

The TENDER Commandments

NINTH COMMANDMENT

Don't Bear False Witness Ex 20:16; Eph 4, James 3

INTRODUCTION

How many of you want to live next to a toxic waste dump, or with AN ARSONIST – that would be scary. Perhaps you already do.

This topic of truth and lies really hit home for me a couple of months ago as I was looking into some material related to the Enneagram Personality Types. Some of you are familiar with the concept; similar to Myers Briggs or the Taylor Johnson Type Indicator – there are basic personality types and as you understand them it gives insights into your own behavior and helps you become more compassionate and patient with others.

One thing some authors who work with the Enneagram do is give a corresponding “deadly sin” to each personality type. – It turns out that I’m the #3-Performer/ Achiever, and it is spooky how well it fits me. As I read the material and listened to some podcast conversations with others who shared my “type” I was stunned at their insights and my thought was “these folks are inside my head.”

They also pointed out that the “deadly sin” of the 3 is - DECEIT.

. Cron and Stabile put it this way...*Threes value appearance over substance. Abandoning their true selves to project a false, crowd-pleasing image, Threes buy their own performance and deceive themselves into believing they are their persona.*

The deadly sin of the Performer is deceit—not because they deceive others as much as because they deceive themselves..... They show up in almost every profession, from music to the mission field. They can be anyone from David Bowie to Dorothy Day, the founder of the Catholic Worker Movement. But they all believe the same lie: you're only as loved as your last success.

...3w2 wing (Helper) make great entertainers, politicians, salespeople and pastors. When their lust for attention and recognition overtakes them or when they feel unappreciated, however, they can become angry and hostile.

You may not be a 3, and you may not care one way or the other, or think it is all a bunch of hoey, but one thing we know is that as humans – men and women – we have an on again, off again relationship with the truth. We have a relationship of convenience with truth and honesty.

As we continue, my prayer is that in this series, need to understand that

-The Ten Commandments ARE NOT ABOUT WHAT God WANTS FROM US, BUT WHAT HE WANTS FOR US.

-Remember that THE Ten Commandments ARE SOMEONE WE MEET BEFORE THEY ARE SOMETHING WE OBEY.

The context of the Ten Commandments is to be understood as a Covenant commitment ceremony,

Stipulations Relating To Loving
LOVE FOR God IS SINGULAR – EXCLUSIVE
Love for God is SPIRITUAL

Love for God must be Sincere
Love for God must be Safe Guarded
Honor Your Father and Mother
Do not murder
Do Not Commit Adultery
Do Not Steal
Exodus 20:16 – Do Not bear False Witness against your neighbor

WHY THE COMMANDMENT?

Fallen men and women have a tendency to distort the truth. It seems to be innate – just consider the 2,3,4,5 yr olds you’ve known. You don’t have to teach them to lie.

No one wants to be called a liar, but It is so common in our society that we almost think nothing of it in certain segments – politics. We almost expect politicians to lie, and then we act shocked when they are caught. <<Are you calling me a liar?>>

The command was given to...

Protect the value of just relationships – the 10 commandments are not just for the sake of ethics, but for promoting loving and just relationships. When truth is replaced by deceit in any relationship, that relationship loses its value.

Protect the Value of one’s Word – As creatures made in God’s image we are to reflect Him in all that we do. God is Truth, his word is always fulfilled, He is faithful; he cannot lie. Being made in His image we too are communicators and our communication should reflect God’s nature and purposes. Remember that words are more than just tools of communication, they are indicators of what is in the heart.

Protect the Value of Truth itself – society breaks down when there is no such thing as truth. The Book of Judges and today’s newspaper headlines show what happens when every man does that which is right in his own eyes. It is tragic to see the impact of the loss of truth in society at large, but particularly when it impacts the church. When the church abandons the concept of revealed truth, then the rest of society is in big trouble.

The whole issue of FAKE NEWS today is an evidence of the breakdown of TRUTH.

Time Magazine – **Is Truth Dead?** March 2017



WHY WE BEAR FALSE WITNESS

Partly from Malice, Contempt, Revenge, and Fraud– this is lying to do harm to another, to put him down or make him look bad.

Partly from Pride, Boasting, and Fear – this is lying to impress someone, to use someone, to keep him from seeing you in a bad light – SPINNING the situation

In each case we manifest a failure to trust God – we don't believe that being honest will be the best thing; we want what we want even if it means that we must dishonor God to get it. That is a failure to believe that God is wise, good, and able to meet our real needs. We doubt his heart.

Isn't this at the root of most, if not all of our sin? Does it surprise you? Remember the FALL – Satan lied to get Eve to doubt the heart of God. Satan bore false witness about God to get Eve to sin. Of course he didn't put it that way, "Hey Eve, come on over here and sin, rebel against the good God who made you and has provided this paradise to live in; take the fruit to your goofy husband over there so he'll eat and plunge the world into sin and bring misery and death to all your posterity."

Genesis 3:4-5 ⁴ And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die! ⁵ "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

The serpent made it sound to right, so appealing. **AT ITS CORE, SIN IS DECEPTION because Satan is a liar and the Father of Lies.**

Lying reflects the image of Satan, "The Father of lies".

Truth telling reflects Christ who is Truth.

Our words move us toward a resemblance of Satan or of Christ.

What if our words were followed by a corresponding morphing of our appearance, like Pinocchio with his nose? What would you look like today?

WHAT ARE WE TO DO WITH OUR WORDS?

Ephesians 4:25 ²⁵ Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.

Ephesians 4:29-32 ²⁹ Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.

Heidelberg

112. Q. **What is required in the ninth commandment?**

- A. **I must not give false testimony against anyone** – clearly in a courtroom situation this is crucial. "Do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?" lives are destroyed when lies are told in the courtroom. Justice is perverted and society as a whole is harmed. This of course was part of the plot against Jesus – the leaders of the Jews found those who would give false testimony in his trial. Peter lied when with cursing he said, "I do not know the man." Ex: FALSE witnesses against Jesus, and Stephen in Acts 6
- B. **In court and everywhere else, I must love the truth, speak and confess it honestly,**
calling evil good, and good evil is a way of violating this command.
Concealing the truth, undue silence in a just cause, and holding our peace when iniquity calls for either a reproof from ourselves, or complaint to others
- C. **Twist no one's words,**
speaking the truth unseasonably, or maliciously to a wrong end, or perverting it to a wrong meaning
- D. **not gossip or slander -**

- E. **nor condemn or join in condemning anyone rashly and unheard** – There are two sides to every story.
- F. **Rather, I must avoid all lying and deceit as the devil's own works, under penalty of God's heavy wrath.**
- G. **And do what I can to defend and promote my neighbor's honor and reputation.**

GIVE A GOOD REPORT

The Member's Commitment to Maintaining Peace Among the Brethren by Giving only Good Reports

Definition of bad report

*"It is using words, tonal patterns or facial expressions to put someone else in a bad light. It is damaging someone else's reputation with information that **doesn't need to be shared**. It is encouraging or spreading discontent or discord among others."*

Bill Gothard

The covenant statement signed when joining Highlands Church

"In obedience to the Word of God, I hereby commit myself to the goal of giving only good reports."

It is so easy to sin with our words. We struggle to tame the tongue – James 3 **ARSONIST**

EX: Pastor who was victim of rumors in a small town; the couple came to confess and ask forgiveness. He was willing to forgive but asked them to pluck a chicken and put the feathers in a sack then begin spreading them around town, to climb to the water tower and let them fly in the wind, **THEN GO GATHER UP ALL THE FEATHERS.**

"Could you do that for me?"

"Pastor, that's impossible; the wind will have blown them all over three counties by then."

They could be forgiven, but they can't undo the damage they did by their sinful behavior. Words are so quickly spoken, but they can't be brought back in.

"A lie can travel half way around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes." Mark Twain or Charles Spurgeon???

If you don't believe how hard it is to tame the tongue, James 3, then try the tongue test
Taming the tongue isn't how you become a Christian, it shows whether or not you know something of the grace of God. The tongue reveals what is in the heart. GRACED people have a new way of looking at relationships; they want to communicate grace to those who hear them. They have a new **AGENDA FOR THEIR MOUTH.**

TONGUE TEST – a good self check-up. Until you see what you do with your tongue you don't realize what is going on in your heart. **THIS IS GROUND ZERO OF DAILY SANCTIFICATION**

Tongue test:

1 week , don't lie or misrepresent issue, no grumbling, no boasting, no gossip, don't run down others, don't defend yourself , or make excuses

Do always affirm other people and speak words that give grace to meet a need.

It isn't enough to just be quiet. Those who are quiet by temperament can sin by saying nothing as much as others can sin by saying the wrong thing.

<<THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE>> That is why we need a savior; that is why God did not leave us alone, but gave us His Holy Spirit when he saved us.

PSALM 15 – Only Jesus lived this kind of life.

O LORD, who may abide in Your tent?

Who may dwell on Your holy hill?

2 He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness,

And speaks truth in his heart.

3 He does not slander with his tongue,

Nor does evil to his neighbor,

Nor takes up a reproach against his friend;

4 In whose eyes a reprobate is despised,

But who honors those who fear the LORD;

He swears to his own hurt and does not change;

5 He does not put out his money at interest,

Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.

He who does these things will never be shaken.

Don't we want to live and do business with people like that?

Do we want to be people like that?

Imagine what it would look like to build a community of believers who live by faith in Christ so as to exhibit that kind of character. It would bless this town.

Look at Jesus – 1 Pet 2:21-25. The describe his sinlessness, Peter points out that there was never deceit found in his mouth.

Jesus is the one person who never lied or misrepresented Truth – yet he became sin, even falsehood, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

GOD CAN CHANGE THE WAY WE speak, when we know Him and pursue Him as our treasure and our Truth.

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