

The Principles of Christian Religion

**A Study through the Baptist
Catechism using Benjamin
Beddome's *Scriptural Exposition***

Outline of the BC

- I. Introductory Questions: 1-6
- II. What We are to Believe: 7-43
- III. What Duty God Requires: 44-114
 - A. The Law and our Inability: 44-89
 - B. The Gospel and the Means of Grace: 90-114

Introduction to the Decalogue

- Interpretation

- J. Douma (cf. WLC 99)

1. “The Decalogue must be interpreted spiritually.”
2. “The negative commandments (‘You shall not . . .’) include positive commands, and vice versa.”
3. “. . . [W]here one sin is mentioned, the commandment intends to cover the entire range of related sins.”
4. “Those commandments concerned specifically with love toward God weigh more heavily than those commandments concerned specifically with love toward neighbor.”
5. “The starting point and goal of all the commandments is love.”

Introduction to the Decalogue

- Uses
 - The “Three Uses of the Moral Law”
 - 1) The Pedagogical Use
 - Leading sinners to Christ
 - 2) The Civil Use
 - Curbing evil in society
 - 3) The Didactic (or Normative) Use
 - Guiding believers in grateful obedience

Question and Answer 58

Q. 54: Which is the third commandment?

A. The third commandment is, 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.¹

¹ Exodus 20:7

Question and Answer 58

- Intro to the Third Commandment
 - What does it mean to “take the Lord’s name in vain”?
 - Literally, “lift/take up . . . to vanity”
 - “To use unnecessarily or idly; to misuse”
 - What’s in a name? Why the focus on God’s name specifically?
 - Represents the totality of one’s person
 - What is the specific focus of this Commandment? The broader principle?
 - In our generation, swearing/profanity
 - In older generations, oaths/vows

Question and Answer 58

1. The Significance of God's Name

- By God's name we are to understand his nature (Exod. 23:21).
- And his essential properties (Exod. 33:19).
- And his titles (Exod. 3:13,14).
- And anything whereby he maketh himself known (John 17:6).

Question and Answer 58

2. The Proper Response to God's Name

- We should reverence the name of God (Deut. 28:58).
- And trust in it (Prov. 18:10).
- And walk in it (Mic. 4:5).
- And we should do this by no other name (Hos. 2:17).
- God hath a great regard for his own name (Isa. 48:11).
- It is therefore a great sin to be careless of it (Lev. 18:21)

Question and Answer 59

Q. 59: What is required in the third commandment?

A. The third commandment requireth the holy and reverent use of God's names,¹ titles,² attributes,³ ordinances,⁴ words,⁵ and works.⁶

¹ Matthew 6:0; Deuteronomy 28:58

² Psalm 68:4

³ Revelation 15:3,4

⁴ Malachi 1:11,14

⁵ Psalm 138:1,2

⁶ Job 36:24

Question and Answer 59

1. The Proper Use of God's Name

a. Profession

- We should make profession of God's name (Jer. 14:9).
- And be sincere in our profession (Jer. 50:5).
- And be careful to credit and maintain it (Rev. 3:8).
 - Cf. Deut. 13:1-14:21, esp. 14:1,2
 - Cf. Deut. 13:5; I Cor. 5
 - Cf. WLC 112; HC 99
 - We as Christians bear the “name” of God and of Christ: we need to live in such a way as to bring glory and not shame to that name.

Question and Answer 59

1. The Proper Use of God's Name

b. Prayer, Praise, and Conversation

- We should use the name of God in prayer (Psa. 116:7).
- And in praise (Psa. 99:3).
- And in Christian conversation (Psa. 22:22).
- But we should do it with the profoundest humility (Gen. 18:27).
- And with great seriousness and deliberation (Eccl. 5:2).
 - Among other things, this means that we need to be mindful and conscious in our public worship.

Question and Answer 59

1. The Proper Use of God's Name

c. Glorification

- We should give glory to God in his word (Psa. 138:2).
- And in his works (Psa. 107:22).
- And in his worship (Psa. 89:7).

Question and Answer 59

1. The Proper Use of God's Name

d. Swearing

- It is lawful to swear (Heb. 6:16).
 - Cf. 2LCF 23: What is an oath? A vow?
 - » Ruth 1:17; 1 Kings 1:29-30; Gal. 1:20; 2 Tim. 4:1;
 - Are oaths lawful? Cf. Matt. 5:33-37; Jam. 5:12
 - What oaths do we still tend to make?
- But we should be cautious in swearing (Eccl. 9:2).
- And conscientious (Jer. 4:2).
- An oath binds the soul (Num. 30:2).
- We should therefore look upon ourselves as bound by it (2 Sam. 21:7).
- And that though it is to our detriment (Psa. 15:4).

Question and Answer 60

Q. 60: What is forbidden in the third commandment?

A. The third commandment forbiddeth all profaning and abusing of anything whereby God makes Himself known.¹

¹ Malachi 1:6,7,12; 2:2; 3:14

Question and Answer 60

2. The Improper Use of God's Name

a. Profanation

- It is a great sin to profane God's name (Ezek. 36:20).
- It is a profanation of God's name to use it as an expletive in discourse (Matt. 5:37).
- Or as a charm (Acts 19:13).
- Or as a sanction for cruelty (Isa. 66:5).
- God's name is also profaned by putting a slight upon sacred things (Mal. 1:14).

Question and Answer 60

2. The Improper Use of God's Name

b. Blasphemy and Hypocrisy

- Blasphemy is a breach of this commandment (Psa. 74:18).
- And hypocrisy (Psa. 50:16).
- This is a great sin (Hos. 10:2).
- And a destructive sin (Job 36:13).
- We should therefore be careful to avoid it (Luke 12:1).

Question and Answer 60

2. The Improper Use of God's Name

c. Other Improper Uses

- This commandment is broken by sinful and unnecessary oaths (Est. 3:7).
- And by profane cursing (Jam. 3:10).
- And by rash swearing (Jam. 5:12).
- And by false swearing (Lev. 19:12).

Question and Answer 60

2. The Improper Use of God's Name

d. False Swearing

- It is a great sin to swear falsely (Jam. 2:7).
 - It is a sin that brings a curse upon the persons who are guilty of it (Jer. 7:9,15).
 - And upon their families (Zech. 5:4).
 - And upon the land (Jer. 23:10).
- Cf. 2LCF 23.3

Question and Answer 61

Q. 61: What is the reasons annexed to the third commandment?

A. The reason annexed to the third commandment is, that however breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape His righteous judgment.¹

¹ 1 Samuel 2:12,17,22,24,29; 3:13; Deuteronomy 28:58,59

Question and Answer 61

1. Escaping Punishment from Men

- Breakers of this commandment often escape punishment from men (Prov. 29:24).
- And they are therefore secure (Eccl. 8:11).
- But those who connive at this sin thereby become partners in it (Lev. 5:1).

- Why is such escape from the punishment of men particularly possible with violations of the third commandment?

Question and Answer 61

2. Suffering Judgment from God

- Such hope to escape the judgment of God (Psa. 59:7).
- But they shall not escape them (Ezek. 17:19).
- Hypocrites shall be punished (Matt. 23:13).
- And mockers (Acts 13:41).
- And covenant-breakers (Ezek. 17:16).
- And those who use God's name in a vain manner (Matt. 12:36).
- Such shall be punished in this world (Deut. 28:59).