

## Text/Theme: Second Commandment

My dear beloved flock, the text for our meditation this morning is the Second Commandment and its meaning, found on page 321 of your hymnals.

Good Morning Boys and Girls, I pray that your bodies are healthy as we discussed last week. Have you ever pondered your name? Why are you named the name you are? Why are you named Aquilla, Kate, Jamie, and Kaylee? I am sure that Mom and Dad thought long and hard about what to name you when you were born and chose that name for a very particular reason. You are not named Joe, or Catherine, it would be odd to call you by those names because those are not your names. William Shakespeare once famously penned in Romeo and Juliet, “A Rose by any other name would smell as sweet.” That what we call something does not change how sweet it smells. We could call it a tulip or a lily and it would still smell sweet. Today we hear in the Second Commandment about the name of God. It states “You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God.” What is God’s name? How do we misuse it? How do we honor it today? Ponder these questions as you hear the rest of the sermon. You may go back to your seats and those who love you.

### **God’s name?**

Let’s start by reviewing the Second Commandment: “You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God.” Everything of who God is and what he has done for us is wrapped up and packed into his name. In revealing His name means that we

know who God is. He is not just some vague “higher power” up there whom we cannot know or we cannot be sure about, like the force from Star Wars.

No, God has revealed himself to us. This happens in and through his holy Word. God made a covenant with Abraham. He revealed himself. He made his name known, to Moses. What is God’s name? He says, “I am who I am.” Or “I will be who I will be.” His name is Yahweh. What in theological circles is called the Tetragrammaton, YHWH. (Yes, for those of you wondering, it does work with the YMCA song.) His name given for the deliverance of His people. The Lord God acted in history to deliver his people and make good on his promises. The Lord God promised to send a Messiah, the Son of David, to bring in the kingdom of heaven here on earth. And we know that the Messiah is Jesus, the Christ. Jesus makes God known to us. He is the Word of God incarnate. Because of Jesus, we are not in the dark any longer about who God is and what His attitude towards us is.

We have even been baptized in God’s name, the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. In Holy Baptism, we have been joined to, we now belong to, the triune God. We bear God’s name upon our head and our hearts. God marks us as His own by use of His name. We bear forth that connection in our thoughts, words, deeds and actions.

### **Use of God’s name**

And so how we use God’s name, which is the sum total of how God has revealed himself to us—how we use God’s name

with our mouth, with our tongue, shows how we are loving God. It shows whether or not we are grateful that God has made himself known to us as the God who loves us and cares for us and sent his Son Jesus to be our Savior.

So how are we doing? Well, it's a good thing that you are here in church to praise God with your voice, singing hymns, confessing your faith, giving your "Amen" to the prayers of the church. Those are ways in which we indeed love God with our mouth.

How do you speak of God in your home or to your neighbors? Do you give all glory to God? Do you acknowledge him in all your ways? Do you call on God's name in prayer in your daily devotions? Do you speak well of your church to others, that this is the place where you hear the good news of Christ, where God's Word is taught in its truth and purity, where your sins are forgiven, where Christ is present, and where eternal life is bestowed freely for Christ's sake? Well, maybe now things are getting a little dicier. Because maybe we don't use our mouth so well in these ways. Maybe we don't control our tongue so well. Our prayer life falters. We neglect to use our tongue to praise God, to bear witness to him, to call upon his name in every trouble. So while the commandment is good and holy, the problem is, we aren't. We sin and fall short on a daily basis. And so the Law condemns us.

We sin on a daily basis. You have not loved God with your whole heart. You have not loved God with how you have used your tongue or ears, or any other body part. Yes, you are a sinner. But Jesus is the Savior of sinners! He is your Savior!

Christ Jesus kept God's Law perfectly in your place. He kept the Second Commandment by using the name of the Lord as it is meant to be used. His mouth and ears were in service to God. Jesus used his mouth to proclaim good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. Jesus used his ears to always hear the Father's voice and to do his will. He used his ears to hear the cries of those in distress: "Lord, have mercy!" Jesus' mouth and ears were always in service to love for the Father and love for people. Jesus is the only righteous one. And yet this same Jesus suffered and died for our sins. He died so that we might live. He rose from the dead so that we might receive a new name, His name, and thereby have eternal joy in the kingdom of heaven. All this he did for you.

Having been washed in Jesus' blood, given the name of God upon us. Let us always pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to enable us to honor His name among us, now and unto life everlasting.

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.