A Publication of St. Luke's Chapel in the Hills Anglican Church

The Hillside Messenger

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A Message from the Rector: The Ten Commandments: Part III

The Third Commandment, "Thou shalt not take the Name of the LORD thy God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His Name in vain," is found in *Exodus 20:7* and *Deuteronomy 5:11* (KJV). The section of *To Be a Christian: An Anglican Cate-*

chism relating to this commandment is Questions 283 -289 on pages 97 and 98. The fact that any transgression of this commandment carries guilt in God's sight teaches God's people that any flippant disregard of God's holy Name is a serious sin, not just a slip of the tongue. This leads us to consider what it really means to take the Lord's Name in vain

The word *vain* in this context means "empty" or "meaningless." To take the name of the Lord in vain is to use God's Name as if it has no meaning, power, greatness, or holiness. For example, suppose someone steps into a swimming pool and, surprised by how cold the water is, uses the Name of God as an exclamation. Clearly, he is not praying to God to change the temperature of the water! The flippant

take the name of the LORD your God in vain.

use of God's Name in such contexts indicates far deeper, underlying problems, those of not being a worshipper of God and of having no relationship with Him. On the other hand, when one cries out in any kind of crisis, "God, help me!" that is a prayer; it is not an instance of taking the Name of the Lord in vain. So significant is this command that the first petition in the Lord's Prayer confirms both the holiness of God's Name and the importance of honoring it as holy: "Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed by Thy Name" (*St. Matthew 6:9b*, KJV). This petition teaches us the highest priority in our lives is to

exalt, honor, reverence, magnify, and regard as holy the Name of God. Whenever we do this, we keep ourselves distant from dishonoring God's Name or taking it in

vain. Question 284 in the Catechism asks why God's Name is sacred. The answer given is that God's Name reveals His identity, His nature, His character, His power, and His purposes. Whatever Names of God we encounter in Holy Scripture, all of them are holy. In

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The Ten Commandments: Part III

(Continued from page 1) *Exodus* 3:1-15, in the passage where God speaks to Moses from the burning bush and calls him to lead Israel out of Egypt, He reveals His Name as Yahweh, meaning "I am that I am" (*Exodus 3:14a*, KJV). This Name conveys the idea of God always existing and causing things to be. Wherever the Name Yahweh occurs in the Old Testament, the King James Version translators rendered it "LORD." Later. in Exodus 34, the LORD descends in a cloud and stands before Moses, proclaiming His Name and who He is. with the result that Moses bows his head toward the ground and worships God. *Psalm* 8 begins and ends with the proclamation of how excellent the Name of the LORD is in all the world. In Isaiah 57:15 we read that God, whose Name is Holy, lives in a high and holy place with the person also who has a contrite and humble spirit so that He may revive the spirit of the humble and revive the heart of contrite people. The Blessed Virgin Mary in telling of God's mighty acts and His mercy on the lowly, proclaims:

> For He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name. St. Luke 1:49, KJV

The great things that God did for the Blessed Virgin

Mary in granting her to be the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, she gratefully realized and acknowledged that He alone could have done for her, and this confirmed for her the Holiness of God's Name.

How, then, can we avoid taking God's Name in vain? Since we love God, we must worship, praise, and thank God daily. Such habits of prayer and adoration will help us to use God's Name reverently and not carelessly or profanely (Question 286). Not only habits of prayer and worship, but also obedience to God's laws help us to fear God's Name, as **Deuteronomy** 28:58-68 teaches us, warning of the dreadful consequences of disobedience. We must always remember that the underlying sin behind taking God's Name in vain is willful disobedience and rebellion, whereas the underlying motive for honoring and hallowing God's Name is love and obedience to God.

What counts as profane use of God's Name? Perjury would be one example of the profane use of God's Name, when one lays one's hand upon the Bible swearing to tell the court nothing but the truth and then deliberately lies in one's testimony. Another would be blasphemy, treating God's Name with contempt and mockery by reviling, or cursing God. But here is an example of the careless or profane use of God's Name that might not so easily be apparent: when one attributes to God any falsehood, injustice, heresy, or evil deed as if He had originated or approved it. This includes presuming to speak a prophetic message which God has not authorized (Deuteronomy 18:20-22). Even the extremes of riches and poverty may cause people to deny God or take His Name in vain (Proverbs 30:7-9). Oppressing people, as the Israelites did to their countrymen in refusing to let them go free after they had served them seven years because of debts, is also despising God's Name (Jeremiah 34:15-16). When we oppress and exploit others, we dishonor God's Name. Worshipping idols and false gods is also despising God's Name. Since Christians bear God's Name in being baptized into union with the Lord Jesus Christ, their prime responsibility is to live lives that honor God's Name. Not only idolatry and oppression of the poor dishonor God's Name, so does sexual immorality (Amos 2:7). Ungodly, false Christians despise the holy Name of God through their immoral and boastful practices (St. Jude 4-19). One can say that breaking any of the Ten Commandments is the same as breaking them all (*St. James 2:10*).

Any use of magic, enchantment, or consulta-

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The Ten Commandments: Part III

(Continued from page 2) tion with mediums, flies in the face of God's law and dishonors His Name (Question 288; Leviticus 19:26-31; Deuteronomy 18:10-14), as do praying evil against people, cursing them, or manipulating them for one's own ends. Instead, we must bless and pray for our enemies (St. Matthew 5:43-45). It is not the case that Christians are given authority

to curse people who act in a hostile fashion towards them. since that would be imitating the Devil rather than the Lord Jesus Christ. The authority God has given us through our Baptism into Christ Jesus our Lord is to build up and not break down God's kingdom.

In *Numbers 12*, an incident is recorded which has a bearing on this matter. Moses' sister, Miriam, and his brother, Aaron, speak against Moses because of an Ethiopian woman he has married. They then claim to have the same authority to speak God's word as Moses (*Numbers 12:2*). When God speaks to them at the tabernacle, stating that Moses is not merely a prophet, but faithful in all God's house (*Numbers 12:7*), and that He speaks clearly to Moses, not in visions, dreams, or "riddles" (NRSV), and Moses sees the likeness of the LORD. The question the Lord asks Miriam and Aaron is, "Were ye not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?" (*Numbers 12:8c*) The effect of the Lord's can be broken is something to which Christians ought to pay serious attention. They should never despise the leaders whom God has set over them in Christ, for they just might be ignorant of the standing these leaders have with God.

How, then, can we obey the Third Commandment and honor and love God's Name? The answer to this question is

The proof of our love for God is our obedience to the commands of God.

> anger on them was that Miriam was affected with leprosy for seven days. Miriam and Aaron, in speaking against Moses and questioning his authority that God had given him to speak God's word, had despised God's Name and the relationship in which Moses stood with God. In doing so, they had come against God. This way in which the Third Commandment

to keep one's vows and promises, worship God in truth and holiness, and invoke God's Name reverently and responsibly (Question 289, page 98, To Be a Christian: An Anglican Catechism). - The Reverend

Chris Parrish

The Hillside Messenger

Our Chapel Family Prayer List

This prayer list was current as of August 20th, and the people of St. Luke's will pray for each need until we are notified that it has been met. Please contact Father Parrish to add or remove names. Thank you!

God. the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech Thee for all sorts and conditions of men; that Thou wouldest be pleased to make Thy ways known unto them, Thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for Thy holy Church universal; that it may be so guided and governed by Thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to Thy fatherly goodness:

Archbishop Foley Beach; Bishop Richard Lipka; Canon Michael Penfield; Father Chris Parrish; Deacon Peter Vogel; and Deacon Linda Bracken; also all those who serve as Thy ministers in governing our nation and state, particularly: President Joe Biden; and

Governor Gavin Newsom; as well as all those who are any ways afflicted, or distressed, in mind, body, or estate; especially those for whom our prayers are desired:

the soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, coasties, guardians, police officers,

firefighters, and pilots who protect us every day;

our persecuted Christian brothers and sisters throughout the world; all refugees; the people and leaders of Ukraine in this time of war; Jim and Edna Davis: Joya de Rossett; Debbie; Scott; Brittany; Tanya Theiler; Mark Quinn; Lisa; Ben; Marion; Flo: Max; Dan and Kendra Pack; the Stanko family; Yoshihiko and Hideko Ikegami; Mary Frances Reeves; Mrs. Kitt;

Jon Carter; Frank Capone; Rose Handwerker; Ann and Frank MacVoy; Bishop Ilgenfritz; Moe Martinez: Victoria Grace; Sharon Veach; Diane Ahlport; Christina: Father Thomas and Lora Vece; Haley and Gabriella; John and Heidi Donnelly; and Ray and Elodia Boreham and Family; that it may please Thee to comfort and relieve them. according to their several necessities; giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And this we beg for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.



A Prayer for Our Congregation

0 GOD,

Holv Ghost. Sanctifier of the faithful, visit, we pray Thee, the Congregation of St. Luke's Chapel in the Hills with Thy love and favour; enlighten our minds more and more with the light of the everlasting Gospel; graft in our hearts a love of the truth; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and of Thy great mercy keep us in the same, O blessed Spirit. Whom, with the Father and the Son together, we worship and glorify as one God, world without end. Amen.

In Times of Great Sickness and Mortality

O MOST mighty and merciful God, in this time of grievous sickness, we flee unto Thee for succour. Deliver us, we beseech Thee, from our peril; give strength and skill to all those who minister to the sick; prosper the means made use of for their cure; and grant that, perceiving how frail and uncertain our life is, we may apply our hearts unto that heavenly wisdom which leadeth to eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Rain

O GOD, heavenly Father, Who by Thy Son Jesus Christ hast promised to all those who seek Thy kingdom, and the righteousness thereof, all things necessary to their bodily sustenance; send us, we beseech Thee, in this our necessity, such moderate rain and showers, that we may receive the fruits of the earth to our comfort, and to Thy honour; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Dear Roger,

I've been a Christian for quite a while, but I'm not sure how to tell if I'm really growing spiritually. Can you give me some sort of measuring stick so I can tell how well I'm doing?

> Sincerely, Paul

ear Paul, The single greatest tragedy in the church is the Christian who refuses to grow up.

Here is a simple checklist I use which will help you determine your level of spiritual maturity.

But first, let me begin by sharing a few principles about spiritual growth:

6 Principles about Spiritual Growth

1. There are different levels of spiritual maturity.

The apostle John mentions three levels: children; young men and women; mothers and fathers:

> I write to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His Name's sake. I write to you, fathers, because you have

known Him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, because vou have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and vou have overcome the wicked one.

I St. John 2:12**-**14

2. God's design is for all babies to grow up spiritually!

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature Body of Him who is the Head, that is. Christ.

Ephesians 4:14-15

3. Spiritual growth is a long-term process.

You have persevered and have endured hardships for My Name, and have not grown weary. *Revelation 2:3*

4. Spiritual babies do not automatically become spiritual mothers and fathers. They must do those things which produce maturity.

> Continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. **II St. Timothy**

11 St. Timothy 3:14-15

5. Many Christians fail to mature because of sin, pride, laziness, materialism, ignorance, or failure to "sell out" to Jesus Christ.

> [Evangelist] Major Ian Thomas [wrote]: "I have discovered an interesting thing about American Christians. They do not usually come to church

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(Continued from page 6) to learn anything. Whatever they do not yet know themselves they think is not really necessary."

6. Why should I bother to grow up in Christ?

Because our heavenly crowns and rewards will be given according to the profitability of our ministry on earth.

> Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

St. James 1:12

A Checklist for Evaluating Your Spiritual Level

This checklist is based on *I St. John 2:12-14* (see above), where the apostle John delineates the following three levels of spiritual maturity: spiritual children; spiritual young men and women; and spiritual mothers and fathers.

1. Have I surrendered my life to Christ as my Lord and Savior (*St. John 3:16; I St. John 2:13*)?

Spiritual infancy commences with the understanding that we are sinners, Jesus Christ died on the cross for our sins, and we can have a relationship with Him by asking for forgiveness.

2. Am I secure in the fact that my sins are forgiven? Or do I still struggle with believing that God could forgive me after all the sins I have committed? (I St. John 2:12)

Trusting Jesus Christ as Savior and the assurance of our salvation in Him comes down to a decision. We choose to believe God's Word and have faith in His promises. Making and standing strong on that choice is a mark of spiritual maturity.

3. Have I overcome the world (*I St. John* 5:4)?

The word *overcome* basically means "no longer fooled, no longer deceived." Spiritual children understand that the world's way is not the way that God has called us to live. A person may be a Christian for 20 or 30 years, but he/she is still a baby if they value and seek the things of the world.

4. Am I having a difficult time applying the Bible to everyday life (*Hebrews 5:13*)?

For example, spiritual children have trouble sorting out issues like the Biblical grounds for divorce, or for giving, or for knowing God's will. As we mature, seeking out Biblical truth and relying on the Holy Spirit for wisdom becomes second nature.

5. Am I certain that I am not following false teachers or false doctrines (*Ephesians 4:14*)?

Mormons tell us that over two-thirds of all converts to Mormonism are people with an evangelical Christian background. The gospel of salvation taught by St. Paul is, "Faith plus nothing equals salvation." Salvation is a free gift based on

grace. On the other hand. the false gospel of Mormonism includes a number of steps in place of the "nothing" which must be accomplished to reach what is termed the "Third Heaven." Spiritually mature Christians are

not fooled by false teaching because they know the Bible well.

6. Do I struggle with spiritual fears and insecurities (*St. Matthew* 10:26-28)?

"I'm afraid that if I tithe, I won't have enough money left to meet my needs."

"I sometimes wonder whether or not I am truly saved."

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"I am afraid that if I sin too much God won't love me anymore and I will somehow lose my salvation."

Confidence in God's promises— trusting Him to supply our needs— is a mark of spiritual maturity. It's most often gained as we trust God through hardship and experience His presence.

7. Do I see signs of steady spiritual growth or am I backsliding into stagnant carnality? (*I Corinthians 3:1-3*)

How long can one remain a baby Christian before becoming stuck in "carnality" or unspiritual? St. Paul taught the Christians at Ephesus the "whole counsel of God" in three years. I believe that if we haven't made great strides in our Christian walk in three years, we are in grave danger of becoming carnal or unspiritual.

8. Am I praying to be a spiritual mother or father at any price?

This is the most difficult prayer you'll ever pray ... and the one God will always answer.

Evaluating the Characteristics of Spiritual Young Men and Women

1. Am I developing strong spiritual muscles by consist-

ently training with the spiritual disciplines? (*II St. Timothy* 1:6-9)

There are at least nineteen spiritual disciplines mentioned in Scripture. Some of them are meditation, prayer, fasting, Bible study, simplicity, confession, and worship (I recommend Richard Foster's *Celebration of Discipline* for a detailed study of all of them).

2. How well do I know the content and teachings of the Bible? (*Acts* 17:11)

What does it mean to "know the Bible"? I'll give you a test just for fun.

What is the main theme of the book of *Oba-diah*?

Except for two words, which two psalms are exactly alike?

The Ten Commandments are found in two different places in the Old Testament. Where?

The book of *Ephe-sians* is just like what other New Testament book?

What is the only miracle found in all four Gospels?

I've tried to ask you some very simple questions about the Bible. You can't read the New Testament over the years without knowing that *Colossians* and *Ephesians* are just alike. You can't read the *Psalms* consistently without being shocked that *Psalms 13* and *56* are just alike.

Once the Word of God is hidden in your heart, your experience, practice, and the Holy Spirit all work together to enable the spiritually mature to minister effectively.

3. Do I recognize the Satanic attacks raging around others and me? Am I comfortable engaging in spiritual warfare? (*I St. John 2:13-14*; *Revelation 12:11*)

The word *overcome* used in *I St. John 2* means "to be no longer deceived by Satan's workings and devices." Satan's basic work against Christians is in the area of lies and deception. His tools are temptations, accusations, and insinuations.

Not only are spiritual young men and women able to adequately defend themselves in battle, they are able to help those who have been ensnared in Satan's traps as well.

Evaluating the Characteristics of Spiritual Mothers and Fathers

1. Am I consciously developing a deeper intimacy with Jesus? (*Psalm* 73:25)

Spiritual babies delight in their experiences. Young men and women delight in their understanding of the Word of God. Moth-

(Continues on page 9)

(Continued from page 8) ers and fathers delight in Jesus Himself.

2. Am I more likely to see life from God's perspective or from mine? (*I Corinthians* 2:11-16)

Spiritual mothers and fathers have spent so much time communing with and experiencing Jesus that when a situation arises, instead of having to figure out the pros and cons, they already know God's intentions. They can see a situation and say I know what God would do here. Spiritual children wouldn't have the slightest idea of what God would do. Spiritual fathers come to the point where they think like God instinctively.

3. Do I refuse to judge others on earth because of a growing understanding that God is bigger than anyone can fathom? (*Romans 11:33*)

I've heard spiritually immature Christians say, "This is what God said and this is the way it is. If you don't do it this way, you're not doing it God's way."

Others say, "I know what the Bible means; don't try to confuse me with the facts!"

I'll illustrate the futility of anyone thinking they have a monopoly on understanding God very simply: A man from San Francisco wades out into the Pacific Ocean, sees the waves, touches the water, estimates the temperature, and observes the coastline and then cries gleefully, "I know the Pacific Ocean." The truth is, he knows basically nothing at all about the Pacific Ocean.

God is higher, greater, and infinitely more complex than any human mind can comprehend. We tend to forget that God is greater than we can imagine!

4. Spiritual mothers and fathers help spiritual children grow up.

St. Paul wrote tenderly to his church in Thessalonica, "We were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her children. We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel, but our lives as well" (I Thessalonians 2:7-8). Spiritual mothers and fathers nurture spiritual children by ensuring that they get fed the word of God and learn basic Christian doctrine. They help them set in place morals and values that develop strong character. They teach them to pray, fast, and worship. They teach them how to be intimate with Jesus. They help them discover their spiritual gifts and know God's will for their lives, and they prepare them to be men and women of God.

Let me encourage you to pray for God to make you a spiritual father at any price. That is one prayer that I guarantee God will answer.

> Love, Roger



Dr. Roger Barrier retired as senior teaching pastor from Casas Church in Tucson, Arizona. In addition to being an author and soughtafter conference speaker, Roger has mentored or taught thousands of pastors, missionaries, and Christian leaders worldwide. Casas Church, where Roger served throughout his 35-year career, is known for a well-integrated, multi-generational ministry. The value of including new generations is deeply ingrained throughout Casas to help the church move strongly right through the twentyfirst century and beyond. Dr. Barrier holds degrees from Baylor University, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Golden Gate Seminary in Greek, religion, theology, and pastoral care

Parish Postings

Please note that, out of love for our brothers and sisters and to safeguard those who are vulnerable, the Vestry has decided face masks must be worn by all those who attend services in the Chapel.



Sunday Morning Bible Study continues with the study of the *First Epistle of St. John* on Sundays at 9:15 AM. All are welcome!



The Los Altos Hills Hoedown will take place at Westwood Community Barn (27210 Altamont Road) on Saturday, September 10th, from 4:00 to 7:00 PM. Let's join our neighbors to enjoy BBQ, bluegrass, square dancing, and equestrian events.



The Vestry will meet after Holy Communion and Fellowship on Sunday, September 18th. All interested parishioners are invited to observe.



St. Luke's Chapel in the Hills will celebrate its annual International Day on Sunday, September 25th, with an international-themed potluck luncheon following Morning Prayer. In preparation for International Day, please:

- Let Father Parrish know by Sunday, September 18th, if you have a favorite hymn from another country you would like to sing at the worship service. Thank you!
- Sign up to bring a dish to share at the potluck (use the sign-up sheet in McNeely Hall). Thank you!
- Invite your friends and neighbors!



Upcoming Events

Friday, September 2nd *Telephone Praver Meeting*

10:00 AM

Sunday, September 4th The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity Sunday Morning Bible Study 9:15 AM Holy Communion with Holy Unction in the Chapel and via Zoom 10:00 AM

Friday, September 9th

Telephone Prayer Meeting 10:00 AM

Sunday, September 11th The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity Sunday Morning Bible Study 9:15 AM Office of Morning Prayer

in the Chapel and via Zoom 10:00 AM

Friday, September 16th

Telephone Prayer Meeting 10:00 AM

Sunday, September 18th The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity Sunday Morning Bible Study 9:15 AM

Holy Communion in the Chapel and via Zoom 10:00 AM

Vestry Meeting 11:30 AM

He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

St. John 14:21

Wednesday, September 21st

St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist Ember Day

> Friday, September 23rd Ember Day Telephone Prayer Meeting 10:00 AM

Saturday, September 24th Ember Day

Sunday, September 25th The Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity Sunday Morning Bible Study 9:15 AM

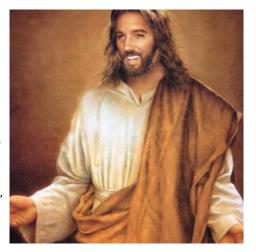
> Office of Morning Prayer in the Chapel and via Zoom 10:00 AM

International Day Potluck following the service

Friday, September 30th Telephone Prayer Meeting 10:00 AM

Sunday, October 2nd The Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity Sunday Morning Bible Study 9:15 AM

Holy Communion with Holy Unction in the Chapel and via Zoom 10:00 AM





A PUBLICATION OF ST. LUKE'S CHAPEL IN THE HILLS ANGLICAN CHURCH

A Parish of the Convocation of the West, part of the Missionary Diocese of All Saints in The Anglican Church in North America

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Worship Schedule

St.

Luke's Chapel in the Hills is a traditional Anglican parish which uses the 1928 edition *Book of Common Prayer*. We invite you to join us for worship and fellowship soon!

First, third, and fifth Sundays of each month

Sunday Morning Bible Study 9:15 AM Holy Communion (with Healing Service on First Sundays) 10:00 AM

Second and fourth Sundays each month Sunday Morning Bible Study 9:15 AM Office of Daily Morning Prayer 10:00 AM

Please note that Holy Communion will be celebrated on Feast Days occurring on second and fourth Sundays.

If you cannot join us physically in the Chapel, please contact Father Parrish to be added to each service's Zoom invitation.

"A place where the Bible is taught."

#

Biblical in teaching. Liturgical in worship. Loving in practice.