

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## Profanity's Sure Sign

(Jerry Fite)

Profanity is making something common which should be holy. Our tongues unleash profanity when they manifest irreverence for God's standard. Our words should be separated unto God in edifying, not degenerating speech and the giving of thanks, not in off color innuendos (*Ephesians 4:29; 5:4*). “Cussing” is a sure sign of profanity with its obvious corruptness and perversity.

“Taking the Lord's name in vain” is a sure sign of profanity. When one swears before God that his promise will be fulfilled, and then does not follow through with the promise is showing irreverence for God's name: “And ye shalt not swear by my name falsely, and profane the name of thy God: I am Jehovah” (*Leviticus 19:12*). The Jews of Jesus' day were trying to circumvent their oaths, thinking they could connect their promise with “heaven”, “earth”, “Jerusalem”, “the temple” or the “altar” and not be required to fulfill one's promise (*Matthew 5:33-35, 23:16-22 James 5:19*). They were not escaping God, who is over and in all, but were actually uttering profanity, showing irreverence unto Him.

Obscene cursing and the empty or vain use of God's name are sure signs of profanity. What does profanity surely signify?

Profanity is a sure sign that one is not applying the word of God in one's life. God's standard for our words is not mere theory. Was Paul uttering profanity when he promised he was telling the truth referring to God as his witness: “*For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the Gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of thee in my prayers*” (*Romans 1:9*)? Was Paul failing to follow Jesus' demand to not swear at all when he says, “*But I call God for a witness upon my soul, that to spare you I forbare to come into Corinth*” (*2 Corinthians 1:23*)? Paul was not disobeying God's command of proper speech, for he was telling the truth when he calls God as his witness as to his statement's veracity. He was applying God's word by avoiding the false swearing that Jesus condemned, while making sure his speech was “*yea*” and “*nay*” (*Matthew 5:37, 2 Cor. 1:19*).

How then is saying, “God\_\_\_\_\_” or more euphemis-

tic “Gosh darn” contradicting any revealed Divine principle? It usually falls from one's lips at the moment of a painful surprise or an irritating circumstance. One is surely not thinking about the sanctity of God when he so uses God's name. And substituting God's name with “Gosh” is in principle that which Jesus condemned when the Jews were substituting “heaven” for “God” in their oaths.

Profanity is a sure sign to the world that one is not a Christian. Yes, even the world knows that one cursing or taking the Lord's name in vain is not befitting to living for Christ. If you want to hide the fact that you are a Christian, use obscene language or take the Lord's name in vain and your peers will never connect you with Christ. The Christian should in word and deed be living to create the opportunity to talk about Christ, not avoid Him (*Matthew 5:16, Acts 4:13, 1 Peter 3:15, Colossians 4:6*).

The character of your speech plainly signifies important things. By your words you will be either justified or condemned (*Matt. 12:36-37*). Are you listening?