

'DON'T TAKE THE LORD'S NAME IN VAIN' and 'KEEP THE SABBATH'

Week #2 of a 5-Week Series, "Prosperity's 10 Commandments"

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So, Jesus said, "Who do people say I am?"

And the disciples said, "Some say that you are John the Baptist returned from the dead. Some say you are Elijah. Some say you are one of the other prophets."

Jesus answered and said, "But who do you say I am?"

And Peter said, "Thou art the Logos, existing in the Father as his rationality, and then by the fact of his will being generated in consideration of the various functions by which God is related and connected to his creation. But the Scripture says, 'A Father and a Son and the Holy Spirit.' And each member of the Trinity being co-equal with each other and acting inseparably with one another, with only the economic subordination within God, which in no way creates any division of the substance which is no longer simple."

And then Jesus answered and said, "Huh?" [Congregants laugh]

Okay, so I love that! Well, in how many jokes did Jesus say, "Huh?" So, the thing is, I hope the words I'm about to say now make more sense than the ones we just heard.

But what we're going to do is jump from Jesus to Genesis. And I want to ask you a question: What were God's first four words in Genesis? *"Let there be light."*

Let's say that together: [with congregants] *"Let there be light!"*

And there was light. God the Creator spoke the world into existence. Through the power of the spoken word, he created everything he wanted to create. And the story of creation shows the power of God to create, but also shows the great gift of creation that we have all been given. *"Let there be light,"* and there was light!

Similarly, whether we realize it or not, we are speaking our personal world into existence by the words that come out of our mouth. The words we speak have an impact on the quality of the experiences that we have in our lives.

In the book of Genesis, Chapter 2, Verse 19, after God had created everything, including Adam and Eve, he begins to talk about giving us dominion and authority over all things. And one of them is that we get to name everything. And here's what it says: "God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air and brought them to the man to see what he would call them,. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name."

We have the power to "call" everything in our lives. We can call it good; we can call it bad. We can call it positive; we can call it negative. But we get to name things, and they can either limit or they can expand our experiences of them. Life is fun and fulfilling, or life is hard and a struggle. We get to name it, and when we name it, we create it. You know, people are caring and supportive, or people are cold and selfish. We get to name it, and what we name creates it.

In the book of Matthew, Chapter 12, Verse 36 it says, *"On the day of judgment, you will give an account of every careless word you utter. By our words we are justified; by our words we are condemned."*

How many people have ever spoken some words carelessly? Words that were unkind, harsh, kind of negative? The fact is: we all speak some careless words sometimes. And the truth is: every day is

judgment day. Because the words that we put out, you know, come back to us. As it says in Isaiah, "*The words that go out of my mouth shall not return empty.*" That the words we put out -- the energy that we put out -- that it will come back to us. And basically what it's saying is that our words matter. Words count. Words create. Words attract.

How many people would say you absolutely believe that our words have the power to create and shape aspects of our lives? And how many people would say that what we name things has an influence on the experience we have of those things?

In the book of Proverbs it says, "*Life and death are in the power of the tongue.*" We can use our words to build up or tear down. We can use our words in constructive ways or destructive ways. You know, our words are powerful. So it's important that we take care and attention, because they will impact every area of our lives.

Today we are in Week #2 of our five-week series on the Ten Commandments. And basically the Ten Commandments are the fundamental laws -- the spiritual laws. And as we understand them and apply them, we can really open up to allow God's abundant flow to move through all areas of our lives: an abundance of love or creativity or joy; all the good things we could ever desire open up when we follow the fundamental laws in the Ten Commandments.

You know, the first law is: **There should be no other gods before me.** And that means that God is our source. God is our one supply. And it's not just to think it, but it's to actively keep seeking and connecting and asking and trusting God. The more we connect -- build our oneness and faith -- we open channels for God to bless our lives. There's only one Source, but there are many channels. Our job is not our source; it's just a channel. Money is not our source; it's just a channel. But the more we connect with God the Source, the more we open our lives to more channels.

The second commandment is: **Thou should create no graven images or idols to worship.** And sometimes we create idols to worship, and we don't even realize it. And it'll sound crazy, but worry is an idol that we worship. That when we begin to bow to worry, and take ourselves away from God, we are creating a lot of negative images. Even though we have access to all this abundance and connection through God, we create graven images of lack that limit our level of happiness and fulfillment. Even good things like money! Money is a good thing. But we cross that line when we're thinking money is the thing that will make my life happy, or people's approval will make it.

We create these images that pull us away from God, our source, and has us experiencing lack, when we actually have access to all this incredible abundance. And so we need to use our images to create images of abundance; images of love; images of success and happiness and fulfillment.

And so today we're going to look at commandments three and four. And that is about using God's name in vain or a wrong use of God's name. And the other one is to keep the Sabbath and to keep it holy; remember the Sabbath.

So let's look at the third commandment. I'll read the full thing. It says: **YOU SHALL NOT MAKE WRONGFUL USE OF THE NAME OF THE LORD YOUR GOD.** For the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

And so, when it's saying don't use God's name wrongly, the truth is that our name is connected to our nature in the Bible. So, it is saying do not connect our nature of God -- which is abundance and pure light, which is holy and sacred -- with anything that is less than. That when we attach anything of lack and limitation, it is sort of blaspheming against God, who is all goodness and all abundance.

And so, what is God's name?

Well, this little boy walks into Sunday school and says to his teacher, "I know God's name."

The teacher says, "Well, what's God's name?"

And he says, "God's name is Howard."

[The teacher] says, "How do you know God's name is Howard?"

"Cause it says it right there! 'Our Father, who art in heaven, Howard be thy name.'" [Congregants laugh]

So, God's other name -- besides Howard -- is revealed to Moses. You remember when Moses ... that God was sending Moses to Egypt to tell Pharaoh to let his people go? Moses asked, "So who should I say sent me?"

And God said, "Tell them I AM THAT I AM sent you." I AM THAT I AM is the name of the living Spirit of God, the fullness ... [Cell phone rings] Tell God I'll give him a call right back when we get ... [congregants laugh] Or you can pick it up. Okay. All right ...

And so, the I AM is the allness and the fullness and the richness and the goodness of God. And the I AM is also that aspect of the Divine that's in us; that aspect that is within ourselves; that God Spirit in us.

And so it's important for us to make sure we use words that reflect and honor the holiness, the sacredness, the goodness, and the abundance of God and ourselves. You know, it is blasphemous when we say things like, "*I am poor*," because A) That diminishes that God is not abundant; and that diminishes that we are not worthy of that abundance. We need to be careful of the words we use and attach to the I AM, because it reflects and diminishes the power of God. and reflects and limits the amount of good that we can attract in our lives.

Saying things like, "*Oh I am such a loser*" or, "*I'm so stupid sometimes*" or, "*I'm so clumsy*" or, "*I am a hot mess*" or, "*I am hopeless.*" "*I am always late.*" "*I am always broke.*" "*I am not enough.*" You know, "*I'm never going to succeed.*"

You know, we say words that are negative and harmful to ourselves and our image and connection to God that are connected to the I AM. But sometimes there are other statements that we could just say, you know "*I hate my life.*" "*I hate my hair.*" You know, "*Nobody loves me.*" "*Nobody really cares about me.*" "*Things never seem to work out for me.*"

And when it says with the law, "*God will not acquit us for our misuse,*" it means when you put out that low energy -- when you put out that lack energy and that negative energy -- it will be attracted to you. You will not be acquitted. We live in a universe of spiritual laws and the Law of Attraction. You put out that energy, and that energy comes back. And the power of our words have energy, and the energy we send out is the energy that comes back to ourselves.

You know, these words of negativity build a consciousness and a mindset of negativity -- a vibration of negativity -- and we tend to attract more of those things.

And so, we need to use our words to make sure we're building up and expanding, and we're moving towards abundance and goodness in all areas of our lives by speaking the word, and especially attaching the I AM to thoughts of goodness and abundance and prosperity.

"I am a prosperous child of God."

Together: [with congregation] "*I am a prosperous child of God.*"

"I am loving and lovable."

Together: [with congregation] "*I am loving and lovable.*"

"I am successful in all that I do."

Together: [with congregation] *"I am successful in all that I do."*

"I am the temple of the living God."

Together: [with congregation] *"I am the temple of the living God."*

"I am the light of the world."

[Congregation:] *"I am the light of the world."*

"Each and every day, in each and every way, my life is getting better and better and better."

Again: [with congregation] *"Each and every day, in each and every way, my life is getting better and better and better."*

Words have power! Words have energy! And they help us remember the abundant good of God. It helps us remember that we are worthy. And it helps us create even more good, even more riches, and even more abundance.

When you think about it, a word is an idea in our minds. And when it is in our minds, it begins to send out an energy to help it form and help it manifest. So, it's important to speak words of faith; to speak words of joy; speak words of faith; speak words of love; speak words of abundance; speak words of success; speak words of courage; speak words of confidence. Because words have power.

And for us to really live the first commandment, the first thing we need to do is, I think, to develop a plan; develop a practice. You know, have a sense of persistence and patience. Because it takes time to transform. Because we're not always aware of the kind of words that are coming out of our mouth. Sometimes even when we're joking around, we say, *"I'm such a knucklehead,"* or, *"Hey, I can't remember anything."* And we say all these things, and we carelessly put these words out there.

So, the first thing we need to do is to start being aware of the words that are coming out of our mouth that aren't really healthy and aren't really the kind of life that we want to live.

And what would be really great is to find a partner or someone close to us to help us become aware for one another some of the words that come out of our mouth. Not in a shaming way, like, *"Oh yeah, look at that negative thing you said!"* But in a helpful way and a supportive way. Because we need to be aware of some of these words that we say sometimes we're not even aware of the negative things we say about ourselves and about our lives.

And then the second thing is to set an intention to lift your words to be fully aligned with the abundance of God and the quality of life that we all deserve, and the amazing human beings that we are. And then you know we can set an intention to stop saying them, but I don't think that's as effective as saying: set an intention to replace that thought with something better. And all therapy, when you really think about it, is replacement therapy. It is releasing something and bringing something healthier and better into our lives.

How many people have heard of denials and affirmations in Unity? You know, the whole idea with denial is: it's not being in denial. It is denying that a certain negative pattern no longer has power over me. You know, so if we say, *"Hey, you know, I am a hot mess."* You can say, *"Cancel, cancel,"* or you could say, *"This limiting belief has no power over my happiness now, for I am a prosperous loving child of God."*

Replace that idea with something greater and better. *"I am always broke."* You can say, *"Cancel, cancel,"* but I believe it's better to say, you know, *"This limited mindset has no power over me. I'm a prosperous successful child of God."* Acknowledge the limiting belief and then deny that it has power and replace it

with something greater. It is a powerful tool! And it is something that needs practice and engagement because, again, we're not always conscious about the words that come out of our mouth. And being more conscious begins to help transform the energy we put out into the world through the power of our word.

And sometimes, you know, we say words, you know, that ... You ever get something like an unexpected bill that's so huge, and you just start using all kinds of language, turning the air blue? I know nobody here does that [congregants laugh], but I hear sometimes we could say some negative words. And I think it's important to get that energy out, but sometimes just saying, *"Oh, it's all good. No, no; I'm fine. All's well."* That energy is still stuck in us. So I think finding a way to release that energy in a healthy way -- without adding negative wording -- is important.

And so one of the ones, and I think I've shared it with you: if something that we don't like happens, I'd like to say, *"That's fascinating!"* [Congregants laugh] You know, *"God is my source. Something good will come from this. That's fascinating!"*

So I think we should use it. Let's practice it. So if you get a flat tire: *"That's fascinating!"* You get an unexpected bill: *"That's fascinating!"* You spill red wine on a white carpet: *"That's fascinating!"* You've got to work on a holiday: *"That's fascinating!"* Did you see? The energy comes out, and "fascinating" is a powerful word that keeps us engaged but releases the negative energy. And then we can add, *"God is my source; something good will come from this."*

Words are powerful, but we need to coach ourselves better. Because we have been careless; we have been lazy. We've been conditioned to say a lot of negative things about ourselves that just aren't true that block the flow of God's goodness and abundance in our lives.

A plan, practice, patience, persistence. Keep doing it. Because it's not just a matter of the 10 or 20 affirmations you do for those few minutes. It's all the words you speak all the time that make a difference. That's why we need a plan. That's why we need practice. That's why we need patience and persistence. Let the words be positive. Let them be prosperous. Let them be joy-filled. Let them be faith-filled.

And it's the I AM words we connect, but also the words we use to talk about our relationships and our health and our bodies and all the different ... our finances. All those words need to be consciously used in a positive way.

The fourth commandment: **REMEMBER THE SABBATH AND KEEP IT HOLY.** Sabbath literally means a time or a period of rest. Taking a break; pausing from working in activity. And, to me, rest and pause to me are powerful, vital, and an important life practice and I believe a spiritual practice.

Because it's a time of renewing, it's a time of restoring and rejuvenating and refreshing. It can be a time of healing. It is powerful. And many levels -- the whole idea of Sabbath, a time of rest -- is important for our bodies. To repair to rest, to wake up more energized. And we need to have Sabbaths for the mind: to relax and quiet the mind so that we can come back with a better perspective; a level of clarity; and a mind that's open for new ideas to come through. We need a spiritual renewal where we feel more grounded; where we feel more centered. The Sabbath is an important practice. A time of rest and withdrawing is hugely important.

You know, when we talk about the creation -- God created in six days and rested on seven -- it's seven days it takes for the process of creation. It's seven. You know, the whole idea is that rest is a part of the creative process. That it is in the rest, you know, that things get completed; that things are transformed. That it is in the rest that the invisible hand of God shapes and works and does the things that need to be done.

It's like a farmer. The farmer does the work of planting the seed and watering and fertilizing, you know. But then he rests and he trusts that the universe and the process of growth will continue, even while he's sleeping. He just lets it go. And that takes care of it and he wakes up the next day refreshed, does more work, and continues the process of work and rest until the harvest comes.

It's an important part of our physical, our mental, our spiritual and our creative process to make sure rest is a part of it.

How many people remember Stephen Covey's fabulous book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*? You remember that chapter -- I think it's called, "Sharpen the Saw?" A guy's trying to, you know, saw this tree down. He's working hard and he's getting tired and not being very productive; not going well. And someone says, "Hey, why don't you stop and sharpen this saw?"

And the guy says, "No, I'm too busy." [Congregants laugh]

You know, and so he's there getting tired. His productivity is going down. He's losing his joy. And yet he still keeps going. How many people here have ever been so busy and out of balance and overworked and you still kept going and you didn't take a break? You know, how many people have ever, you know, had your body stop working, but your mind kept going and going and going? And you get mental exhaustion?

You know, we already know that we're more productive when we're balanced. We all know we're more productive and effective and engaged in life when we feel well-rested. We all know that. Yet our culture has this thing about work ethic, and making sure you work your fingers to the bone, pulling an all-nighter. You know, we've got this badge of honor because, "*I stay late at the office every night,*" and we keep doing these things for ourselves.

I have a friend; she was a doctor. And on her days off, you know what she did? She picked up extra shifts. Not because she needed the money. It's because her dad kind of drummed into her that you're being lazy and unproductive. We think rest is sometimes lazy and unproductive, and that's not healthy. It's not only not true, but it's actually harmful to ourselves to not take time for rest.

So I ask you: Where in your life are you a little bit out of balance? And what would you be willing to do to get more in balance? You know, where in your life do you need a little more rest and renewal? And where in your life could you do a better job in maybe doing better self-care and taking care of you?

Three of the smartest people ever -- Einstein, Leonardo da Vinci, and Nikolai Tesla -- had one thing that they all believed helped bring out the very best in themselves; made them as the smart and creative geniuses as they are. And you know what that was? Naps! They love naps! And it is because they understand the rhythmic flow of the mind and the body. And when we're rested, we see things clearer. Then when we're rested, we have a mind that's more receptive and open to inspiration and possibilities. And they work that. They took the Sabbath on a regular basis. They understood themselves; they understood how we work. And they honored it! And their levels of genius were incredible.

But sometimes we feel like running ourselves down: keep working harder and harder. And some, you know ... Was it Abraham Lincoln who said, "*If you gave me six hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend the first four sharpening the axe*"? And it sounds silly, but it's how important and vital rest and renewal is for all of us.

Jesus said, "*Come apart a while and rest.*" You know, I don't know if he was into naps, but he certainly got the whole idea about rest and coming apart a while to come back renewed; to come back engaged and refreshed and excited to create something more.

You know, if you look a little deeper about the whole idea of Sabbath, it really is about letting go. It's about letting go. Even resting is an act of letting go. But sometimes it's hard for us to let go, because we

like to be in control. How many people would say you're a little bit of a control freak? Anybody would say that? Well, since I'm using my words, I don't want to use it negatively. So let me just adapt that a little bit. How many people would say you're a control enthusiast? [Congregants laugh] Okay; all right. [Laughs]

And so, you know, the Sabbath is about: Are you willing to let go and trust that the universe is supporting you? That God's got you? That you can trust the process of growth, the process of unfoldment? You know, we don't need to be in charge every second of every day. We have to let go so we can have a true Sabbath that brings us rest and peace; that helps us get grounded and centered and relaxed and revived and renewed for even greater experiences and greater possibilities.

Think of an area in your life where you need and would be willing to trust God and let go a little bit more. You know, where in your life are you willing to let go and do a little bit of self-care for you? To honor yourself as the temple of God, and to open yourself to feel the support and connection of Spirit?

You know, if you really look at it, the third and the fourth commandment are about helping us bring out the best in ourselves through using the power of our words and the power of rest.

Bill Klem was a Hall of Fame umpire in Major League Baseball from 1905 to 1941. He was an umpire. He umpired 18 World Series, which is still a record. And he'd say, *"There's always that pressure. Was it a ball? Was it a strike? There's always that pressure. Was it a fair ball? Was it a foul ball?"* And he always said, *"It ain't nothing until I make the call."* [Congregants laugh]

And so, for you, it ain't nothing until you make the call! So why not call it possible? Why not call it hopeful? Why not call it beautiful? Why not call it wonderful? Why not call it amazing? Why not call it prosperous? Why not call it successful? You know, why not call it loving? Why not call it an overflowing level of good and abundance in our lives?

Our words: they help build ourselves up. You know, to build up the kingdom of God; build up all the good that is available and accessible to all of us. And our words are an important place to start.

You know, the Sabbath is really about honoring that spirit of rest and renewal. That spirit of rest; of knowing that you were supported by the universe. You can let go and know that more good things will happen than if you just keep holding on and keep pushing yourselves.

It sounds so simple, huh? *"Words? Rest? I mean, this is going to transform my life?"* And sometimes it's the simple things that make the big difference.

Do you know one of the key things they say that set us up for success? It's going to sound ridiculous! Making up our beds every morning! It puts your mind into a level of organization and clarity. We feel good about ourselves. Just a simple thing like making up your bed every morning can bring our lives great levels of success! We're always looking for the grand-slam home run. Sometimes it's the little things that make a big, big difference!

Here's what Friedrich Schiller said. He said, *"Only those who have the patience to do simple things perfectly will acquire the skill to do difficult things easily."* Let me say it again: Only those who have the patience to do simple things perfectly will acquire the skill to do difficult things easily.

Words. Rest. You know, naming and the Sabbath. These are the things that will help us fulfill the third and fourth commandments. But they will also help bring out the best in us to live a more prosperous, God-centered life. God bless you all.