

# The Curse of Profanity

Dub McClish

The New Testament Greek word translated *profane* in our English versions comes from the Greek word for *threshold*. A threshold is accessible to all, thus those who pass over it are not fenced out or restricted. A threshold is also that upon which men walk with no thought of its use or value. Both ideas suggest profanity.

*Profane* is used in the New Testament of both men and of things. Esau is called *profane* because he counted his valuable birthright as of no value (Heb. 12:16). Paul's accusers in Caesarea said he intended to *profane* the temple (Acts 24:6) — treating that which was restricted to Jews only as accessible to Gentiles as well, thus treating the holy as common. This is our common usage of *profanity*. Such can be seen on every hand in modern secular man.

Perhaps the most pronounced illustration of it is seen in the words people use. Not too many years ago, even the most foul-mouthed reprobate would not curse and swear in the presence of women and children. Now it is not uncommon to hear the women and children "out cussin'" the men. At one time there was general respect for the name of God and His Son, but now the only time some folks mention the sacred Names is in a context of profanity and/or exclamation. Even such terms as *damn* and *Hell* as curse words have become a regular part of the vocabulary of both ordinary and famous people in both public and private settings.

The entertainment world has moved steadily into vulgarity. Movies and TV programs not only spew out words of indecency, but situations and acts as well. I have been appalled at the lewd and profane words that have been placed in the mouths of pre-teen children in some PG rated movies. The words of today's songs (both rock and country) are sometimes like a visit to a sewage treatment plant. They take that which God has made holy (marriage, sexual purity, honesty, truth, etc.,) and make a mockery of them.

The way people spend their money exemplifies crass profanity. Most people give little or no thought to their own souls (and those of their children). They spend for the present or for a few years of retirement, only to go out someday into an eternity with not a penny on deposit in Heaven (Mat. 6:19-21; 1 Tim. :17-19) . Such is abject profanity.

Ironically, much of religion is sheer profanity. To ignore the Bible and the absolute commands it has for daily behavior, worship, how to be saved, etc., substituting human desires and plans for the Divine, is simply profane. We dare not call evil *good* and good *evil* (Isa. 5:20).

[**Note:** I wrote this article for, and it was published in *The Edifier*, weekly bulletin of Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, TX, July 17, 1986, of which I was editor.]

**Attribution:** From *thescripturecache.com*; Dub McClish, owner and administrator.