

The Ten Commandments
Exodus 20:1-17
Message #10 – Tell the Truth
(12/3/2017 AM)

The 9th Commandment has both a *civil* and a *personal* aspect to it.

The Law of Moses established the legal system for the nation of Israel. A person's life and generations of his family could be impacted by a false witness against him. God established the law concerning witnesses in Deuteronomy 19:15-21. Both aspects of lying are seen in Proverbs 6:16-17. God is just as concerned about personal lying as He is about perjury in a court of law. The Bible has a great deal to say on the subject of lying.

❖ **The Bible reveals the existence of *absolute* truth.**

The Bible begins with God, Genesis 1:1. Scripture goes on to reveal Him to be “a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He”, Deuteronomy 32:4. Truth exists because God exists. God is the author and the standard of truth. Truth is the self-expression of God. Truth is theological. God is the author of truth and Satan is the author of lying, John 8:44. Truth is also ontological, meaning truth is the way things really are. Reality is what it is because God created it to be that way. Paul describes the unsaved as those “who exchanged the truth of God for the lie”, Romans 1:25.

➤ Our culture believes that truth is *made not found*.

The world's view of truth is the exact opposite of what scripture teaches, Isaiah 59:14. In our culture everyone is entitled to his own truth. To suggest that you might be right about your beliefs and that others might be wrong is about the greatest offense one can commit. The statement “there is no such thing as absolute truth” is stating an absolute truth, Romans 1:18.

➤ The Word of God is the *objective standard* of truth.

God has provided a means of measuring truth and error. John 17:17, “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.” If there is no such thing as truth then there is no such thing as sin. If there is no sin there is no Gospel of salvation. There is no Savior, John 14:6.

❖ **As Christians we are to be people of *truth*.**

We are saved by the truth of the Gospel. Ephesians 1:13. At the moment of salvation we received “the Spirit of truth”, John 14:17. Our lives should be particularly marked by truth. Psalm 25:5, “Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation.” We need to speak the truth to one another and to speak up for the truth. This relates to the ways in which we break this commandment (16) “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

➤ We break this commandment by the things that *we say*.

One of the key evidences of our spiritual condition is the words that come out of our mouths, Proverbs 18:21 & James 3:2. The first sin committed after the Fall was a sin of the tongue.

▪ ***Gossip is a form of bearing false witness.***

Gossip most often degenerates into slander, Proverbs 10:18. One of the requirements that Paul lists for the wives of deacons is “not slanderers”, 1 Timothy 3:8. The word is *diabolos*. This word is used 40 times to describe the devil. When we lie we are speaking Satan's native language. Our words carry weight, James 3:5-6. We need to be careful about repeating something we do not know to be true as if it were true. Even if it is true we need to weigh our words, Ephesians 4:29.

▪ ***Many things we say would be better left unsaid.***

To speak with grace means to say what is helpful and healing, Colossians 4:6. We should adopt the prayer of David in Psalm 141:3. Deception, exaggeration, and cheating are also included.

➤ We break this commandment by the things that *we do*.

Ananias and Sapphira conspired to deceive the Apostles and the early church, Acts 5:1-4. Their sin was not holding back part of what they received. Their sin was lying to the Holy Spirit (4). God struck them both dead. They acted under false pretense. God was declaring at the beginning of the church that He hates hypocrisy among His people.

➤ We break this commandment by the things that we say but *then do*, 1 John 1:6.

John uses the term “walk” to describe a believer's daily living. If I claim to be a disciple of Jesus but continue to live a life of sin I am living a lie. John is not talking about acts of sin which every Christian will commit from time to time, 1 John 1:8, Sin remains but it no longer reigns in our lives. A true Christian can fall into lying like any other sin.

▪ **However a true believer cannot live a life *characterized by lies and deception***, Psalm 101:7. Lying in particular grieves the Holy Spirit because He is “the Spirit of Truth”, John 14:17. How would it be possible for a Christian to be a pathological liar? 1 John 2:4, “He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” The most reliable evidence of salvation is one’s present life not simply a past decision. How does a Christian stop committing the sin of lying?

➤ We stop lying by ***telling the truth!***

Ephesians 4:25, “Therefore, putting away lying, ‘Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,’ for we are members of one another.” Through saturating our minds with the Word of truth and relying upon the Spirit of truth we can walk in truth. Psalm 119:29-30, “Remove from me the way of lying, and grant me Your law graciously. I have chosen the way of truth; Your judgments I have laid before me.” The Christian life is a constant daily battle. Ephesians 6:14, “Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth...” The idea is total truthfulness. This involves the spiritual character qualities of honesty, integrity, and sincerity. There is no hypocrisy or duplicity. This is transparent truthfulness. Psalm 51:6, “Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts...” Every moment of every day we are making conscious decisions about what is true and what is false.

We Need to Recognize Lying and *Repent with Truth* Psalm 51:10, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” ESV