

54. The Sin of Cursing.

Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Jas. 3, 10.

By cursing by God's name, which Luther mentions in his explanation of the Second Commandment, all *blasphemy* is meant. We read in the third book of Moses, Lev. 24, 15. 16: "Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death." From this we see what the Scriptures mean by cursing. If a man blasphemes the name of the Lord and speaks of God in such a way as if He were not the holy and majestic God, that is cursing by God's holy name. This sin is committed very often. The Lord God complains Is. 52, 5: "My name continually every day is blasphemed." And of these latter days before the end of the world the apostle prophesied that especially much blasphemy would be in vogue. This time has come. Men to-day utter impious, arrogant, contemptuous, reproachful words respecting God and sacred things. They say that God is powerless and unjust. They ridicule the Bible and the entire Christian religion. Blasphemy is a sin as heinous as it is common.

Cursing by God's name also means *to invoke upon oneself or others the wrath and punishment of God*. This is commonly understood by cursing. With such cursing the world is filled. Many draw God into their wicked cause and treat His holy name with levity. They have the effrontery of calling upon God to become the tool of their wicked purpose, or when they curse thoughtlessly, as, alas! is done so often, they thereby show their contempt of God.

Let us beware lest we be betrayed into this sin by our sinful flesh. Let us ever be on our guard, remembering that we have no right to curse anyone. The fear and love of God is incompatible with cursing. God gave us our tongue to pray, praise, and give thanks, not to abuse His holy name or to imprecate evil upon our fellow-men. We received the boon of speech for blessing, not for cursing. Let us not regard this sin as a small matter. "Only acknowledge thine iniquity that thou hast transgressed against the Lord, thy God." Blessed is he who seeks forgiveness for Christ's sake.

Prayer.

Merciful God, gracious Father, I beseech Thee to guard me from all ills of body and soul, so that I may rest secure from the wiles and the power of the devil and from vain and vile speech, thus living to Thy glory and showing love of my neighbor. I pray Thee, for the sake of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, graciously forgive all sins I have committed against Thee in thought, word, and deed, and remember them no more in all eternity. I commend myself into Thy hand; Thou hast redeemed me, Thou faithful God. Amen.

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand.

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