

- a. Condemnation is at our doorstep, church. Why? Several reasons.
- First, you swear by heaven and earth and anything else.
[That is wrong]
- Second, you don't realize that you're actually swearing by God Himself; He hears your oaths even if you don't "invoke" Him.
[We act as if God is absent]
- Third, you **may not** keep your promises that you swear.
[Are we certain we can do what we promise?]
- Fourth, you think oaths will solve communication problems.
[They won't]
- Fifth, you won't take each other at his word so you insist on oaths.
[Violating covenant with each other]
- b. In communication, we probably require more of people than we think. We don't trust people. We are impatient with people. We want to be assured, comforted and at ease.
- So we ask them to promise. When we ask them to promise, we ask them to put themselves at risk with God so that we'll feel better about our own risk.
- In other words, it could be that when we ask them to "promise" to us (to ease our risk) we are asking them to put themselves at risk in violating God's commandment and taking His name in vain.
- So, asking people to say more than "yes" or "no" is really about us than about them. It is about our view of God and His sovereign care for us.
- The next time you find yourself requiring more from someone in their communication, ask **yourself**, "what am I afraid of"? The answer will surprise you.
- c. Oaths are about the Name of God. Commandment #3 doesn't get too much play in our day and age. It should: "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, *for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.*"
- Do we not think God is serious about His name?
- Taking His name in vain isn't just about us not saying certain phrases or that we would be dogmatic about words like "gosh" etc. It is about promises and oaths and requests that people "make sure" they tell the truth.
- If we really took the name of God seriously, we wouldn't require people to certify their words with oaths – because of the risk we put them in.
- Consider your own use of God's name. Were you only thinking that straying from certain words was all that mattered?