

## **R-E-S-P-E-C-T**

### **10 Ways to a Better Life series**

**by Chris Famisaran & Bill Aumack**

Chris: Good morning, everybody. How are you all doing? So before we get into today's sermon, I have to have some accountability because I made a bold claim last week. Y' all remember what I talked about? Okay, cool. I don't have to talk about it today. I'm kidding. So I made a bold claim that I thought I could get my screen time on my phone down to an hour and a half, maybe an hour. Bill, what's the daily average?

Bill: 3:39.

Chris: It's still better than it was the week before.

Bill: That's almost an hour and a half.

Chris: So, yeah, there's a lot of progress. Yeah, driving and whatnot got in the way. So what I would say, though. Try it out. Try it out.

Now, today, I also. I hate we're going to have to talk about this because now I'm going to have to be very accountable about what I say moving forward. Today we're talking about the third Commandment. We've titled it R E S P E C T. Kind of a note, actually, to Aretha Franklin. Song about getting some respect.

Bill: We wanted to play the song, but didn't want to deal with the copyright strike.

Chris: Right. So we're going to talk about respect. What does it mean to respect God? And especially, how do we respect God with God's name? Now, Bill, you have a story to share that can give us a little bit of understanding of why we're talking about this today.

Bill: Yeah. So this story is humbling because it admits a big character flaw. But it's the summer between my seventh and eighth grade year. We moved from eastern Pennsylvania to Wisconsin, and I'm working on the farm. And anybody here baled hay in the summertime? One person. All right. Baling hay is a ton of work, but it's kind of fun at the same time. I don't know how to explain that. You end up the day just whooped beyond belief. But it's a lot of fun. So we're out in the field, we're baling hay. And this is back when you had the square

bales. We didn't have those big round bales and tractors. It was manhandled. And there's an older student who's driving the tractor. We'll call him Eric. He's driving the tractor. There's the baler. I'm catching the bales off the bailer and stacking them on the wagon. And there's a certain way you have to stack them on the wagon so that they stay. If you just stacked them all the same, you'd have columns of bales. And as you go down the road, they just fall off. So you've got to stack them some this way and some this way and some this way and to make them lock together so they stay on the wagon.

So we're doing that. We're going along, bailing. Hey, it's a hot summer day, we're having a good time. And the bailer stops. So we hopped off. We start looking at it and you check all the usual things. Is it jammed up? No. Did the shear pin break? Because it has a pinch, but it picks up a rock or a piece of metal. Instead of breaking the bale or this pin breaks and stops the machine. The shear pin hasn't broken. Is the chain on? We check all the stuff. We don't know what's wrong with it. We can't get it to work. And all of a sudden, Eric lets loose with a rather professional sounding stream of cuss words, just making sailors around the world proud. And he looked at me and I don't know what kind of look I had on my face, but it was probably surprise. I mean, I've grown up in a Christian family at Christian schools. I've heard swear words, but never strung together like that. That was impressive.

And so Eric explains to me his philosophy. And he says, you know, when you're out in the field like this and you're getting frustrated, it's better to let your frustrations out and then you can attack the problem again. And the bailer's a piece of metal. It doesn't care if you cuss at it or not. Its feelings aren't hurt. And I thought, this is genius, right? And Eric was a popular guy. The girls liked him. He was an athlete. And I was like, all right. And so I kind of adopted this philosophy. And I learned to cuss pretty well. Never at people. Never once cussed somebody out, at least to their face. But, you know, it's machines that get you, right? When the car won't start, when the refrigerator dies and you just bought groceries or the printer.

You guys heard of the band Rage Against Machine? They never said what the machine was they were raging against, but I bet it was a printer, right? And it tells you for the fourth time to open the back door and take out paper, and there's no paper in that back door. And it wasn't until years later that I really

understood that that was not a good philosophy. And it was damaging me. It wasn't damaging the printer or the baler or the car, the refrigerator. It was damaging me.

Chris: So today I want to go through a couple of verses. Sorry, we're going to go through a couple of verses. So let's go to. You see on the screen, there's a couple of verses we're going to highlight. We're not going to be able to get to every single verse in depth, but let's start with Exodus 20, verse 11. Sorry, 20, verse 7. Exodus 2:7, it says, *you shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.*

Now, just to highlight as well, you also have Leviticus 22, 31, 33 that says, *Keep my commands and follow them. I am the Lord. Don't profane my name, for I must be acknowledged as holy by the Israelites. I am the Lord who made you holy and who brought you out of Egypt to be your God. I am the Lord.* We also, if you remember the Lord's Prayer, what's the first line? Matthew 6:9 says, this, then is how you should pray. *Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.*

So we should honor God with our words. And we see this not only in the Old Testament, but also in the New.

Bill: Yeah, this is not just something that shows up one line in the Old Testament somewhere. This is throughout the whole Bible. And Pastor, I love the questions that we've been going through as we look at these commandments.

And the first question I want to tackle today is, how does this commandment confront us? What does it reveal about our characters? And I think that this commandment reveals that **we don't fully grasp how evil we are.** We think we're pretty good. Right. I'm not an axe murderer. Not out raping and pillaging and terrorizing the neighborhood. I'm not a thief. I don't commit adultery. But if the printer jams, run for the hills, right? And so, you know, I think this is really kind of important that we need to fully grasp how evil we are.

Chris: Now, one of the dichotomies or challenges that I have found with the Ten Commandments, okay. If you read the Ten Commandments from bottom

to top, in a way, it reveals again how bad we are. We've all fallen short of the glory of God. We're not perfect people. At the same time, too, though, it's showing. It's a prescription of how we can live our life faithfully, love God with everything, and love our neighbors as ourselves. But we cannot do that without what? We cannot do it without Christ. I recognize that we are saved by Christ. It's what we believe or who we believe in, rather than what I am trying to accomplish. But if you also love Christ, don't you want to also do the right thing? Don't you want to honor God with your words to have no other gods? Don't you want to love your spouse, to honor your parents and not try to murder anybody else?

So I think as well, over time in this culture that we've. Over time period, I think it's just we've become normalized or we've made it acceptable that we can say whatever we want without consequence. So is that a problem? All right, go ahead, Bill.

Bill: I remember growing up that there were certain words you didn't say on tv, right? Or the radio. And now you hear them on TV and the radio, and it's just like you said, it's become normalized to say those things.

Chris: Did you ever, when you heard those words on the tv, your mother or father. Father was sitting behind you and all of a sudden the hairs on your back went up and you wondered what's going to happen, especially if you chose the movie?

Bill: They're not supposed to say that. Yes. All right, so the second question that I love, and this is, as you know, my most favorite question in the world. So what? Right? The why? Why is this true? What does this mean? How do I implement it? What difference does it make? Is it just some piece of head knowledge trivia or does it really matter? And so this next question is like, that is, what does this commandment reveal about God or God's character? And I have never thought of the Ten Commandments that way. The Ten Commandments were always just a list of do's and don'ts. Obey and be a good boy or you're in trouble. And so, you know, this thought of these commandments reveal something about God has been very intriguing to me and makes me look at them a whole different way.

And I think when we talk about this, **we don't fully grasp how holy God is.** We've grown up in a society in the west where we've made Jesus our friend and he's your best buddy and he'll be there for you and he'll take care of you and he'll do all these things and there's truth to that. But he's also holy, right?

Some years ago, Linda and I got to tour the Greek Orthodox Church here in town. It was right after they were kind of getting done building it. It wasn't even all the way done on the inside. And as you go in and tour, they let you into the sanctuary where they say, don't go near the altar and don't go up on the stage. That's a holy space. And we don't do that in most Christian circles. And it's a double edged sword. But I think we lose something. We forget about how holy God is. And I think it's good to kind of come back to that from time to time.

Chris: Well, I think too, I mean, deep down, what is a church? It's all of us, okay, but yet I also feel and believe that this space that we're meeting in, it's a sacred space. Why did we come here? Well, we met, we're here, we're here to meet one another, to worship together, but ultimately to honor and worship God. You know, we have a fellowship hall, we have all of our classrooms. But this is, I believe, my understanding how I feel is this is a sacred space. Are we going to bring the circus or rodeo in here? No, this is God's space. And you know, kind of.

Also, I want to share one other point too. As I was researching, as I was thinking about this, somebody posed this thought. Is **how we treat God's name directly reflects how we regard God himself.** I'm going to share that again. How we treat God's name directly reflects how we regard God himself. What do our thoughts reveal? Because our thoughts become our words. Our words become what, our actions. And so I think we need to take time to reflect and ponder how do we speak of God and how not just what, but how like in a manner, Do we see God as sacred, as reverent? And yes, Jesus is our best friend. But I also think that we've lost in some way that reverence and the respect that God deserves.

Bill: So, you know, and again, I think Western Christianity hasn't been great here. You know, we focused on Jesus being our friend. But think about it this way. When you grow up, you know, and hopefully you had good parents, you had a good relationship with maybe mom or dad. And as you're a child, they're

the authority, you have to listen to them, you have to obey them. But as you grow into adulthood, what happens? You don't have to listen to mom and dad anymore, right? You're an adult, you get to make your own decisions. Now if you go somewhere with your dad, you like to do things with your dad, you like to go fishing with your dad. And so if you go fishing with dad, it's different than when you go fishing with your peers or your Friends, your buddies, right? You have a good relationship with dad. You guys are laughing, joking, having a good time, scaring the fish away, whatever, right? But it's different because dad has a different relationship. And Jesus is our friend. He is there for us. But he's not your best buddy. He's God. And that makes it a little bit different. That makes it a little bit different.

Chris: I know we didn't talk about this, but have you ever called your dad by his first name?

Bill: No. No.

Chris: Have you ever tried to do that? Not that I think my dad would, like, spank me or anything, but that's just weird, right? So kind of talking about how you have your relationship with your friends, but you have a relationship with your father. You treat your father or your parents, your elders, with respect. So continue to do so.

Now, when we were going through the Names of God series this last year and the year before, I posed this question. You know, as parents, how long did you spend time choosing a name for your child?

Bill: Nine months.

Chris: Nine months. All right. I hope you will have spent more than just walking through the halls thinking, what am I going to name my kid? Right. I know for some of you, maybe moms, you've been thinking about this for years, you already had in your heart what you wanted to name your child. And names are important because, you know, when it comes to the Bible, biblical names, they can have a lot of meaning. They would name their children in the hopes that they would, you know, be a child of promise, or one would be a hunter, this or that. Names. When somebody's name comes up, it's very intentional. It's very important. It's very revealing about that person. It could be who they are, what they're lying, who they come from, but also maybe

reveals who their character is, a possibility of who they could become, or maybe reveal their nature.

And so we talked the last couple of weeks about the awesomeness, the holiness, the sacredness of God. God's name is not to be messed around or trifled with. In fact, if you even read later on in the Journey of the Israelites, they would not even say God. They would say Yahweh or in the name of the Lord, because they held God's name so sacred. And if you choose to mess around with that, it was grounds for what? The death penalty. Okay?

And so we find that as a follower of Jesus, okay, hypothetically, okay, you're going down, or maybe you're at the stoplight and your window is down and you realize that the car in front of you, you Ever been behind somebody? It's green, but you know they're on their phone because they're not moving and you want to slam the horn. You want to say all kinds of choice words. What if you did that while the window's down and you have your tirade, but on the back of your car, maybe on the. On the license plate or the bumper, you say you're a follower of Jesus. What does that look like? That's super cringe. Or maybe you're at the office and one of your co workers does or says something that makes you want to react in a visceral way, and your other co worker knows you're a Christian and they're also a believer. And when you let out certain choice words, how do they now view you?

We talked about shining light as shining lights for Jesus in our Sabbath school earlier today. The light may be flaming, but when you act like that, it gets what? It gets snuffed out? Because now you have no grounds to stand. Okay. And I think, let's be honest, some words just have that very visceral way of expressing how we feel. Right? But is it the right thing to do or the right thing to say?

Now, another way of looking at this, too, and I didn't realize it before, but in my research as well, why does God say, don't misuse my name? How would you feel if somebody went to the bank or whatever, applied for a credit card, put your name down and signed your name on the dotted line, took out a loan of credit without you knowing? Would you. Would you jump for joy?

Bill: No, that's a crime.

Chris: It is a crime. But number two, and then they go out and they buy whatever they want, and all of a sudden you have a 2,000, a 15,000, or if you got really great credit, maybe \$50,000 worth of goods, who's on the hook for that? You can claim it was fraud, but now you have to go all through the matter of trying to clear your name.

And when we say, let's say we swear in the name of the Lord, I promise by God's goodness in everything. What are you doing? You're forcing the hand of God. You're trying to speak for God. And what if God doesn't believe in your cause? Right? What if it goes against God's principles? So, you know, we look at Matthew 5:33-37. Okay, let's go there briefly. Okay. Matthew 5:33-37. Matthew 5:33-37. All right. *And it says, again, you have heard as it was said to the people long ago. Okay? It's a reminder. Jesus is reminding them, do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made. But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all, either by heaven or for it is God's throne, or by the earth, for it is the footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And. And don't swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. All you need is to simply say yes or no. Anything beyond this comes from the evil one. Okay? And so if you're trying to use God's name for your own personal gain, that's a no. No. Let your yes be yes.*

Do not promise anything that you cannot for sure deliver. And another thing too, another point that came across this week that I want to share with you is if you make an oath in God's name, I kind of talked about it earlier. **You are forcing or manipulating God's hand.** Does God need that? No. I mean, is God generous? Yes. But should we try to exploit that generosity from God? No. Let's honor and respect God's name. Don't promise or try to make any oaths that you cannot follow through. So let your yes be yes and your no be no. But also remember we talked about in chapter 19, God is calling them to be a priesthood of all believers, to be representatives, and they were not to misuse the name.

Because let's go ahead now, **if we misuse the name of God and God's reputation is then now sullied.** I don't know how I came up with that. I figured I'd try a new word, but it becomes stained, it becomes soiled. How we treat and love, care for one another. And if we claim that we're followers of

Jesus, I mean, our name might be sully, but who else's reputation is being hurt? God's reputation. Right. So be mindful. God has drawn Israel into relationship. If we're in relationship with God, why would we want to dishonor God's name? Are you going to dishonor your family member, your parent, your sibling, your uncle, whoever? No. We want to honor and treat people with respect. So let's not take God's name for personal gain.

Bill: And I think we need to expand this commandment to more than just using the Lord's name in vain. Right? I mean, we know that's bad. You're not supposed to do that. But like I said, there's all those other words you can use those four-letter words. And sometimes we don't even use the four-letter words we use. We'll call it the veggie version of the four letter words. We don't say a certain word, but we say shoot right or darn right. And I think Jesus sets a precedence for doing this in some of the commandments that are coming, right? It's not just don't kill anybody, but don't think evil of them

Chris: To hop on that. I had a friend many, many years ago who in their faithfulness and zeal for the Lord to be a faithful Christian, a new baby Christian, instead of saying certain choice words, this person would reveal while they were driving, "Jesus loves you" when they're cut off or "in the name of the Lord." Or they would quote Bible verses instead of saying choice words. Well, interesting idea. What is at the heart? Okay, what are you really trying to express? You can say, Jesus loves you. How does that come across?

Bill: Weird.

Chris: It's awkward and weird. It still reveals that your heart is not in a good spot. So again, what? Where's your heart coming from? And also, you know, when we speak of God, we should speak well of others. But when we also disrespect and mistreat and use choice words against God's own children creation, what were we saying then? We're disrespecting God's children. So choose your words carefully.

Bill: We're not going to read this text right now, but you might want to write this down on your notes so you can look it up this afternoon. Matthew 23:16-22. Now, in Matthew 23, Jesus is giving it to the Pharisees with both barrels he is unloading on them. And it's no wonder they didn't like him afterwards

because, I mean, he really tears into them. But in the middle of that, he says, listen, you Pharisees, you say you're not supposed to swear on the temple, but you swear on the gold on the lampstand in the temple. It's the same thing. You say you're not supposed to swear on the altar, but you swear on the offering on the altar, and it's the same thing. So I think if we're not going to say certain words because they're bad words, but we say something else instead. It's the same thing. It's the same thing.

A couple texts we want to look at. We're going to read a couple. And while we're doing that, why don't you turn to James, chapter three. We're going to read that one Together. So while you're turning there.

Proverbs 22:11 says, *the one who loves a pure heart and who speaks with grace will have a king for a friend. They will speak with grace, not with Foul language.*

James 1:26 says, *those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves and. And their religion is worthless.*

Chris: Another way of saying that is their effort is worthless as well.

Bill: Yeah, I mean, that one that hurts. That one hurts. All right, so you're all at James, chapter three, verses six through 12. *It says the tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body. It sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and. And is itself set on fire by hell. All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind. But no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil full of deadly poison. With the tongue we praise our Lord and our Father, and with it we curse human beings who have been made in God's likeness. You were talking about that, Pastor. And out of the same mouth comes praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers and sisters? Can a fig tree bear olives or a grapevine bear figs? Neither. Can a salt spring produce fresh water.*

You know, the tongue is powerful. We know that. We've read this text before, but we gotta remember it. And I think part of that is having a plan. Because if you don't have a plan, you'll do the same thing you've always done, right? And this applies to anything in life, you know, have a plan. And so if you want to stop using certain words or certain replacement words, what are you going to do instead? If you smash your thumb or you stub your toe and it hurts, why isn't it "OUCH!" enough?

Chris: It doesn't express what I'm feeling, Bill.

Bill: I have never smacked my thumb with a hammer and wanted to yell, "Chris Famisaran!"

Chris: I don't blame you.

Bill: I hope none of you yell. "Bill Aumack!" when you stub your toe in the middle of the night. That's weird. Why do we do that to God? When you stop and think about it, it's weird. And I think that it comes from a certain evil one who would just have us do other things instead. He doesn't have our best at heart. So just have a plan for what you're going to say. Say ouch if you're frustrated at the printer, say, this printer is frustrating me. Good enough, right? Have a plan.

Chris: So are you mindful of how you speak of God? Are you mindful of how you speak of God with others? Is your speech mature or does it tend to be childish? Listen, I admit I am not perfect. I am definitely not mature for my age. That being said, you know, when we think about what does this promise hold for us? Throughout Scripture, there's over hundreds, literally maybe eight or nine hundred different ways of either names or ways of describing God. I haven't gone through all of them, but, you know, kind of what you were talking about. Are you going to use somebody else's name?

I love my wife and I love her name. It's a unique way of spelling it. But when I think of my wife and if I'm mad at her and I'm thinking of her name and I use her name in anger, does that draw me closer to her, or does it create separation? If I love and honor my wife, why do I want to disrespect and misuse her name? When we honor God with God's name, in a way it draws us

closer. And rather than trying to use other names to try to take the place of our anger, reflect on the goodness of God. There's many names, such as, you know, in the Book of John, Jesus describes God as an advocate. We've talked about how God is El Shaddai, a mountain, or a great one. And so think on the positive things. Let's not take God's name, good name, and soil it. So you also want to point out, too, you know, very, very popular illustration that you gave. We could definitely apply to this here.

Bill: Yeah. You remember when we were talking about Sabbath in our small groups, I gave the example, One of the ways I determine whether I should do something on Sabbath. I think if I was spending the day with Jesus, would I do this? I think the same thing is true with our language. If Jesus and I were remodeling the back room and I dropped the hammer on my toe, would I say that?

I remember a comedian who remained nameless who does a pretty funny bit about he thought his father was an idiot because he could never finish a sentence. When he grew up, he realized his dad was censoring himself and just not saying certain words right. But you don't want to just censor yourself. You want to stop what's in your heart. It's one thing to put a lock on your mouth. I didn't say it, but I Thought it. Right. Because this is really a heart issue.

Chris: You know, actually, I don't know why I just. This came to mind. You know, you talk about, would you treat God the same way if God were here with you? And because, you know, I mean, yes, the Holy Spirit's here and we're meeting with God, but if you were God and I'm here, but you're facing that way, I can talk smack about you all I want. And you may think, I may think you don't hear. Obviously you can hear. But because God is not here, we think we can talk smack and get away with it. Just like you can gossip and say all kinds of things behind somebody's back. But the truth is, God's here. God can hear.

So as we're going to reflect on this week, this theme. Does my way of speaking. Okay. **Does my way of speaking reflect Christ?** Would Christ speak the way of speaking that I do? Do I want to reflect Jesus? Absolutely. So the way that I speak, does it reflect Christ? This week you want to take this?

Bill: Sure. I think this week, you know, **pray about it and make a plan for what you're going to say instead.**

Certainly, you know, we need to make this a matter of prayer. Ask God for help. I know that in my walk it kind of, you know, I think I'm doing pretty good. I think I'm doing pretty good, and then I realize I'm not. You know, then I work and I think I'm doing pretty good, and then I realize I'm not. And so it's this sine wave for those of you who like science class. But, you know, it's important to pray about it and make it a matter of prayer. And it's important to have a plan or you just do the same thing you've always done.

Chris: Be intentional. Now I'm going to say this as well. Bill and I, we are not perfect. Okay? But especially as I was going through this series and preparing, I was like, man, I got a lot of growing. But God knows our hearts. As you draw closer to God, may you reflect Jesus. May you be a shining light. As we talked about as well earlier in our Sabbath school.

Lord, only through you are all things possible. Give us wisdom, give us courage, give us strength to do the right thing. Help us to be mindful. Help us to reflect you, Jesus, in our words and in our actions. In Jesus name, amen. Amen.