

# Don't Murmur Against God and His Name

*Heidelberg Catechism Season 20*

By Dr. Joel Beeke

sermonaudio.com

**Bible Text:** 1 Corinthians 10:10-11  
**Preached on:** Sunday, August 23, 2020

## **Heritage Reformed Congregation of Grand Rapids**

540 Crescent St NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

**Website:** [www.hnrc.org](http://www.hnrc.org)  
**Online Sermons:** [www.sermonaudio.com/hnrc](http://www.sermonaudio.com/hnrc)

Remember that the fulfilling of the law, Matthew 22:37-40, is love and that will be key to understanding the third commandment this morning.

Our Scripture reading is from 1 Corinthians 10:1-15.

1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat; 4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. 6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. 7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. 8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. 9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. 10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. 12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. 14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. 15 I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.

May God bless the reading of his sacred word.

Dear church family, the Bible says how excellent is God's name, how excellent is God's name. Have you ever wondered why? There is so much emphasis in the Bible on the name of God and have you ever wondered why there is so much emphasis in the Bible on

the seriousness of using that name in vain? Today people use the name of God in vain commonly, flagrantly, blatantly, unashamedly as never before in American history. All around our nation, this is perfectly acceptable even to use God's name as a mere fill word. And yet what we're going to hear this morning is that God regards nothing so seriously as taking his name in vain.

Now we can sit rather smugly as religious people and say, "Well, I never, I never swear. I never curse. I never exercise this form of blasphemy that's directly forbidden in the third commandment," but there are all other kinds of ways of taking God's name in vain as well and this morning I want to look with you at one of the most common ones that we're all guilty of and we all need to hear about, and I won't have time to deal with a lot of the other ones you're used to hearing about from Lord's Day 36, but I want to deal with one particularly common way of violating God's name and that's the way of murmuring. That's the biblical word in 1 Corinthians 10 but it can also be translated today's language, grumbling, complaining. Grumbling, complaining, do you ever do that, boys and girls, young people, parents? We're all guilty of it so we need to listen carefully this morning and we need to understand how serious this sin is because it's an attack on the name of God, and I'm going to make my case for that from 1 Corinthians 10:10-11.

10 Neither murmur ye [or think, neither grumble], as some of them also murmured, and [notice this] were destroyed of the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples [or we would say today, examples]: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

We'll look at that in conjunction with Lord's Day 36 of the Heidelberg Catechism and I also want to read Question 113 of the Westminster Larger Catechism to show you the extensiveness of the third commandment and how they also zero-in on this sin of murmuring.

Lord's Day 36 Questions 99 and 100.

Q. 99. What is required in the third commandment?

A. That we, not only by cursing or perjury, but also by rash swearing, must not profane or abuse the name of God; nor by silence or connivance be partakers of these horrible sins in others; and, briefly, that we use the holy name of God no otherwise than with fear and reverence; so that He may be rightly confessed and worshiped by us, and be glorified in all our words and works.

Q. 100. Is then the profaning of God's name by swearing and cursing so heinous a sin that His wrath is kindled against those who do not endeavor, as much as in them lies, to prevent and forbid such cursing and swearing?

A. It undoubtedly is, for there is no sin greater or more provoking to God

than the profaning of His name; and therefore He has commanded this sin to be punished with death.

With death. That comes from Leviticus 24, "he that blasphems the name of the LORD, shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphems the name of the LORD, he too shall be put to death."

Then Question 113 of the Larger Catechism.

Question 113. What are the sins forbidden in the third commandment?

Now listen to this,

Answer. The sins forbidden in the third commandment are, the not using of God's name as is required; and the abuse of it in an ignorant, vain, irreverent, profane, superstitious, or wicked mentioning or otherwise using his titles, attributes, ordinances, or works, by blasphemy, perjury; all sinful cursings, oaths, vows, and lots; violating of our oaths and vows, if lawful; and fulfilling them, if of things unlawful; [then it comes] murmuring and quarreling at, or curiously prying into, and misapplying God's decrees and providences;

Murmuring, quarreling at, you could say grumbling about God's providences in your life, it's a sin against the third commandment, against the name of God. It goes on,

misinterpreting, misapplying, or any way perverting the word, or any part of it, profane jestings, curious or unprofitable questions, vain janglings, or the maintaining of false doctrines; abusing it, the creatures, or anything contained under the name of God, or sinful lusts and practices; the maligning, scorning, reviling, or any other way opposing God's truth, grace, and ways; making profession of religion in hypocrisy, or for sinister ends; being ashamed of it, or a shame to it, by unconformable, unwise, unfruitful, and offensive walking, or backsliding from it.

I hope you just get a feel from that Answer of the extensiveness of sinning against the name of God.

So our theme this morning is "Don't Murmur Against God and His Name," and three thoughts: first, remember who God is; second, stop your grumbling and cursing; and third, use his name with reverence and gratitude.

So why is all this so serious? Well, because God's name is God. You have a name, boys and girls, maybe your name is George, but there's another George or two more George's in this congregation, your name is not unique. God's name is unique. God's name is who God is and often we forget that. You see, the Bible speaks a lot about we don't want our

name damaged, we don't want our name in ill-repute. So we all care about our names but God's name is at a different level and among all the names of God, hundreds of them, there is one name of God that reflects the core of who he is, "I Am that I Am," it's the Jehovah name or as scholars call it now, the Yahweh name which in the King James Version is the name with four capital letters, Lord with the ord being a little bit smaller but all caps. That name is used 3,000 times in the Bible. It's the special name of God. That's the name used here in Exodus 20, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord in vain." This name is God in his holiness, God in his unchangeableness. This name actually means "I and what I am. I was what I was. I am what I am. I shall be what I shall be. And when you speak my name, you are reflecting myself." That's what the Lord is saying so when we take God's name upon our lips, we're not just taking a label upon our lips, we're taking the very essence of God himself. God's name is wrapped up in his very identity. That's what you need to grasp.

So you can't just use God's name lightly. He's the holy, the unchangeable, the eternal God. Now that has made some people say in history, especially the Jews, especially the scribes copying over the Bible, "If it's that serious to take God's name in vain, then I could be stoned to death in Old Testament times. Well, I'm probably better off not using that name at all." And so what the scribes did, they left a little blank, some of them, they left a little blank when they copied the Bible over in certain places where the name Lord was used because they said, "We don't want to sin. We don't want to be worthy of death so we're better off not using the name." No, no, no. That's unbiblical too, isn't it? This name is a great gift to us. It's a greater gift than anything else in the world, that we know who God is in his Triune being as Yahweh, the "I Am that I Am." It's so valuable that we need to say not, "I don't want to touch it. I don't want to use it. I think I'll put it away." No, what you want to do is you want to use it with gratitude, with reverence, with a sacred awe of who God is.

So boys and girls, if someone were to give you a really special gift, really special gift, I mean, they put a lot of time into it and they put a lot of money into it, and they brought it to you all wrapped up beautifully, what would they think if you said, "Well, that is such a special gift, I'm just going to put it in my closet and not unwrap it. It's too special to unwrap and to use." They'd say, "That's why I gave it to you." They would be insulted, wouldn't they? Well, God is insulted when we use his name wrongly, yes, but he's also insulted when we don't use his name rightly. His name is a tremendous gift to us and so on the one hand we must use that name with reverence and godliness as referring to a holy God who we exalt, we must use it in Jesus Christ, looking to him as our only hope, there's no other name to go to than this name, at the same time we must not use this name in vain.

Now the word "in vain" actually means in Hebrew, the root meaning, "to rush," like a mighty rushing wind, like a mighty hurricane or a tempest. Now what does that mean in relationship to the third commandment? Well, as a mighty rushing wind tears down trees and destroys homes and strips away vegetation and leaves destruction and barrenness everywhere, God is saying, "When you take my name lightly, you're destroying everything. You're destroying your life. You're destroying your future. It's unfruitful.

You're destructive. When you don't take up my name with meaning and with purpose, it's like bringing a hurricane into your own life." You use it on your lips in vain because you don't take refuge to God in Jesus Christ and thereby use it rightly.

So it's critical, it's critical that we understand how we are to use the name of God, to use it with purpose, to use it with meaning, to use it with intelligence, to use it as our refuge, as our strong high tower. "My name," God says, "is a strong tower. The righteous run into it and are safe." So remember, that's my first point, remember who God is. Now the second point, that's where we come to our text: stop your grumbling, stop your cursing. You see, when you focus your life on thinking you deserve more than you're getting and you complain about God's providences and you quarrel and you grumble with God and with man, you actually destroy your life and you provoke the anger of God.

Now all of us have problems here. I'll share one of mine, one of my biggest problems is computer problems. I do not do very well with computer problems, especially not when they come on Saturday and there's no one around the seminary to help me and I do, my life revolves in many ways around the computer. That's where I write my books and my articles. That's where I prepare sermons and handle email and all kinds of things, and when that computer is broken, eh, you probably don't want to see me at that time. I'm not very sanctified, I'm afraid, and I sometimes find myself complaining like this, "Oh, not again! Not now! Can't happen now! I can't believe this is happening." What am I doing? I'm complaining. I should just say calmly, "This is God's will for me and I'll use the means to fix it," but I should say, "All things work together for good," shouldn't I, "and this is a trial, temporary trial that will work together for good." You see, but really what I'm saying is by my complaining, God's not in control of all things. I don't like what he's doing and I have a right to complain and grumble and I'm really sinning against the third commandment.

What do you complain and grumble about? Do you complain to your parents, boys and girls, about something? When they ask you to do something, do you grumble when God has put them there? You're sinning against the third commandment. You complain about the weather just directed by God? You're sinning against the third commandment. You complain about a teacher? You're sinning against the third commandment. The teacher is there as a gift of God to you. Husbands, wives, when you complain about each other, you're sinning against the third commandment.

And you see, that's the whole point of 1 Corinthians 10. Paul takes 15 verses to tell us, "Don't be like Israel, the people of God." This is a sin that the people of God particularly commit, as well as the world, of course, but the people of God are the people that should know better. Israel should know better. And so really what 1 Corinthians 10 gives us is God's view of grumbling and he says in our text, "Don't grumble as some of them did and were destroyed by the destroyer."

When's the last time you really realized that grumbling and complaining is a serious sin in God's eyes? You know, we think of serious sins, we think of lust, we think of sexual immorality, we think of idolatry, as we heard in recent weeks, but grumbling? Grumbling

destroyed Israel. They murmured in the wilderness. They were kept out of the Promised Land for 40 years. The whole generation died. They were killed by God because of grumbling. We are so self-centered, we are so thinking that we deserve something and we're pretty good people despite all our belief in human depravity, that when everything doesn't go our way, even down to a little lousy computer, we think we're free to complain and grumble. When something doesn't go in the home the way we want it to go, we grumble. When something doesn't go the way we want it to go in the church, we grumble.

Now it's different, of course, if you're dealing with an outright sin, then you need to deal with it, but not in a grumbling, complaining way but then in a way of correction. But you see, that wasn't Israel's problem. Israel's problem when you think back on their experience in the wilderness as Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 10, their problem is that they weren't worshipping the God who delivered them over and over and over again and they just kept complaining against him. You know the miracle of the Exodus, don't you? God passed over them. When the 10<sup>th</sup> plague came, the firstborn were to die, they were passed over because of the blood, pointing to the blood of the Lamb to come. This is God's amazing goodness. This why God's name is so great and so worthy to be worshiped and praised, that God provides a way for sinners to be saved in the blood of Jesus, and that alone means we should never grumble. We all deserve death. We all deserve hell. None of us deserves the blood, the blood of Jesus by which God can pass us by and bring us through faith in him into glory. The firstborn were untouched when the blood was there. This is Yahweh. This is Jehovah. This is the "I Am." He loves his people from eternity past to eternity future. We have only reason to be overwhelmed with gratitude and reverence, dear child of God, for his great and holy name.

Then right after the miracle of the Exodus, Paul points us to the miracle of the Red Sea. The miracle of the Red Sea. Pharaoh changes his mind. You remember the story, boys and girls, he chases after Israel and God positions a cloud as a wall between the Egyptian chariots and his people, and Moses lifts his staff, the Red Sea parts, the Jews escape, the Egyptians follow, the waters envelop Pharaoh's chariots and destroy the entire army. And what did they do? They sing a song to the name, to the name of God. They sing his glory. They sing the demonstration of his love, singing how he cared for them and protected them and acted on their behalf. They sing his praises. They glorify his name which is exactly what they should do every day of their lives and we should as well. But what happens? Only a little while and they begin to complain and grumble in response to wilderness testing.

Actually, there's more tests but let me just focus quickly and briefly on four major tests God gave them in the wilderness. You know, God gives us all tests, doesn't he in the wilderness of this world in our lives? He gives them four tests. Let's see how they do. First, water at Marah. Several days after the Red Sea, they arrive at Marah. They're hot, they're thirsty and they finally find water but they can't drink it because it's bitter. And so what happens? Well, you think they'd say, "Based upon the miracles, the I Am, the Jehovah, has already done for us and the escape from the Egypt and in the escape from the Red Sea and the drowning of our enemies, let us wait on God. He will supply." No, no, no. What do you read, Exodus 15? The people grumbled against Moses. They

murmured. You see, God knew the water was bitter at Marah and he led them there to test them. Would they trust him? Would they honor his name? No. They failed the test. They only grumbled. But then notice the amazing grace of God. He's slow to anger. He restrains his judgments. Despite their unbelief, he purifies the water and he leads them on to the oasis of Elam. Again, an amazing faithful God who glorifies his name to an ungrateful people, a sinful, murmuring people.

Test #2. Food in the wilderness. They'd been in the desert now several days. Marah and Elam and behind them. Their food is running out. What are they going to do? Well, you would say, "Of course, you've got the God of heaven and earth who's your God, the God of Egypt, the God of Exodus, the God of the Red Sea, the God of Elam. He's going to help you, isn't he?" They're going to say, aren't they, "We saw the 10 plagues. We watched God destroy the Egyptian army. We watched God purify the water. No bread? No problem. We're God's chosen people. By the grace of God, he loves us. We've seen his power in action. He's always come through for us. He's never failed. He'll do it again. His name is I Am. Let us not worry. Let us not grumble. Let us not complain." No. What do you read? Exodus 16:2, "The whole congregation," not 10%, "The whole congregation," the people of Israel, "murmur against Moses and Aaron." They grumble again and despite all their grumbling for 40 years, think of that, until they reached the Promised Land, God delivers fresh manna to Israel every single morning because he's the I Am.

Test #3. Water at Rephidim. The next stop for Israel was at Rephidim where things got worse. At Marah there was water but it was bitter. At Rephidim there's no water at all and now they're in a dry, treeless wilderness. Again, this stop on the journey is no accident. God has given them a third test. Would they be grateful now? No. Exodus 17, the people said to Moses, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord? Why do you test the Lord? You're testing his name by your grumbling, by your murmuring." But the people thirsted for water, Moses says, and grumbled against him and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our animals with thirst?" And Moses struck the rock and clean, cold water gushed out. Once again, God pointed them to the Messiah. We read it right here in 1 Corinthians 10, the Rock that followed them was Christ. Once again, God was faithful. Once again, he was the I Am, filled with kindness, faithfulness, generosity.

And then test #4. Mount Sinai and departure for Canaan. You see, finally Israel arrives at Mount Sinai. There they receive God's law, built a tabernacle for God's dwelling place, ordained Aaron and his family into the priesthood, and rested for a whole year. Meanwhile, God fed them with manna, refreshed them with water from the rock, but when they departed for Canaan, the pattern of grumbling returned. Once more, Numbers 11, the people complained in the hearing of the Lord and finally God's patience ran out. When the Lord heard it, his anger was kindled and the fire of the Lord, Numbers 11:1b, "burned among them," consumed a good part of the camp. Thousands died.

Three times the people murmured, complained, grumbled, in Marah, in the wilderness, at Rephidim. Three times God's amazingly patient but the time comes when his anger will

be exercised. You see, Paul then says to us all these examples are there for you, for me, upon whom the end of the world has come. We are not to be like Israel. That's what he says. You're not to be a grumbler. You're not to be a complainer. And yet with all that, you know, it's amazing when Israel sees even that people die for their grumbling and complaining, they still complain and they say, "Who will give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, the garlic, but now our soul is dried away. There's nothing at all beside this manna before our eyes." They were tired of God's food and they wanted to go back to godless, wicked Egypt and the anger of the Lord is kindled. You see, it's altogether possible. You can come to church every Sunday and you can look your Lord's Day best and you can leave this house of God, you can go back to your home and you can complain and grumble to your parents, or parents, you can complain and grumble about your kids and go right back in that grumbling spirit from Monday through Saturday and all of your religions is a farce. It's all hypocrisy as Question 113 of the Westminster Larger Catechism said.

So you see, whether we're young children or whether we're seniors, we need to be, or anything in between, we need to be aware of the magnitude of the sin of grumbling because the sin of grumbling, it really is complaining that God's providence isn't doing for us what we think we deserve when all we deserve in hell and he's always better to us than we ever are to him, and we always, every moment even in our deepest affliction, we are receiving more from God than we deserve. And when we persist in that lifestyle and we don't repent of it, God's anger is kindled. That's one of my greatest fears, well, probably my greatest fear about Covid-19 for myself, for our congregation, yes, but for the whole nation, for the whole world, really. When we don't repent under God's plagues but actually complain about them and murmur about them and just get tired of them and think, "Well, I wish it were all over," and we're still not repenting, when is God's anger just going to break out even more? He has every right to do so.

Actually, the text says it this way, "Neither murmur you as some of them also murmured and were destroyed of the destroyer." Now you may think that destroyer was Satan but that's not true. We read in several places in Exodus 12:23 and 1 Chronicles 21:15 and Hebrews 11:28 that the destroyer in these cases was the angel of God who came to destroy people because of their murmuring spirit. You see, we are amazed, aren't we, that God's people forget their deliverance from Pharaoh, forget the parting of the Red Sea, forget the destruction of 600 chariots, forget the waters of Marah made sweet, forget the manna, forget the crystal pure water gushing from the rock, forget God and forget God's name which is good and sovereign and holy.

They come to a land flowing with milk and honey and what do they do? They say, "Oh, we can't go into it because there's giants of Anak there." What? You're gonna make these little 8 feet tall, 9 feet tall giants of Anak to be bigger than your God who parts the Red Sea? Stop your grumbling. Stop your complaining. Believe in your God. You know, the spies, the false spies did not trust God and they said to the people, "We can't go in. We can't go in. We can't live out God's name and God's promises." And the people then turn again, Numbers 14, once more, this time again to Moses and Aaron and they complain.



They say, "Would to God, would to God we had died in the land of Egypt." Now they're not talking about the garlic and all the good things they had in Egypt, now they just wish they had died in the land of Egypt. Or, "Would to God we had died in this wilderness. Wherefore has the LORD," and they use, amazingly they use the Yahweh name, the capital ord. "Wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land to fall by the sword that our wives and our children should be a prey. Were it not better for us to return unto Egypt? And they said one to another, "Let us make a new captain and let us return unto Egypt." This is the height of grumbling. This is a blatant rejection of God and his name, you see, and of his servant, servants, Moses and Aaron. Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation and the Lord said to Moses, "How long will this people provoke me with their murmuring? How long will they, 'er they believe me, for they believe me for all the signs which I have shown among them? I will now smite them with pestilence and disinherit them and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they." God's saying, "I'm gonna destroy the whole nation. I'll keep you, Moses, and I'll build you up, I'll build up a nation from you." But Moses responds as a type of Jesus. He intercedes for the people and pleads, "What will God do with his great name?"

That's exactly the way we should plead for our nation right now, our cocky, petulant, arrogant, unrepenting, grumbling, murmuring, hate-filled, anger-laced nation that is not repenting even when God sends a pestilence our way. Who could say anything against God if he said, "I will just destroy you by the destroyer. I'll send an angel and kill you by the hundreds of thousands and the millions." Already it's 173,000 and we haven't repented. How many will it take before we repent?

So what do we learn about grumbling from all of this? Well, let me give you three or four quick things. 1. Grumbling equals despising. When you grumble about something, you're really despising God and that's how God sees it. "How long will this people despise me?" Grumbling and despising are synonyms to God because our grumbling, our complaining, our whining reveal a heart-level conviction that God is not true to his name, or he's not fully good, or he's not fully sovereign, or he's not fully trustworthy. We take, then, his name in vain. Grumbling is an open window through which God and others can view the arrogance of our own complaining hearts. When we grumble, we're actually trying to stand above God and we're trying to look down on God and assume a position of superiority, and we're saying, in essence, "If God were truly wise and loving, he would treat me better." We rob him of his glory. We take his name in vain and the result is, it's like a mighty rushing wind throughout our life, destroying us, destroying our communion with God, destroying our personal spiritual fellowship with him.

2. Grumbling should teach us that we're accountable to the extent of our privileges. You see, God said to Moses, "This people whom I've known like no other people on the face of the earth, this people is despising me with their grumbling?" I was thinking about that at the high school graduation yesterday, the incredible privileges these high school students have had in their life compared to me even. I longed for a Christian education when I was a boy but there was no good school to send me to, a sound Christian school. I look at you guys who can go to a Christian school like this one and say, "This is amazing,

amazing." What a gift. What a gift. Is there 1%, 1% of young people in the world that get to hear the doctrines of sovereign grace at home, church and school? In the world? Probably not even 1%. But to whom much is given, much is required. You see, God had a certain measure of wrath because he had so greatly blessed Israel and they so grumbled, so despised, so complained that God said, "This is inexcusable. I need to put an end to it."

3. We need to learn from grumbling that grumbling is a heart issue. A heart issue. That's the problem. That's my problem with the computer, when I'm in that mode of frame of mind, it's a heart issue. I'm not clinging to Romans 8:28, "All things work together for good," and neither are you when you complain. You see, miracles by themselves will never convince us that God is trustworthy. We need a new heart. We need the exercise of God's grace in our heart to bow under his ways, bow under his providences in every situation. That takes grace. But you see, the point is God has proved himself true. He's got a good track record, 1,000 times in your life, and for some of us who are a bit older, 10,000, 100,000 times. Why don't we just trust him? Why would we resort to grumbling? Have you ever been angry at yourself and looked at yourself in the mirror and said, "How can you be so stupid? You in that mirror, how can you be so stupid to grumble and complain against a God who has treated you so well? Why do you keep sinning against the third commandment, taking his name in vain?"

You see, the ultimate reason for gratitude is that when we have a spiritual heart transplant, when we get the new birth from Jesus, when we believe in him alone for salvation, we become convinced that Yahweh is God, that God is God, the I Am is God, and we begin to trust him like we never have before, and we trust him because of the spectacle that he presents to us in his word through his Son, a Savior who died on the cross naked, shameful, a cursed painful death so that we through faith in him, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, may live unto him and receive everything we need. In fact, he even says all things belong to Christ and when you belong to Christ, you have all things and all things are God's, really the meek shall inherit the earth. Everything belongs to you when you belong to Christ, everything needful for you. The ultimate reason for gratitude is Jesus Christ, the cross, the empty tomb. This is God's goodness. This is God's off-the-chart goodness. This is God doing goodness for us like no other event in all of human history. And you see, when you believe in Christ alone for salvation, and the joy of God, and the reverence for God, and the goodness of God fill you, you just want to praise his name, you want to never complain again, you want to say, "How can he be so good to such a sinner as I am?"

So God will test you. He tests us all the time. He'll test you day by day. He tests me with my computer, as I said. He'll test you in other ways. He knows, he knows how to test you and will our gratitude say to those watching us that God is infinitely good? That he can be trusted in times both good and bad? Also in very difficult times, can he be trusted? When you lose a child? When you have repeat surgeries without improved health? When you have a time of protracted unemployment? When you have received a failing grade in a test at school? When you're in a challenging marriage? Do you complain or do you trust God? Do you take refuge to the living God or do you say, "I really just deserve a visit from the destroyer because I'm just one big complainer"? You see, the amazing thing

about the Gospel is that Jesus, think about that, Jesus, Jesus himself took our whining and complaining sins and nailed them to the cross, and when you become a true Christian by the grace of the Spirit, God imputes all the guilt for your complaining and your grumbling to Jesus, and despite your constant tendency to still grumble, the Father forgives you and clothes you in the perfect righteousness and gratitude of Jesus Christ.

So look to the cross. There's your answer. There's the cure for your grumbling. Look to the cross. Stop your grumbling and cursing by looking to Jesus but trusting in God's name. So Jesus never complained once. Jesus never grumbled. Jesus never murmured even on the cross. What did he do on the cross, boys and girls? What was the first word? "Father, forgive them for the people who put me up here didn't know what they were doing. John, look after Mary, my mother. She's now your mother. Woman, mother, behold your son. Today, thief on the cross, verily I say unto you, you will be with me in paradise." And then finally in the midst of agony that just tore him apart, his Father deserting him, he cried out not as a complaint but just cried out in the agony of his soul, you can be in great agony and not complain if you're in Christ, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

You see, Jesus triumphed where you and I routinely fail. He was sinless but that's exactly our hope, and so we fly to Christ again and again and again with all our sins against the third commandment, all our grumbling and our murmuring, we take refuge in his name, in his salvation and confronted by the amazing grace of God who forgives even the sins of complaining, our hearts are purged and made grateful, overwhelmingly grateful so that we cry out to God, "How couldst thou be so good to me, such a sinner, such a whiner as I am?" And we take refuge in him through Jesus, refuge in his name. His name becomes the gateway that leads us into his communion, "Into sweet communion, Lord, with thee I constantly abide. My hand I'll hold that's in thy own, to keep me near thy side." And then we use his name with great respect, we use his name with great gratitude and we say, "Lord Jesus, thy name is Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, the Prince of Peace. Thou art a wonderful I Am, a wonderful Yahweh, a wonderful Jehovah. Thy name is glorious. My soul will run into it and be safe."

Well, that's the way to use the name of God. So we must never joke about the name of God. We must never use the name of God lightly, but we must also, also pray for grace in Christ to get rid of this complaining, grumbling, murmuring spirit. Jesus took your place, dear child of God, on the cross to pay also for this sin. But for you, dear friend, who are not yet in Christ, I need to say one more thing before we close and I mean it in love, I mean it in love. The very worst form of complaining is not to believe in the name of God's Son. God offers you the most wonderful gift the world has ever known, he gave his only begotten Son. He offers him to be your Savior. He reveals his name through the Savior and if you don't run into that name and take refuge in that name, if you reject that name, if that name is not music upon your lips and music in your heart and your only ground of salvation, then your life is empty. You're not ready, you're not really living and you're not ready to die. Somehow if you think there's some other way that you can enter into heaven beside his Son, there is no other way. "There is no other name given among men under heaven whereby we must be saved." Please, please, don't listen to Satan who

will whisper to you that in some way on the day of days, you can stand before God unredeemed by the blood of Christ, side-by-side with a gross blasphemer who spent his life not in church but swearing profusely, and will have a lighter sentence than he will have. No. You've sat under the Gospel. You've rejected and cast it away. You've trampled underfoot the blood of the name of God. "How will you escape when you neglect so great salvation," the Bible says to you.

You know, I sat on a plane about a year ago, two years ago, next to a lady from Alaska. She told me she didn't have a Bible. She never read the Bible. I sent a Bible to her. But I thought when I talked to her, "Isn't this amazing? Never read one chapter in the Bible." Is she on her way to hell? Absolutely. Absolutely. She's guilty of all kinds of sins. But what will it be to stand before God on the Judgment Day and say, "Lord, I spent my whole life in church and I never bent the knee before thy Son. I never took refuge by faith in the Son of God. Even though thou didst say to me again and again and again and again, much more than four times, look unto me and be ye saved all ye ends of the earth."

You've read the Old Testament. You've probably felt like I did, I remember vividly as a nine year old boy reading through the Bible on my own at night, and I remember thinking, "Those stupid Israelites. It's unbelievable. How could they be so complaining? How could they reject God's word so many times?" And then when I was 14, the Lord showed me I was worse. I was worse. Ask God to show you that you're worse, worse than the Israelites. You've had greater light afforded to you than they had. They never saw the cross. You have the whole New Testament and you have the word faithfully preached to you, and you've been invited directly by God to come to him hundreds, some of you thousands of times. Don't delay. Behold, now is the time of salvation. Now God is knocking on your heart and saying, "Come to me. I will not cast you away. I will not cast anyone away who comes to me." Trust him. Trust his name. Fall upon his name as a needy sinner and he will forgive you by his grace all your sins, also your sins against the third commandment, because he's a guilt-bearer and when you go lost at his feet, you know, that's what Luther said, salvation is going lost at his feet, when you go lost at his feet and plead on his mercy, you will find that he covers every iniquity you've ever committed. His blood will wash away your every sin and you will know the joy of worshiping his name with reverence and with gratitude. Seek his face while he is to be found. Call upon him while he's near. Let the wicked forsake his way. Let him turn unto our God for he will abundantly, abundantly pardon, the original words there, abundantly pardon. It refers to a flood, a river overflowing its banks, it goes everywhere. God will abundantly pardon your every sin and you will know the joy of fearing his name, worshiping his name, loving his name, finding your refuge in his name.

Don't take the name of God in vain like a rushing wind to destroy you, but take the name of God up in worship, present his name back to him and fall before him as an unworthy sinner, and believe in that name and trust that name, stake your whole life on that name and you shall be saved. Amen.

*Gracious God, oh, help us, help us to stop being our worst enemies, to reject the very name, the only name that can save us, and help us to surrender to that name and to*

*honor that name and revere the name I Am, Jehovah, Yahweh, the unchangeable one. Help us to worship thee and to love thy name with all our heart, all our mind, all our soul, and all our strength. In Jesus' name. Amen.*