

Popular Profanity

by Dan Shipley

Profanity is more than taking the name of God in Vain. It is **all** irreverence shown toward God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. It is treating holy things as common, whether by word or by deed. It is essentially an attitude of contempt or disregard for God or the things of God and is well exemplified by those of Ezekiel's day of whom God says, *"they have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane.... I am profaned among them"* (Ezek. 22:26). Not only was this true of the priests, for the prophets, princes and the people were guilty as well. Profanity was popular in those days.

But, with the passing of nearly 2500 years, if this profane attitude is sometimes expressed differently, it is no less prevalent, for many are still putting no difference between the holy and profane, even if unwittingly. If God was profaned in the violation of that law given through Moses, how much more in the violation of that law given through His Son? Many who claimed allegiance to the law of Moses had no delight in it and it was as a reproach unto them (Jer. 6:10). It is obvious that the *better* covenant is not getting much *better* treatment — even from those who know better. Why? Perhaps because many Christians do not take their sins as seriously as they should. Maybe we forget that God is profaned no worse than when His people deliberately engage in sinful practices. We may be getting a little insensitive to sin — especially our own. Seeing sin from the Divine viewpoint will help.

Take, for instance, the many unfaithful who claim, "I know what I should do," but never seem to get around to doing it. If they do know what they should do, do they really understand what they **are** doing? — that they *"crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame"* (Heb. 6:6)?; that they in their unfaithfulness trod Christ underfoot and profane his precious blood?; that they actually do despite unto the Holy Spirit (Heb. 10:26-31). Until and unless such sinners see their profanity in its true light, repentance is not possible. It is more than just offending the brethren or "sinning against the church" as we sometimes put it — it is, as someone has said, tantamount to spitting in the face of God! It is blasphemy; it is mockery; it is saying, in effect, "God, you are not going to rule over me, I'll do as I please!" Any Christian who places his own personal interests above God's will manifests this profane attitude, as he and his brethren need to understand. Jesus only states the positive side when he says, *"If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments"* (Jn. 14:15). Failure to keep His commandments expresses much more than most are willing to admit.

Finally, God says the willful sinner is like *"the dog turning to his own vomit again, and the sow that had washed to wallowing in the mire"* (2 Pet. 2:22). When the unfaithful and their concerned brethren can see it like God says it, perhaps some can be saved from that *"sorer punishment"* — and, hopefully, such profanity will become less popular among the people.

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