

DON'T MISUSE MY NAME

Scriptures used: Exodus 20:7, Acts 1:8, Acts 2:42-45 (NLT)

OVERVIEW

God has commanded us not to misuse His name. When we take it “in vain” and use it in empty, insignificant ways, or align it with falsehood, we make God small. We dishonor Him! God’s strategy for changing the world is to change people’s hearts through His power. When we diminish and reduce Him to something trivial, that impedes His ability to open the hearts of people and transform communities. We contrast this with the early church of Acts, which through the power of the Holy Spirit, honors the name of God by acting together and effecting substantial change in the community.

We are using our time in Life Groups this week to host House Meetings, small group conversations where we will explore issues impacting our local communities. The Life Group leader will guide us through the conversation, and there will be someone taking notes on what is shared. This will help guide New Beginnings in the next phase of transforming the community.

KEY POINTS

The Big Idea: The 10 Commandments are best understood in the context of relationship, and they are given as gifts and blessings.

- 1) When we misuse God’s name, there are significant implications for how we view God. Misusing God’s name:
 - a. Devalues God’s person. Names have meaning and give people value. When we demean the name of God, we reduce His value in our lives.
 - b. Deflates God’s authority. When we reduce the role of God in our lives, we diminish His authority.
 - c. Defames God’s reputation. When we align God’s name with what is false or evil (that which is inconsistent with His character), we defame God’s reputation. It impacts what we believe about God and so impedes His work in the world.

- 2) How do we misuse (dishonor) God’s name?
 - a. With our lips. We make false commitments or use obscene language. This strips God of His holiness and drives the message that God isn’t really God in our lives and the world.
 - b. With our lives. We claim God’s name while living in ways that are inconsistent with God’s character. As Christians, we are stewards of His name (Acts 1:8) and our job is to magnify God’s character. We should ask ourselves: When people think of my life, does it add to or take away from the reputation of God?

- 3) How do we honor God’s name?
 - a. Individually. We unleash His Light, Love and Power in our lives.
 - b. Corporately. We reveal His Light, Love and Power to the world. The power of God is amplified when the church acts together (Acts 2:42-45). The transformation in the early church happened over time, and it was the first time the Roman Empire had experienced anything like this. We are starting in house meetings and reflection, where the early church started. Like the early church, we want NBCC to shock Silicon Valley as we reveal the Light, Love and Power of Jesus.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** When you think about the pressures, issues and challenges facing people in your community, what makes you angry or causes you pain?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** Collectively discuss the themes surfaced from the stories. What do our stories have in common? What is different in our experiences?
- 3) **DO** How has what you’ve learned in the message and experienced in the House Meeting caused you to think differently about your role in the world as a follower of Jesus? Is there a next step that comes to mind as a result of that?