

“The BIG TEN ~ 9th commandment” 5.23.10

Let’s begin our time together with THE TEXT:

(R) Exodus 20: 16 or p. in pew Bible

The MSG translates it...“NO LIES about your neighbor.”

Over the years I’ve collected statements that we know are not true; but somewhere along the way, they became acceptable lies. Here’s a sampling ☺

- Open wide this isn’t going to hurt
- It’s easy to assemble - - just follow the simple directions
- Please dad, “I walk him - - I’ll feed him - - I’ll train him - - I’ll will do everything ☺
- One size fits all.
- I just need (5) minutes of your time
- “I’m from the federal government & I’m here to help you” ☺
- It’s easy to find - - you can’t miss it
- (2) can live as cheaply as one
- It’s not the money; it’s the principle
- Listen “Mother is only staying for two weeks; you will HARDLY NOTICE she is around the house.” ☺

LYING is not acceptable to God because IT...destroys relationships & it perverts justice;
LYING... destroys trust & fractures families;

And for those of us who claim to follow God, TELLING LIES misrepresents the One whose basic nature is truth.

(R) Proverbs 6: 16 – 19 or p. 484 in pew Bible

2 of the 7 things GOD HATES are a LYING tongue + a false witness who pours out LIES
The 2nd part of the ‘BIG TEN’ ~ last (6) commands deal primarily with HOW WE respect other people’s rights.

IT protects others from having their most precious possessions wrongfully taken. Their life against the murderer; Their marriage + family against the adulterer; Their property against the thief; & Their REPUTATION against liars.

This brings us back to the 9th commandment,
“You must not testify falsely against your neighbor” or “No lies about your neighbor.”

Proverbs 22: 1 instructs, “Choose a good reputation over great riches; being held in high esteem is better than silver or gold.”

The 9th commandment is similar to the 3rd commandment:
The 3rd commandment protects the reputation of God’s name;
The 9th commandment protects the fragile nature of your neighbors’ reputation.

So for the rest of our time let’s address (2) QUESTIONS that will hopefully shed light on the 9th commandment:

- I. 1st QUESTION = What violations does this command encompass?
 - A. Let’s begin with ‘broader violations’ of this commandment.

1. PERJURY is the most direct violation of the 9th commandment. For (1) to 'give false testimony' is to testify falsely in any sort of formal hearing.
 - a. Under the Law of Moses ~ a severe penalty was imposed on anyone who perjured himself.
 - b. (R) Deuteronomy 19: 15 – 21 or p. 154 in pew Bible
 - c. U.S. courtrooms perjury is still in a tremendous offense. "Do you solemnly swear to the truth, so help you God?"
 - d. Response "I do" to that oath ~ places person under penalty of perjury.
 - e. INSERT 2005 Congressional Steroid Hearings

2nd violation of this commandment includes:

2. ALL-LYING is prohibited. It would be far too narrow to limit this commandment to include only testimony given in a formal hearing.
 - a. Define a LIE = is an intentional misleading of another person. An honest mistake is one thing, but an intentional misrepresentation is something else all together.
 - b. (R) Matthew 5: 33 – 37 or p. 736 of pew Bible

3rd violation of this commandment includes:

3. SLANDER = the Hebrew word 'dib-lar' succinctly means, a defaming-evil report + to speak evil of another + to malign + to backbite.
 - a. One of the most fragile aspects of a person's life requiring protection is his or her reputation.
 - b. Proverbs 10: 18, "Hiding hatred makes you a liar, slandering others makes you a fool."

Perjury + All lying + Slandering are the broad violations of this command; now let's be more specific with the 2nd question.

B. 2nd QUESTION = 'Exactly who' violates this commandment?'

1. THE PERJURER ~ God considers lying very wrong, but lying under oath is even worse.
 - a. Prov 19: 5, "A false witness will not go unpunished, nor will a liar escape"
 - b. WHY this is so critical? Because the fate of the accused & those who suffered injustice depends on your integrity.
 - c. INSERT Todd Zimmerman's example

Another example of one who breaks this commandment is:

2. THE SELF-PROTECTOR = the Bible is filled with accounts of people who lied in order to protect their own hides.
 - a. Abraham lied about Sarah being his wife & told the Egyptians, "...she is my sister". In a moment of doubt in God's ability to save, Abraham took matters into his own hands.

- b. Joseph's brothers lied about ' him being eaten by a wild animal' to protect themselves from their father's wrath.
- c. David lied to cover up his adultery w/ Bathsheba, to protect his status
- d. Simon Peter lied to cover up his friendship with Jesus to protect his himself from being arrested.
- e. You know when I am tempted to lie? It's remembering people.

Somebody stops after church to see me & they say, "I'm visiting from Ohio & our children's director, Jo Andrews said to tell you hello, do you remember Jo?"

Oh yeah, "How's HE doing?" they will say, "Well Jo is a SHE"
 "Oh, that Jo Andrews!" Ya, Ya, ...

We rationalize - - I didn't want to hurt Jo's feelings thinking I don't remember her.

But in reality I'm LYING to protect my fragile image.

Proverbs 10: 9,

"People w/integrity walk safely, but those who follow crooked paths will slip & fall."

Another person who breaks this commandment is...

3. THE INSINUATOR

- a. You can lie by stating something factual but you insinuate that the opposite is true. For example:
- b. I've got good news for you today. Phil Heller is sober this today. You got it, it' a deliberate attempt to deceive!

Be cautious insinuations can hurt; if you have ever been on the receiving end, you know how painful this can be.

Another example of someone who breaks this commandment is:

4. THE GOSSIP & EAGER LISTENER

- a. The gossip ~ is someone who maliciously spreads information that is not fact based; is considered a liar.
 - i. As Christians we must refuse to participate in or to tolerate any conversations in which a person is being defamed or accused w-out the person being present there to defend himself.
 - ii. If someone comes to me with a problem about someone else; I attempt to stop the conversation & take them to that person.
- b. The eager listener ~ is just as guilty as the gossip or the insinuator.
 - i. (R) Leviticus 5: 1 or p. 81 in pew Bible
 - ii. In other words = if you know the truth & you don't speak up to protect a person, you're guilty of allowing a falsehood to be spread about that person.

5. THE FLATTERER

- a. Proverbs 26: 28, "A lying tongue hates its victims, & flattering words cause ruin."
- b. Flattery says something to a person's face they would never say behind their back.
- c. Fred Craddock my preaching professors encouraged us to never put too much stock into nice comments after the sermon ☺
 - i. Story ~ visiting (1) of his seminarian students preaching (1) Sunday night; said it was a miserable experience.
 - ii. (2) older ladies in pew in front of him leaned over and whispered, "that's the most dreadful sermon I've ever heard."
 - iii. Dr. Craddock leaned over to his wife Netty & said, "Let's follow them out & see what they say to the preacher." ☺

When they got to the door, the older woman said to the young preacher, "Pastor, that was inspired, (1) of the best messages I ever heard." ☺

Be cautious; flattery gives people a false evaluation & diminishes any genuine praise.

Let me attempt to give you something to take home:
So, how do we AVOID BREAKING the 9th commandment?

I would suggest YOUR NEXT STEP is doing a 'walk thru of your heart:'
This is how you do it:

- 1st, ask God to reveal your motives + your reasons + your rationales for doing & saying certain things. TRUST ME: God will reveal things you are saying & doing that will shock you.
- 2nd, put some teeth to the 9th commandment: Critique all your conversations.
 - Question yourself & Question God =
Have I embellished something today? Have I stretched - - exaggerated?
 - Have I told as fact something I only have guessed at? Have I lied to God or to someone else today? THEN WAIT - - allow Him to speak. Ask for forgiveness – if necessary: go to that person & admit.
- Finally = install several lie detectors in your life. Find people you trust & love; trusted confidants; ask them to hold you accountable for your honesty!