

## A LOOK AT THE NEW TESTAMENT

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*// Read Acts 9:1-19*

*Reflection: In your group list three prominent people in each of the following areas: sport, politics, fashion, celebrity, industry. Then identify what characteristics (positive or negative) you associate with their names.*

*// Read Acts 9:1-2, 22:3-5 and 22:9-11*

Gather together Paul's descriptions of what he had been doing to Christians and try to identify what motivated him.

Paul discovered that although he thought he was waging a campaign against a few people who were threatening his religious beliefs he was actually opposing Jesus, the Son of God.

Throughout history and around the world today some people still oppose followers of Jesus, either by ridicule or through violence. What would it take to turn them around? How can we pray for those who persecute followers of Jesus today?

What do you see of God's power and character in the way Jesus treats Paul? How does this give you confidence to keep on praying for people who seem to keep on resisting God?

When people misuse God's name, what are they blind to?

*// Read Acts 9:15-16*

Once Paul has met with Jesus he is given a new task that would come at a huge personal cost (see 2 Corinthians 11:23-28.) See how Paul fulfills his new task in the following passages: Acts 13:38-52, Acts 16:11-15. What were his new priorities?

In the light of the third commandment and as we learn from Paul's conversion, how can we be people who treasure the name of Jesus today? To what extent are we prepared to suffer for him?

study notes  
week four

**THE TEN COMMANDMENTS**

## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

### WAY IN

*Reflection: Think through your day. Then, ask God to: a) forgive you for things you've done that haven't pleased him; b) to help you trust him for the things you've struggled with and; c) to help you rejoice in the blessing that he has given to you today. Then, ask him to speak to you through this study.*

As a group list as many names of God mentioned in the Bible as you can. What do each of them mean?

A friend asks you 'Why do you often say "in the name of Jesus" at the end of your prayers?' How would you answer?

### A LOOK AT EXODUS

*// Read Exodus 20:7*

What do you think this commandment means for us today?

Read through the following verses and note down what it is that disrespects God's name in each of them: Leviticus 18:21; 19:12; 22:2; 2 Chronicles 33:4-7; Ezekiel 36:22-23 and Malachi 1:6-14.

Why are each of these an example of 'misusing' the name of the Lord? How might each of these verses be applied today?

*// Read Exodus 3:13-15*

Moses has been sent by God to ask the king for his people to be set free from Egypt. This is a big ask, and so Moses wants to know who the God is that is sending him. From these verses what do we learn about God?

How should that have helped Moses to do what he was being asked to do? How might this understanding of God help us in times of difficulty?

*// Read Exodus 5:22-6:8*

Whenever you see the word 'LORD' in Capital letters in the bible, it is referring to the name of God given in Exodus 3 (i.e. Yahweh). Therefore, what extra do we learn about God's character from these verses?

Misusing God's name is not just about speaking his name, but also about disregarding and disrespecting who he is in our lives. How do we do that today, with particular reference to the aspects of God's character mentioned in these verses?

As well as 'swearing' how else might we misuse God's name in our speech?

In your group pray together that you would be people who would take the 'name of the Lord' (cf. Acts 4:12) to the world in a manner that is fitting of Jesus' disciples.

### QUOTE TO REFLECT ON

*"The name of God is much more than a combination of letters or sounds. After all, God's name is different in Russian than it is in English. If we say the word bog, we mean a swampy area, whereas in Russian it means 'God.' When the Bible speaks of God's name, it is not indicating that a particular set of letters carries some mystical power. The name of God is the Bible's way of speaking of God's presence in his revelation...Practically speaking, there are many ways in which we can honour the great name of God. As with all commandments, we not only put off practices that dishonour God's name, but also put on attitudes of the heart and deeds of obedience that bring honour to that name." (Edmund Clowney)*

In what ways would your family/closest friends say that you honour God with your life?