Quotes”

### WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID

*The savage bows down to idols of wood and stone; the civilized man, to idols of flesh and blood.*

- George Bernard Shaw

*Whatever your heart clings to and confides in, that is really your God.*

- Martin Luther

*Those who draw near to lifeless images, as if they were gods, act in a similar manner to those who would enter into conversation with houses.*

- Heraclitus

*Humankind cannot bear very much reality.*

- T. S. Eliot

*He who begins by loving Christianity better than truth will proceed by loving his own sect or church better than Christianity and end by loving himself better than all.*

- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

## WHAT DO YOU SAY?

### Questions for Discussion

- 1) Does this commandment mean the same as the previous one about worshipping other gods, or is there a significant difference between them?
- 2) But God won't accept any kind of lobby, any kind of intermediary, any kind of buffer zone. What kind of intermediaries do people put between themselves and God? Why? Is it always wrong?
- 3) As a defense against having to meet Almighty God face to face we have tried cleverly to redefine Him. We make him into something he isn't. We might not bow down to graven images, but we can carry around false images of God in our heads. In a sense, we then may be worshipping a god who is part true, part false. What wrong images of God do people have? How can we try to get a truer image of who God is? Is it even possible for humans to have a fully true image of God, one that really does him justice?
- 4) We usually try to make Him into either a megalomaniac, sitting on an enormous throne, casting bolts of lightning down on us poor helpless creatures, or we make Him into a kind and rather feeble old man who spends his time turning blind eyes to our misdemeanors. Which of these two images do you tend towards? How can we get the balance more right?
- 5) What is the image of God we should emphasize? Can the image that we have of our maker affect the way we see ourselves?
- 6) What visual images do different churches use to help their worship? Are these, or can they become, idols? What is the difference?

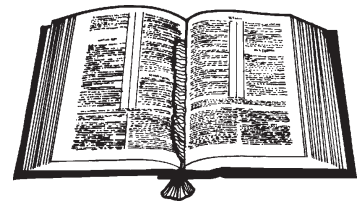
## WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

### Isaiah 44:12-20

- 1) How does this satire make idolatry look ridiculous?
- 2) How does the description compare with worshipping the Lord?

### Acts 17:16-17, 19:22-31

- 1) What was Paul's response to the idol worship in Athens?
- 2) Does his sermon rebuke them for what they've got wrong or commend them for what they've got right? Or both?
- 3) What are his arguments against idol worship?
- 4) How does he want his listeners to respond?



**SCRIPT FOR THE SECOND COMMANDMENT**

The Lonely Traveler



**THE LONELY TRAVELER**

He's always on the road.  
That's his life.  
Travelling around the globe doing travel stories, taking photographs.  
Travelling has become a lifestyle to him.  
He met lots of interesting people,  
but he has never let anyone too close.  
He has always made sure he was on his way  
before things got complicated.  
He said that his job forced him to move on.  
Always surrounded by people but a stranger to everyone really.  
He never looked back —  
not until he met Julie, that is.  
Normally he would just walk out and be on his way.  
But when he tried that routine on her something happened inside him.  
A kind of a pain started.  
Well, he didn't like that much.  
But no matter how hard he tried, he just couldn't shake it off.  
It reminded him of something.

Presenter



**PRESENTER**

Let's refresh our memories a little.  
We've followed the infant nation of Israel  
on their journey from slavery in Egypt  
to an encounter with the God their forefathers had told them of.  
He appeared to them on a mountain called Horeb in the Sinai desert.  
Moses, their leader, went up the mountain and came back down again  
with two stone tablets.  
And carved on these were ten messages from this unknown God.  
The first message was,  
"I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt,  
out of the house of bondage.  
You shall have no other gods before Me."  
Let's have a look at the second message.  
It reads, "You shall not make for yourself a graven image  
or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above  
or that is in the earth beneath  
or that is in the water under the earth.  
You shall not bow down to them or serve them,  
for I the Lord your God am a jealous God.  
I guess the question that comes up when we hear this  
is, Just what is his problem?  
Why doesn't he allow people to put their trust in anything or anyone  
but Him?  
Look at this second command.

NOTE: The contents of this script are  
chronological as they appear in the  
program. However, for your ease in  
isolating any one of the three strands,  
we have put all of the first strand,  
FEELINGS AND MEMORIES

**in bold typeface**

All of the second strand,  
THE BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

in regular typeface

And all of the third strand,  
MODERN EXAMPLE TESTIMONY

in a shaded box.

He tells them not to bow down to anything.  
In other words he seems to be telling his people —  
well, he actually commands them —  
to be free,  
to stand on their own two feet  
and to be responsible for their own choices.  
But our natural reaction to this almighty, all-knowing Being  
is to try to isolate ourselves from Him by hiding behind someone else.  
We desperately need a go-between to soften the focus.  
But God won't accept any kind of lobby, any kind of intermediary,  
any kind of buffer zone.

#### THE LADY WHO CAME TO WACO

The only people that I knew that were Christians  
were my sister and my brother-in-law.  
And in '86 I heard that they had gone over to the States,  
that there was some sort of prophet there in America,  
and I thought, "Well, I'll go along and I'll observe."  
At first I was a bit anxious about what they were studying  
because I heard there were a few things that weren't quite right,  
but I thought, "Well, maybe I can study so long in the Bible,  
and I can pull out somehow."  
So this was the first introduction  
to this prophet that they had been studying under: David Koresh.  
Mount Carmel is at a place, Waco, Texas, that was the main center  
of the Branch Davidians.  
It is 77 acres of land, that housed the main building  
and some other smaller buildings there.  
Generally we were discouraged from making any contact  
with people outside, because they were considered to be Babylon  
and the people at mount Carmel were to be your family.  
Apparently all the women  
would eventually belong to what was called the house of David.  
And what that was, was  
the women outside of the group were Babylonian women.  
So us having been in Babylon ourselves,  
in order to connect back to the royal seat,  
we needed to come into the house of David.  
And there was only one way that you could come into the house of David,  
and that was to be with David Koresh.  
So it was seen as something to aspire to.  
The men were to be eunuchs  
so they were to give up their wives  
for this great truth.  
And the women were to now see David as their husband.  
And that was the only way that they were going to make it  
was through that way.  
So the idea was to procreate another seed which would be pure  
and untainted.

#### The Lady Who Came to Waco







#### THE PRESENTER

With this command the Lord God touches the core of the problem.  
Our problem as fallen human beings.  
As a defense against having to meet almighty God face to face,  
we have cleverly tried to redefine Him.  
At least in our own minds, He's not like that, He's like this.  
We usually try to make Him into either a megalomaniac,  
sitting on an enormous throne,  
casting bolts of lightning down on us poor helpless creatures,  
or we make Him into a kind and rather feeble old man  
who spends his time turning blind eyes to our misdemeanors.  
Either way we make Him into something that He isn't,  
and in doing that He becomes conveniently irrelevant,  
for we either make Him inaccessible  
or totally impotent.



#### THE LONELY TRAVELER

Something felt like it was coming unglued inside.  
And that scared him.  
Memories started to come back, images he'd forgotten,  
and they made things unbearable for him.  
He had gotten his love for traveling from his granddad.  
He thought he was brilliant.  
He'd be at his house every day when he was a kid.  
And his granddad would tell him stories  
about the exotic, faraway places he'd been to.  
I'm sure he used to dream about them at night.  
But he promised himself that he would go there one day.  
When he was twelve his granddad gave him his first camera.  
He was so happy.  
His granddad said, "Every photograph tells a story,  
so you be a storyteller, son."  
Well, his first photograph told a story alright.  
He looked through the viewfinder and saw his granddad slump forward.  
"Grandpa!"  
He was dying.



#### PRESENTER

Let's go back to the beginning.  
Remember the story of Adam and Eve?  
You may have heard how Eve had some sort of a problem with an apple.  
Actually her problem was that God had told them:  
"You can eat anything you like, but not this fruit. It's not good for you."  
Then this snake comes along and says to her,  
"There's nothing wrong with the fruit.  
There's just something wrong with God.  
He doesn't want you to be like Him.  
And that's what will happen once you eat this forbidden fruit."  
So what is Eve to do?  
Obey God and trust that He has her best interest at heart,

or disobey and make her own decision as to what is best for her?  
Well you know the story.  
She eats the fruit.  
Her husband is foolish enough to do the same. And the trouble starts.  
You see, God decided to give them what they wanted:  
independence from Him.  
He sent them off to take care of themselves.  
And from that moment on life just hasn't been as easy.  
And it just seems like all this time we have never been able to admit  
that maybe it's not such a good idea to play at being God.

#### THE LADY WHO CAME TO WACO

He said, "If I come one night into your rooms, ladies,  
I don't want you to be scared or challenge me.  
I just want you to accept that I've chosen you."  
I remember hearing the ladies.  
They were talking about it and they were quite scared.  
I thought, "I'm going to lock my door.  
You know, I don't want him to come suddenly,"  
and I remember lying in my bed thinking, I hope he doesn't come in.  
So it was almost a frightening thing thinking,  
he might come and he might not.  
I was lying in my bed,  
and I felt this voice calling my name.  
I was stirred awake and felt the voice saying, "Do you have faith?"  
I said in myself, "Of course, I have faith."  
And then the next thing that came or the next impression that I felt was  
that I had to get up and go to David's room.  
And I thought, "No way, I don't have that much faith. I'm not going to do it."  
So I just ignored it and went back to sleep.  
And the same thing happened the next night.  
And I thought, "God, I can't do this.  
I can't go up to his bedroom. I'm too scared."  
And so I went to sleep again, ignored it, and it happened again the third  
night.  
And I woke up another lady who I was sharing the cabin with  
and I told her,  
"Let's go up to David's room."  
I didn't really tell her why.  
I thought, "He knows what's coming."  
Then he said, "Okay, I want you to go back and call the other people.  
We're going to have a meeting."  
It was about 3 o'clock in the morning.  
So he went downstairs and rang the bell,  
and everybody came.  
He got up and said, "Come and sit up front with me."  
So he sat me up front, and when I was sitting there he said,  
"Okay, we've got a message here from God."  
And he just ridiculed me.  
Everyone laughed, because to them there was only one spokesman.  
Nobody else hears from God.  
So what is this?



Apparently he called a meeting later on and he told everybody they could have got lost because of what I did that night. I'm still not sure what he meant. I'm assuming they could have lost their salvation because of what I did. So, that was quite a serious offense and I was put under house arrest. It was a 24-hour guard. I stayed in that cabin for 4 months. And at the end of it he said that God said that we could go.



PRESENTER

There is another thing we need to remember about images though. Of course, a statue is a motionless object; it has no life. But the statues in old religions represented a deity. So whoever worshiped the statue worshiped the deity. As the people began to use the statue in this way, the deity began to inhabit it just like the soul inhabits the body. And though the rites were often exceedingly cruel, sometimes even involving self-mutilation or child sacrifice, using these rites and the statue made the god in some way approachable and even manageable. Assuming that you did what you were supposed to do, the deity would then do what it was supposed to do. Though worshipping a statue made from a block of wood or stone may seem ridiculous, there are plenty of examples of things really happening when people do. Some forms of meditations and mantras used in these forms of worship allow the worshipper to go into a trance, and in the process of lowering the barriers of our conscious mind, perhaps it's no surprise they become like an empty container. And that could be inhabited by whatever happens to be around at the time.

However we choose to worship, there is always a price to pay. Whenever we worship something or someone, we invest it with a power over our lives. Once that power is invested, it's not as easy as we might wish to get away from that influence. It's a bit like a trap we've walked in to, almost a kind of slavery. And maybe this tells us something about the meaning of the second part of this message. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, allowing the sins of the fathers to be visited upon the children of the third and the fourth generation of those who turn away from Me, but showing steadfast love to those who love Me and keep my commandments.

## THE LONELY TRAVELER

By the time he understood what was happening, it was too late.  
He couldn't do anything for him.  
How angry and how lost he must have felt.  
He never went back again, though, you know.  
He just ran away from that place,  
and he has been running ever since, I think.  
You see, it hurts to miss his granddad so much.  
And now he doesn't want to miss anyone that much ever.  
But Julie, well, she stopped him in his tracks.  
He ran, all right, but it was too late.  
He's got to face it.  
To miss her is even more painful than the thought of losing her some day.  
He can't go on running and hiding anymore.  
I guess she has helped him to be honest again —  
not to hide behind his job or his camera,  
but to come out and to be loved.

## PRESENTER

All of our choices have consequences,  
not only for us and our families,  
but they will sometimes bring future generations  
to the feet of the same idols  
and into the same slavery,  
almost like a domino effect.  
But look at the next thing the Lord God says.  
The curse of worshipping idols lasts three or four generations,  
but God shows steadfast love to those who love Him  
and keep his commandments.  
These are the ones who have understood their slavery,  
have realized just how helpless they were.  
God takes them out of their captivity,  
and now they have voluntarily chosen to trust the Lord God.

Jesus used the parable of the prodigal son to illustrate this.  
Here is a son who demands that his father give him a share  
of the family inheritance.  
He takes off with the money and spends it all.  
Soon he has nothing left, and he is in big trouble.  
In the gutter he finally comes to his senses. He says to himself,  
"What am I doing here, rotting away,  
when even the slaves of my father's estate have a better life than I do?  
I'll go back home, and I'll ask my father to hire me as a slave."  
But the way his father deals with him  
makes the Lord God's attitude clear.  
For a start, the father has been waiting for his son to return  
every day since he left.  
And when He sees him in the distance,  
rather than waiting for his son to arrive and explain himself,  
he runs to meet him.  
When the son falls to his knees before him in defeat,





his father raises him up, embraces him and weeps with joy.  
When he walks barefoot as a slave would,  
his father puts sandals on his feet.  
When he insists that he is not fit to be a son,  
his father makes him an heir again.  
The trouble is that after spending so long being controlled  
and trying to control,  
real freedom can be confusing and even hard to accept.  
Perhaps we would rather God told us exactly what to do all the time.  
Even raining down fire and brimstone when we do something wrong.  
At least there would be a clear, controlled relationship.  
But he does neither of these things.  
He longs for us to grow into spiritual adults  
by guiding us gently and yet giving us the liberty to make our own choices.

#### THE LADY WHO CAME TO WACO

From the start when I joined the group,  
David told me was a prophet.  
He was God's spokesman  
for this time.  
And what I found eventually, it changed somehow; his position changed  
from prophet to Son of God,  
which was instead of Jesus Christ.  
I remember one of the later studies before I left Mount Carmel.  
David was saying,  
"The government will be coming in here and the FBI, and you'll see tanks."  
I thought, "There's just no way, you know, this little property?  
You know, sort of like blowing it up" and I think,  
he doesn't know what he's talking about.  
And it was a real surprise when it actually did happen.  
In 1993 when I first heard about the raid  
was when a friend rang me and said,  
"Did you know that the group in Waco, Texas, that you were in had been  
raided?"  
And I said, you know, the news just struck me. I was shocked.  
I remember driving down the motorway in New Zealand  
and turning on the radio hearing the names, and they were very familiar.  
One of the people that died  
at the compound was my youngest sister Rebecca.  
My parents continued to get on their knees and pray  
and just ask God to help us.  
They didn't understand what was going on.  
They just knew there was something wrong with us.  
They were devastated.  
They saw Rebecca's death on TV.  
That's how they found out about it.  
My sister rang them and said, "I'm coming over.  
Something has happened to Rebecca."  
So they heard about the siege.  
They hoped that she would come out eventually.  
And then to see their daughter die in flames was devastating.  
I wasn't around at the time.

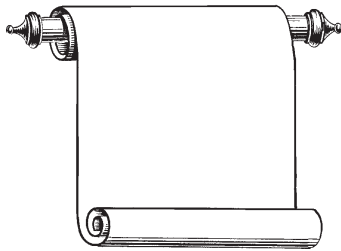
I was in Australia. I'd gone to Australia to help another sister.  
So they were going through that pain in my absence.  
And then when I came back later on that year, we just,  
you know,  
I'd just see it off.  
You know, please forgive me for my part in all this.  
And, you know, they said,  
"At least we still got you."  
And you know, but they were just. . . it took them a long time to recover.  
And that was the first death in our family.  
It was very difficult as well.



1. Have no other gods but Me
2. Do not bow down to anything
3. Do not misuse My Name
4. Keep the Sabbath
5. Honor your father and mother
6. Do not kill
7. Do not commit adultery
8. Do not steal
9. Do not lie
10. Do not covet

# The 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment

## Do not misuse my name



### A SHORT HISTORY OF GOD'S NAME

The people of the Old Testament knew God, not just by titles like “god” and “lord” but by his own personal name, “Yahweh.” But they took the third commandment so seriously that eventually they wouldn’t even pronounce his name: it was too holy for their lips. This made reading the Scriptures aloud difficult, so whenever it said “Yahweh,” they said “the Lord.” When they translated the Scriptures into Greek, in the third century BC, they wrote “the Lord” wherever it said “Yahweh.”

During the Renaissance in fifteenth-century Europe, scholars rediscovered the name of God in the Hebrew manuscripts, but as Hebrew doesn’t write vowels, all it said was “YHWH,” which is hard to pronounce. However, as Jewish scribes had written the Hebrew word for “Lord” in the margin, they took its vowels, added them to “ and got “Jehovah.” Now, further research has shown that “Yahweh” was the most likely pronunciation, but it is still translated “the Lord” in the Bible, because that’s what everyone is used to.

## “Quotes”

### WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID

*Naught but the name of Jesus can restrain the impulse of anger, repress the swelling of pride, cure the wound of envy, bridle the onslaught of luxury, extinguish the flame of carnal desire.*

- Bernard of Clairvaux

*The name of Jesus is in my mind as a joyful song, in my ear a heavenly music, and in my mouth sweet honey.*

- Roger Rolle

*Large areas of The World will not hear us till we have publicly disowned much of our past. Why should they? We have shouted the name of Christ and enacted the service of Moloch.*

- C. S. Lewis

*In the best prophecies, 60% is man, 40% is God. In the usual prophecies, 90% is man, 10% is God.*

- John Harper

## WHAT DO YOU SAY?

### Questions for Discussion

- 1) In what different ways is it possible to misuse the name of the Lord?
- 2) Should Christians expect or demand others to show the same honor for His name even if they don't believe in Him?
- 3) What does God's choice of name ("Yahweh," "I am") tell us about him?
- 4) To use God's name is like using his signature but only for the things for which He gives us license. Do you think that Christians can also do wrong using God's name for "unlicensed things"? What kind of things might we wrongly claim God's signature for?
- 5) Jesus brought his disciples into a new intimacy with his Father by teaching them to call Him "Abba." What does this new name for God tell us about him and about our relationship with him?



## WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

### Psalm 20:6-7

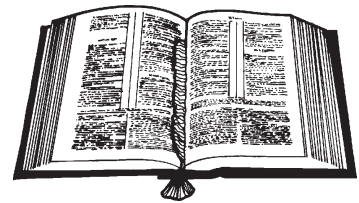
- 1) What does it mean to trust in the name of the Lord?
- 2) What might people trust in these days instead of horses and chariots?

### Matthew 18:19-20

- 1) What does it mean to come together in Jesus' name?
- 2) What difference does this promise make to us?

### Mark 9:38-41

- 1) Why do the disciples think this man was misusing the Lord's name?
- 2) Why does Jesus accept what he's doing?
- 3) Do you think the disciples were actually misusing Jesus' name when they tried to stop the man?
- 4) What does it mean to help someone out in Jesus' name (as in v. 41)?



**SCRIPT FOR THE THIRD COMMANDMENT**

Do not misuse My name.

The Girl and the Homeless  
Man in the Park



Presenter



NOTE: The contents of this script are chronological as they appear in the program. However, for your ease in isolating any one of the three strands, we have put all of the first strand, FEELINGS AND MEMORIES

**in bold typeface**

All of the second strand,  
THE BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

in regular typeface

And all of the third strand,  
MODERN EXAMPLE TESTIMONY

in a shaded box.

**THE GIRL AND THE HOMELESS MAN IN PARK**

**From the very first visit, the park became a special place:  
country girl, farm-fresh and exiled to a big, cold city.  
She saw him through the bandstand bars, the homeless man,  
sitting on the steps in a world all of his own.  
She wasn't afraid of him, just cautious.  
For in his eyes there was no evil, only a sadness.  
He lived there in the park, where he didn't belong.  
Even a little girl could see that.**

PRESENTER

Let's summarize for a minute.  
God has been telling the Israelite people that He is not like the gods they've met so far — the gods of their slave drivers in Egypt, the gods held the Egyptians in bondage just as much as they made slaves of the Israelites.  
By miraculously leading them out of Egypt and straight through the Red Sea, God revealed Himself to them as a God of freedom.  
Then, as they're still getting used to not being slaves any longer, God says to them,  
"Okay, here we are.  
From now on it's just you and I.  
No more of that other gods nonsense.  
I will take care of you from now on.  
And remember, you are a free people now.  
So don't let Me catch you bowing down again for anything or anyone.  
If you want to talk to a deity, come to Me directly and of your own free will and without hiding behind anyone or anything."  
But now comes the third thing. God says,  
"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."  
This is the commandment which is perhaps most commonly misunderstood.  
So before we go any further, we need to clear something up.  
Let me illustrate what I mean.  
Suppose I have a friend who visits me.  
And as we talk he sprinkles his conversation with "goddamn's" and "Jesus Christ" this and that.  
And then out of the blue I finally say,  
"Your mother is a bitch."  
This really stops him in his tracks.  
Then I try to explain to him that his habit of using my heavenly Father's name to give himself some kind of macho-credibility

offends me as much as my making rude comments about his mother might upset him.

After that the conversation stays nice and clean.

But now let me ask you a question.

Do you think my friend was any more holy because he stopped using bad language?

I don't.

Yet we generally seem to agree that God would like a person that doesn't use his name in this way more than a person who does.

I'm pretty sure that God isn't very enthusiastic about people using his name as an obscenity,

but changing our language doesn't make us any better if our attitude to God Himself remains the same.

And that is why this commandment concerns something much more serious than a bit of verbal abuse, however upsetting that might be.

#### KLAN MAN

I felt that it was my Christian duty to work for the Ku Klux Klan.

I felt that it was my Christian duty to preserve the white race because I was taught by the Ku Klux Klan that God's true chosen people are the white people.

And when I got involved in it, I decided that I wasn't going to be a mamby pamby regular run-of-the-mill Ku Klux Klan member.

I was going to work real hard, and I was going to give the organization my one hundred percent.

And what I did was I recruited, I put out ads in the newspapers.

Some of my very first recruits was a whole police force.

I remember one of the first laws that I actually broke was burning a cross on an interracial couple's lawn that had moved into the town where I lived.

And it was a white woman that was married to a black guy.

And we went by and we burned the cross on their lawn, and they moved right after that.

I did such a good job at that, they promoted me to grand dragon, which means I was over the whole state of Oklahoma.

I was in charge of that realm of the Klan.

And eventually I was promoted to being the imperial wizard, which meant that I was over the whole United States Ku Klux Klan.

And I instigated race riots, beatings, whippings, church burnings.

We did a lot of those type of things.

And I was at the helm of it because once I had the power within me,

I could tell other people what to do.

And I could dictate authority.

I could dish it out to the rest of the Klan.

I did these things to put the Klan on the map so people would take notice and realize that we were in town and that they better be afraid of us.

#### Klan Man





PRESENTER

So what exactly is this command about then?  
Well, let's first have a look at the name of God.  
The word "God" is really a description  
rather than a personal name.

The fact that God uses that as his personal title  
is a message in itself.

Unless God would really be the only one of his kind,  
there would be no excuse for Him doing that.

It implies that there aren't any other real gods.

There are lots of spirits around,  
but you can't call them genuine, fully paid up gods.  
But does God have a personal name as well?

He does:

Yahweh.

It's translated, *I Am*.

An odd kind of name, don't you think?

Makes you wonder why God picked it for Himself.

Perhaps one reason might be that it illustrates or underlines, if you will,  
what He really is.

He is not defined or changed by our perception of Him.

He is God.

Even if we don't understand how He is or don't even believe that He is,  
He still is.

No debate, no irrefutable evidence or argument is ever going to change that.



GIRL AND HOMELESS MAN

She spent long hours working on his picture.

It was a gift.

They'd become friends, the little girl and the homeless man.

He never said so, but he always liked to see her there.

She could read that in his eyes.

They both looked forward to their times in the park.

He never had much to say for himself,

but she chatted away about all kinds of things.

She once asked him about his name,

but he wouldn't tell her.

He said, Nobody ever used it.

So it couldn't have been very important, could it?

She couldn't understand that.

The day before her family went on vacation,

she gave him the picture she'd made.

Then she didn't see him for three weeks,

but she often wondered about him

and why he had no name.

The day they came back, she ran to the park to meet her friend  
and tell him about her holiday.

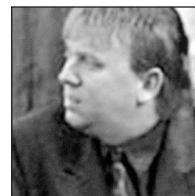
He was gone.

PRESENTER

This message from God forms a sort of group with the first and the second ones. It's like when you meet someone who you haven't met before. You introduce yourself. "Hi, I'm the person who. . ." and so on. And somewhere along the line you say something like, "Oh, and by the way, my name is Adrian." Now just imagine me introducing myself, and at that point I say, "You should not take my name in vain, for I will not hold you guiltless if you do." Just a touch confrontational perhaps. So why would God say that? What does He mean? Why does he take mentioning his name so seriously? We have a phrase: What's in a name? I guess it's meant to be a rhetorical question. But actually there is a great deal in a name. Having a name and especially if being known by other people has everything to do with having an identity. Being someone. Existing. If a person is nameless, it usually means that for some reason he has been forgotten by everyone. He has become irrelevant to everyone else. In a cruel sort of way he has even ceased to exist, though he may not be dead in the literal sense. And then if he actually died, no one would notice anyway. So what's the difference? Perhaps the most stark example of this occurred in Hitler's concentration camps in the second World War where internees were tattooed with a number. And in the end, after everything else had been taken from them, their names were also taken from them, and they became just a number. All this was an attempt to erase their very existence completely. This memorial in Israel is inscribed with the names of all those Jewish children who died in the holocaust because this principle is so deeply felt by the Jewish people. By giving the children back their name, they gave them back their identity and, therefore, their existence.

KLAN MAN

Right after the Civil War or the war between the states in 1865 when the Klan was formed, the Klan put sheets around them and pillow slips over their heads and would drape their horses in sheets because they would ride through the countryside at night, pretending to be the ghost of the confederate death to scare the black people. And so black people would see the Klan riding along the mountainside





with these sheets draped around them  
and they would ride up to black people and say,  
“We’re the ghosts of the confederate dead.  
We haven’t had a drink since the battle at Shiloh.”  
And it would scare the black people.  
I believed in all these things the Klan used  
to instill fear into other people’s minds  
because that’s what the Klan is all about:  
they use fear to control people.  
They have linked themselves with the Nazis and the skinheads  
and the militia groups,  
and their ultimate goal would be an all-white world  
in the extermination of non-white people.  
They would take the Scripture for instance in 2 Corinthians 6:14  
that says, “what fellowship hath light with darkness,” and said that meant  
that blacks and whites are supposed to remain separate from one another.  
And when we were told to hate all black people,  
I found that there were some black people that I just couldn’t hate.  
I remember one time I was invited to be on a radio show  
where I debated a black man which was the head of the National  
Association for the Advancement of Colored People,  
and he was a minister and the pastor of a church. Reverent Wade Watts.  
And I debated him and I called him every name in the book.  
When I got face to face with him I said to him,  
“Well, you no good sorry black so and so.”  
He looked at me and smiled and said, “God bless you son.  
Jesus loves you.”  
And I would say, “Well, I hate you.”  
And he said, “Well, I don’t hate you.  
I’m going to pray for you whether you like it or not.”  
So with that type of attitude, I found it very hard to hate a man  
that would have that type of attitude toward me.  
And Rev. Watts was really nice.  
I remember one time we surrounded him —  
he was eating a plate of chicken in a restaurant —  
and we surrounded him in the restaurant and said,  
“We’re going to do the same thing to you  
that you do to that chicken.”  
So he picked up the chicken and he kissed it.  
And when he did that, even the Klan started laughing  
and we turned around and walked away from him after that.  
He just refused to let the KKK intimidate him.  
And he was a big influence on my life because of that.



PRESENTER

What does God mean by “take my name in vain”?  
To mention a name indicates a relationship of some sort,  
and that’s what God wants with his people.  
And there is a big difference when your name is spoken by a colleague  
or by the one you love.  
When you love someone and know that person well,  
just that name represents a world of memories and shared experiences.

And the other person will hear that  
in the way you speak their name.  
God wants the same thing.  
He knows who we are.  
He knows what's in a name.  
When He speaks our name,  
He expresses the full weight of all we are  
and wraps around that his love and concern.  
When He calls us by name,  
then it's never in vain,  
and it should be the same the other way around.

#### GIRL AND HOMELESS MAN

**She could not understand it.  
The park seemed empty now.  
Her mother asked around, and people told her  
that he had been found dead one morning while they were away.  
She was devastated.  
No one knew who he was or where he came from.  
So it took them quite some time to find out where they had buried him.  
He didn't have a name,  
but she wanted to give him something that said he belonged.  
So she gave him a new name.  
She wrote it in the sandy earth of his grave:  
Jack.**

#### PRESENTER

What we have discussed so far is not all there is to say about God's name.  
It might sound to you like God just takes conversation very seriously  
and tells us to realize that when speaking his name,  
we are talking to Him.  
Well, there is more to his name than just that.

In the name of Jesus we are saved and receive forgiveness for our sins.  
It is like the power of a signature really.  
If someone signs his name,  
a document becomes legal and has authority.  
To use God's name is like using his signature,  
but only for the things for which He gives us license.  
You cannot just go about and use that signature for whatever you want.  
Let me give you an example.  
There were some very miraculous things happening  
in the early years of Christianity.  
When Jesus' new disciples would pray to God in the name of Jesus,  
sick people would be healed,  
and demons would leave those who were possessed.  
Seeing the effect this had, other people would try to do the same thing  
as if speaking the name was a magic formula somehow.  
At one point several sons of a man named Sceva  
told a demon to leave someone  
in the name of Jesus who Paul preaches, they said.



As a prelude to attacking them the demon answered,  
Jesus I know and Paul I know, but who are you?  
Well, this is a perfect illustration of how it works.  
You see, Paul had much more than a name.  
He had a relationship.  
He wasn't just using the name.  
He had spoken to God and had received instructions  
to go and act in the name of Jesus.  
The sons of Sceva, on the other hand, had the name but no relationship,  
and that became very clear from the demon's reply.  
Subsequently, they had absolutely no authority and received quite a beating.  
This wasn't a unique thing between God and the apostle Paul either.  
The whole New Testament is full of stories like this one,  
with other disciples of Jesus performing great miracles in his name.  
And the key to this is in the word "disciple."  
A disciple is a person who has come before God  
and had the nerve to be honest and confessed their sins,  
a person humble enough to ask God's forgiveness  
and wise enough to stick with what God says.



#### KLAN MAN

Because I had resigned from being their leader.  
I didn't resign from the Klan, I just resigned from being their leader,  
but they were mad that I had resigned, because they were counting on me  
to lead them for the next 20 or 30 years,  
and because of the fact that I had resigned, they didn't like that.  
So they weren't there for me, and all of a sudden there I was dead broke,  
and I had lost everything, and it was hard for me to comprehend  
that one day I am being picked up in limousines  
to go to the Oprah Winfrey show and I am speaking at big Klan rallies,  
and I'm commanding all of these people,  
and the next day I had no money, I had no job, I had no people, everything.  
I am just stripped bare of everything.  
When I had all the power and the women  
and the money and the leadership in the Klan,  
I wouldn't listen to anybody.  
But when all of that was gone, then God got my attention  
by stripping me helpless of everything to where I was down and out  
on my luck and God got my attention.  
When I read that story on the prodigal son,  
I realized what God was trying to say to me.  
So I got on my knees and I asked Jesus to come into my heart.  
I felt a lot of the guilt being taken off me,  
and I knew Jesus had listened to me.  
But I was still full of prejudice.  
I didn't get up off the ground and say, "I love all black people,  
and I love all Jewish people."  
That didn't happen.  
I still had the racial prejudice that was in my heart and, you see,  
prejudice and hate is a learned response.  
You're not born with it, someone has to teach it to you, so I still had it.  
And I wanted to go see the people that I considered an enemy.

The Klan taught that churches like Victory Christian Center was an enemy of our race, so I wanted to go see what that was all about. So I wanted to go check it out and when I walked in I was really amazed, because I had seen blacks and whites and browns and yellows and reds all worshipping together. There was the American Indian standing next to the black man, standing next to the white man, standing next to the Asian man, standing next to the Hispanic man, men and women, and people all worshipping together, worshipping the same God, and I was truly amazed at that. God gave me a heart for that. The more time I spend around these people, the more I got rid of the prejudice. Then I began to realize that I had brothers and sisters of all races and denominations. I realized that I had been using God's name in vain; I realized that I had been distorting God's Word and claiming God's Word was something that it was not. And when you take God's name in vain, that does not mean saying a curse word with God's name in it. Taking God's name in vain is trying to justify hatred. The most profane thing you can have is hatred of another race. When you use God to justify that hatred, that's taking his name in vain. I realized that all of the things that I taught — whether I used the name of God or not when I was in the KKK — all the things that I have taught and all the things that I have been taught, all these things were wrong.

PRESENTER

The Israelites out of reverence for the holy name of God wouldn't even pronounce it, wanting to avoid any possibility of breaking his commandment. So they called God, *Adonai*, Lord. Or they only used the letters of his name: Jehovah. Jesus brought his disciples into a new intimacy with his Father by teaching them to call Him, Abba, meaning "Daddy."

Jesus showed them that as they drew close and honored Him, the almighty God would lift them up and embrace them as His much loved children. This is the relationship, our Father longs for.

