

#9 Do Not Bear False Witness

Exodus 20:16; Deuteronomy 5:20



The Last Five Commandments Are Summed Up This Way:

“You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord,” Leviticus 19:18

The Opposite Of A False Witness Is A Faithful Witness

- Like Jesus
 - About His Faithfulness = To the seven churches of Asia, John wrote, “and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness,”
 - About The Truth = “Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world--to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice,”
John 18:37
 - About Himself = “I am the one who bears witness about myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness about me,” John 8:18

The Power Of Witness

- False Witness Is Malicious – Exodus 23:1
- It Makes The Difference Between Life And Death – Numbers 35:30 cf. Deut. 17:6
- God's laws on witness – Deut. 19:15-20
 - No crime punished without it. v.15
 - False witnesses endured the punishments intended for the accused. v.16-19
 - Others would be impressed upon not to repeat the crime of false witness. v.20

The Power Of Witness

- It Has To Do With Personal Integrity
 - Who is hurt by it? Certainly the person
 - But what about ourselves?
 - “for we aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man,” 2 Cor. 8:21
- What you say about others makes a difference.
 - E.g. Telling friends about others (school gossip)
 - E.g. Telling parents about siblings (bringing trouble)
- What you don't say when you know better.
 - E.g. when you hear gossip.

What Would Cause Someone To Be A False Witness?

- “Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled? But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. **For out of the heart** come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person . . .”

(Matthew 15:17-20)

Bearing False Witness Is Lying

- Telling the truth is a basic principle in the New Testament.
- “Do not lie to one another, seeing you have put off the old self with its practices,” (Col. 3:9)
- “... but speaking the truth in love...” (Eph. 4:15).
- “Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another,” (Eph. 4:25)
- All liars will have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone (Rev. 21:8)

How God Feels About It:

He Hates False Witnesses!

“There are six things that the LORD hates, seven that are an abomination to him . . . a false witness who breathes out lies . . .” Proverbs 6:16-19

The Damage Of False Witness

- Abraham told Abimelech Sarah was his sister – Genesis 20
- Potiphar's wife against Joseph – Gen. 39:6-20
- Jezebel's false witness against Naboth – 1 Kings 21
- The Chief Priest And Elders Against Jesus – Matthew 26:59-65
- Those Hired To Lie About The Body Of Jesus – Matthew 28:11-15

Some Practical Applications:

- Refuse Participating In The Gossip Mill
- Research Claims Before Forwarding Emails (claiming some company does this or that)
- Remember To Preserve Reputations With Every Word
- Reason By Weighing Out Short Term Backlash vs. Long Term Comfort Of Knowing You Told The Truth