

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT: HONOR TRUTH

Part 6 of LOVE PEOPLE. Exodus 20:16.

Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. August 7, 2022.

INTRODUCING THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

The Ninth Commandment

Exodus 20:14 (ESV) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

The Meaning of the Ninth Commandment

It is prohibited "to willfully communicate a falsehood about my neighbor, either in legal or in other matters, in order to misrepresent them" - *Deuteronomy 19:16–19; Psalm 109; Proverbs 12:17; Matthew 26:57–61; To Be A Christian - An Anglican Catechism, 2020.*

The Reason for the Ninth Commandment

Communicating falsehood "defames and wounds my neighbor, erodes my love of truth, disobeys my Lord Jesus, and aligns me with Satan, the father of lies" - *Psalm 52:1–5; Proverbs 25:18; Jeremiah 9:3–9; John 8:42–47; To Be A Christian - An Anglican Catechism, 2020.*

The Implications of the Ninth Commandment

I should speak at all times with love, wisdom, and truth, so that my words may honor God, and comfort and encourage my neighbor - *Psalm 32:2; Proverbs 12:17–20; 14:25; 15:1–4; Zechariah 8:16–17; Matthew 5:33–37; Ephesians 4:25; To Be A Christian - An Anglican Catechism, 2020.*

Our focus today: God wants us to live according to the truth.

HOW TO LIVE ACCORDING TO THE TRUTH

1. Adopt a Truth Perspective

The context of the Ten Commandments: God on the mountain, speaking.

Israel's truth perspective: God is real and he speaks truth to live by.

The fallacy of living by our own truth.

Jesus had a truth perspective:

John 8:26-30 (ESV) He who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him." 27 They did not understand that he had been speaking to them about the Father. 28 So Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.

Jesus said that God is true - real - and he speaks truth.

2. Find a Truth Person

Not everything we are taught, hear about, or learn is the truth.

Building our lives on a foundation of lies, misconceptions, deceptions, and half-truths creates an unstable life.

Jesus is a truth person. He said, "I am the truth" (John 14:6).

John 8:31-32 (ESV) So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

According to Jesus, truth can be known and his word is the truth.

3. Follow a Truth Plan

Three commitments in a truth plan:

- Commit to know the truth

Proverbs 2:6 (ESV) The LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

- Commit to live the truth

John 14:21 (NLT) Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me.

Luke 11:28 (ESV) "Blessed ... are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

- Commit to speak the truth

There are ways to mess with words so they are half way to being a lie:

- Exaggerate, embellish, spin, shade, edit, reframe, highlight, hold back, twist

Jesus taught about speaking the truth in the Sermon on the Mount:

Matthew 5:37 (ESV) Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil.

- Speak the truth plainly. Be true to the truth.

FINAL WORDS

Let's be truthful: We have all broken the ninth commandment. We need a Savior to provide forgiveness, cleansing, and restoration to God. Only Jesus.

NEXT STEPS - THIS WEEK

During the week, take some steps to reflect on and apply today's Bible teaching. Pick one or more of these questions to consider:

What are some situations in which you are tempted to lie? How have you resisted those temptations?

How do you respond to the following? Last week, I read in the Open Doors prayer journal about a Christian in Libya who was martyred for his faith. This is what his uncle said: "It is very painful for us, but the only thing that comforts us is that he didn't renounce his faith and he kept the faith until his last breath. He was martyred in the name of Jesus Christ. We are all proud of him and very happy for him."

Persecuted Christians always face a choice: Deny the faith (lie) so they can go free and live, or keep the faith, tell the truth, and go to jail or death. How do you tell the truth under pressure?

How do you think Jesus' teaching in Matthew 12:36-37 clarifies the need to speak truth?

What are some ways you could help spread the truth of the Gospel? Who are some people you need to speak the truth to?

Pray to stand firm in the truth. Ask for more grace to be a truth-teller even when it is inconvenient or potentially costly. Remind yourself of the ninth commandment. Think about Jesus who is the truth, taught the truth, and was betrayed by false testimony. Remind yourself the truth builds but lies destroy (Proverbs 19:5).