

3rd. The honor of God's name as His chief and ultimate end and what this implies

Introduction

The 3rd commandment is the "glory of God" commandment because the negatives of the commandments imply positives that we are to act on ourselves and promote in others.

Accordingly, **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** (Ex. 20.6) indicates by good and necessary consequence this duty: you shall seek the honor of God's name as your chief and ultimate end. His end is His own glory as Scripture states: **For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever** (Rom. 11.36).

His great end must also be ours. This is both a logical and an ethical must. There are four lines of thought here by implication.

1) Because everything exists for God, for the ultimate end of manifesting His glory, then that must be what we exist for. Of all the things that we ought to do, this ultimate end is an ultimate ought (of what we ought to be).

2) Because we are His image bearers who are made for the express purpose of reflecting His glory, then it is a fitting duty that we now pursue all our days on this earth. This is an ethical duty par excellence because it is a duty that arises from human nature by creation.

3) Because God seeks this goal more than any other and He seeks this goal as a final end in itself with nothing further beyond it for which it is a means, then as His children, we ought to follow His example. For Him all other ends serve this end; likewise, all other ends that we pursue should serve this end of bringing honor and glory to His name.

4) Because glorifying God was the chief end of the work of Christ and because we are to follow His example and walk in His steps, then glorifying God ought to be the ultimate and chief end of our work. In the garden He said, "Father, glorify your name." As this end sustained Him in suffering so it should sustain us in suffering. As it was His main goal it should likewise be our main goal.

This is of course confirmed all through Scripture. **"Whatever you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God"** (1 Cor. 10:31).

Philippians 1:9-11 is classic in this connection.

Prayer for the saints is made with certain goals in mind: that love abound, that it abound more and more, that it abound more and more in knowledge and discernment. And discernment is sought for a further goal that of being able to test "things that differ" and choose the best. Moreover, wise choosing has an even further goal, the goal of fruitfulness in righteous living. But all these goals are subordinate ends that serve a chief and ultimate end, which is the praise and glory of God. This is how we ought to pray for one another in a fundamental way.

Glorifying God directly and indirectly

God's glory is a goal that will be realized through His governance of every fact of created existence. Thus even disobedience is worked to this supreme end. The judgment of unbelievers serves to display His patience toward them and the riches of His glory toward vessels of mercy ordained for glory (Rom. 9:22-24). While reading this passage consider how the questions make assertions: He did display His wrath, power and patience; He did make the riches of His glory known; He did show mercy to Gentiles.

We might call this the negative working of glory or glorifying God indirectly. To glorify God indirectly is not a worthy or pleasant way to honor God because it means that we fail to be what we are designed to be, we fail to have meaning, value, dignity that accords with our creation in God's image. It is thus an unfulfilling way to live and it leads ultimately to eternal death. To glorify God directly is to make His glory our supreme aim in life. Instead of taking His name in vain, we strive to honor His name in all things. To the triune God be all glory, amen.