

## Stop Taking God's Name In Vain By Robert Hines

You have been a Christian for years and it is a surprise to hear some of the things you say in conversation, things like, Oh, my God, I can't believe it" or "My God, what happened" or "God, I'm so tired" or "Dear Lord, what a shame" or "Lordy, what a mess." Your friends are fairly confident these are not prayers, and you're not talking to God at all.

You may not even realize what you are saying. It may just be a habit, your long time way of intensifying something you want to say. Whether or not you realize what you are saying, we know what it sounds like. It sounds horrible and completely out of place in your life as a Christian. It sounds like a cheapened, worldly use of God's name.

You know that one of Israel's Ten Commandments is "You shall not take the name of the Lord our God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain" (Ex. 20:7). You know that "vain" here has the idea of "empty" or "worthless." That's what your "Oh my God" is: using His name in an empty and worthless way, a throwaway word rather than the sacred respect the God of heaven deserves and requires.

This worldly use of God's name is condemned in Leviticus 19:12. "And you shall not swear by My name falsely, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the Lord." The idea in "profane" is of treating something sacred in a common way, and treating something holy in an unholy way, a way that gives it no importance.

Such vain, empty, worthless, profane words are surely part of what the Lord calls "idle" words in Matthew 12:35-36, words that do no work and accomplish nothing good. "But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the Day of Judgment, For by your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned."

It is time for you to repent of such talk and ask the God whose name you have profaned to forgive you and help you change the way you speak to the simplicity He requires. "Let your 'Yes,' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one" (Matt. 5:37).

You would think that as long as you have been a Christian you would have let the Lord get this out of you by now. But you haven't. And so someone who loves you needs to be blunt with you and tell you it's time to stop. You don't sound like a Christian. It offsets any good you have to say. Those who love you want you to stop.

### Giving Blood

"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13).

In his book, "Written in Blood," Robert Coleman tells the story of a little boy whose sister needed a blood transfusion. The doctor had explained that she had the same disease the boy had recovered from two years earlier. Her only chance for recovery was a transfusion from someone who had previously conquered the disease. Since the two children had the same rare blood type, the boy was the ideal donor.

“Would you give your blood to your sister Mary?” the doctor asked. Little Johnny hesitated, his lower lip started to tremble, and then he smiled and said, “Sure, for my sister.”

Soon the two children were wheeled into the hospital room--Mary, pale and thin; Johnny, robust and healthy. Neither spoke, but when they met, Johnny grinned. As the nurse inserted the needle into his arm, Johnny's smile faded. He watched the blood flow through the tube.

With the ordeal almost over, his voice slightly shaky, broke the silence. “Doctor, when do I die?” Only then did the doctor realize why Johnny had hesitated, why his lip had trembled when he'd agreed to donate his blood. He'd thought giving his blood to his sister meant giving all of his blood, thereby giving up his life. Though, in reality, it was not necessary, he was willing to give his life for his sister. In that brief moment, his love for his sister caused him to make his great decision. Let us remember that there was one who laid down His life for us.

### Wanted

People who are as interested in the church on Sunday evening and Wednesday night as they are on Sunday morning.

People who are as liberal with their money as with their advice and criticism.

People who love God more than pleasure (2Tim. 3:4).

People who are willing to let church services interfere with work, school, or recreation.

People who are willing to spend at least half as much time studying the Bible as they do watching television.

People who can be half as enthusiastic about a gospel meeting as about the World Series or the Super Bowl.

People who are willing to practice in their lives what they say they believe in their hearts. (via THE KEY WORD, Memphis, TN)

### Answered Prayer?

They built a raunchy nightclub right next door to Saint Lukewarm Baptist Church of God in Christ. The good folks of SLBCOGIC decided to start a prayer vigil. Amazingly, the nightclub's business dwindled so much they had to close the doors. This wasn't altogether good news, you see; the owner of the nightclub brought a lawsuit against the members of SLBCOGIC, accusing them of ruining his business with their prayers. The attorneys for the church argued there was no way their prayers could have had any effect on the poor performance of the club. The judge agreed. He ruled in favor of Saint Lukewarm, saying, "while the nightclub owner strongly believes in the power of prayer, the church membership does not." [Dana Key, "By Divine Design," Nashville, 1995, p.13]

### A Moments Wisdom

It is better to be despised for the right than to be praised for the wrong.

A man's character and a fence are alike; neither can be strengthened by whitewash.  
The company we choose is always an index of our character.  
Too many measure success by what others haven't done.  
Love does not dominate; it cultivates.  
If you don't enjoy what you have now, how can you be happier with more?  
People cannot change the truth, but the truth can change people.  
Preach, not because you have to say something, but because you have something to say.  
When a Christian is in the wrong place, his right place is empty.  
A Christian should never let adversity get him down, except on his knees.  
Jesus is not looking for believers; He is looking for disciples.