

## *Reverencing God's Name, by Mike Riley*

In today's digital world, it's sometimes difficult to keep up with the abbreviated terminology that accompanies today's fast-paced, youth-oriented electronic communication. For example, in the "Instant Messaging" (IM) world, the text-message language, "laughing out loud" becomes "lol." The phrase, "By the way" becomes "btw." And regrettably, some people are using "omg" for "Oh, my God!"

This last phrase seems to be on the lips of many who receive startling news. But as Christians, we need to stop and think before we utter this or any other phrase that flippantly uses God's name (cf. Exodus 20:7).

When Jesus was teaching His disciples how to pray in Matthew Chapter 6, the first thing He told them to say was this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name" (Matthew 6:9). Clearly, God's name itself is special. It encompasses His holy nature (1 Peter 1:15-16; cf. Leviticus 11:44-45), His teachings (2 Timothy 3:15 -KJV; cf. John 5:39); His moral authority (John 17:1-3; cf. John 8:10-11; Mark 2:1-12;), and His moral character (1 Thessalonians 4:7; 2 Peter 3:11). To speak the name of God is to call on the Creator and Sustainer of the universe (Hebrews 1:1-3; cf. Acts 17:24-25; Nehemiah 9:6). In every way possible, we should honor and protect God's holy name, preserving its use for those occasions when we are speaking of Him or addressing Him in faith (Psalm 111:9 KJV; cf. Luke 1:49).

Let's be careful never to turn the hallowed name of Almighty God (Genesis 17:1 KJV) into just another flippant phrase on our lips or in a digital text message.

***"May all I am and do and say  
Give glory to my Lord alway;  
And may no act of mine cause shame  
Nor bring reproach upon His name." —Anonymous***