

[Exodus 20:7:] "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name."

[Luther's Explanation to the Second Commandment:] We should fear and love God that we do not use his name to curse, swear, lie or deceive, or use witchcraft, but call upon God's name in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.

1. So far we've covered the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Commandments in our series on how Jesus upholds the Ten Commandments. We went from honoring authority, to upholding life, to God's will with regard to human sexuality. Today, we have a Gospel Lesson that directly intersects with the Second Commandment, which means that it's our first reading in our summer series to intersect with the first table of the law.
2. Commandments One through Three are called the first table of the law because if we imagine the two tablets Moses brought down from God on Mount Sinai, we could put the first few which have to do with our relationship with God on one tablet, and we could put the last seven which have to do with our relationships with other people on the second tablet. Much Christian art depicts the Ten Commandments this way, with the Roman numerals I-III on a tablet at IV-X on the second one.
3. The Second Commandment in our Lutheran shop-talk is used to talk about using God's name properly. Jesus uses that name properly even in the hardest of times. We see that in our reading.
4. Jesus takes up a sad and difficult topic as He gathers His disciples for an intimate discussion for them alone. But amazingly, we see a few examples of how Jesus *and* His disciples upheld the Second Commandment in this brief but profound exchange. It gives us heart. There is so much more to keeping the Second Commandment than not calling out Jesus Christ's name when we hit our thumb with a hammer. (Or any other time we're upset things didn't go our way. And yes, we shouldn't do that: that's not what His name is for. So, that begs the question, what *is* God's name for?) As is abundantly evident by Jesus' question posed to His disciples, God wants His people to know Who He is! {Read verses 18-20b.}
5. John the Baptist had just died. Elijah never died. The other prophets died long ago. Jesus was none of these. But all of these pointed to Who Jesus is. And Peter is blessed to honor God by honoring the Second Commandment with regard to Jesus. {Read all of verse 20.} The title Messiah = Hebrew for Christ = Greek for Anointed One = the One Chosen to save us from our sins. Only the One Who fulfilled all prophecy could have that title. Only the One Who is God Himself in the flesh come to save sinful mankind could claim that title. There is only One Who could accept what Peter said and not break the Second Commandment. And His name is Jesus. And Jesus (Whose personal name means He saves) Christ (Whose title shows He is the only One Chosen to save us) would die for this unique fulfillment of the Second Commandment. {Read verses 21-22.}
6. The third fulfillment of the Second Commandment is that Jesus not only accepted the title given Him—a title only God could accept—but also built on it by proclaiming Himself the Son of Man. Jesus is the unique Son of God and Son of Man. The Word incarnate reveals to us Who God truly is, showing us how to uphold the Second

Commandment by honoring Jesus for Who He is. Hebrews starts off so beautifully, proclaiming this: In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

7. It is the very Word of God that would show us what the Word incarnate must undergo, being stricken, smitten, and afflicted so that we might truly know Him and His salvation. There can be no doubt that Jesus is the only fulfillment of all prophecy. There can be no doubt that Jesus is the only Savior from sin. Knowing only Jesus takes away all sins against the Second Commandment. Our careless use of God's name is washed away. Our failure to remember that name and have it properly on the tips of our tongues at all times does not keep Him from being Who He is. And He is the God Who in the midst of difficulty makes His name known to us. {Read verses 23-24.}
8. This is a joyful thought! And the only reason taking up a cross for Jesus is joyful is because we know that name of Jesus. Yes, crosses are difficulties we face in this world because we bear Christ's name. Yes, they are necessary to follow Christ. And yes, we look at Jesus and how He denied self to save us and sanctify to us all the times we must deny self.
9. Are you in pain? Your power to make it go away isn't what makes you worthy of God's love. No, you know the name of Jesus and His bleeding love for you! His pain sanctifies your pain.
10. Is something missing in your life? Your ability to fill the gap isn't what makes you worthy of God's love. You know the name of Jesus and His complete love for you! His righteousness completely covers you.
11. Does sadness seem to swallow you up? God doesn't tell you that you have to be happy all the time to prove everything's alright. You know the name of Jesus and His unconditional love! His resurrection prediction proved that even sad things work for our good.
12. That name of Jesus—Who made sure we know it and know the salvation connected with it—might be the only thing we hold onto when we are in pain, when something is missing, when we are so sad that no words can come except, "Lord have mercy." That's losing our life for Him. And He is the One Who has saved us. How do we know? We know God's name. In upholding the Second Commandment, Jesus made sure that God's name is known to us. Amen.