

INSIGHT

How much are your opinions worth? How about your statements? Your speech? Your words? Have you ever lied? Have you ever manipulated the truth so that it looks and sounds like the truth but is really a self-centered attempt to justify your actions? I'd like to think that my words are as good as gold. Gold doesn't change. If I buy it, it will remain gold until Jesus comes again. Even if I die gold will still be gold until Jesus comes again. Gold will never turn into some worthless material and real gold is gold all the way through; not just coated with gold. How about your words? Are your statements/actions sometimes just "gold-coated"? Are your statements/actions sometimes unreliable? People don't know whether to believe you or dismiss you as a liar?

Every time you lie, whether it is by manipulating truth, deceiving, outright misrepresenting something or someone, your integrity suffers. You steal trust from people. You begin to owe trust. It is very interesting that it only takes one lie to destroy someone's integrity and other people's trust in that person. One lie. One "small, innocent, white, lie".

The ninth commandment deals more with honesty, sincerity and integrity than with issues of knowledge, accuracy and facts.

"You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor does not require you to be omniscient, but it does require you to be honest. It does not demand that you have the full content of factual truth in your possession, but it does require you to be trustworthy when you speak about some matter wherein the facts are in your possession."

You are not responsible for lacking in information on a particular subject or being perplexed and confused about some difficult matter; but you are responsible for telling the truth and not misrepresenting the facts so as to deceive, mislead, or send someone down a blind alley.

The Heart of God: The Ninth Commandment The Pinocchio Syndrome...

Key Text:

Exodus 20:16

"You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor."

Theme:

Many echo the words of Pilate when they reflect an attitude of cynicism by the response, "What is truth?" Many people today rely on being deceitful and manipulative to get what they want. So much misrepresentation and dishonesty exists that "truth" has become an idealistic concept--unexisting and nonsense to those who make their living by deception. As people of God, required to emulate divinity, falsehood should never be an option that we are willing to pursue. The words that we speak are only valuable if they are truthful. Otherwise, they are not even worth the paper this is printed on.

Application:

Here are some helpful suggestions:

1. **Trustworthiness:** requires you to give honest opinions and judge impartially. Tell the truth in love, even if it hurts.
2. **Integrity:** To have integrity is not to be fragmented (partially truthful and/or partially dishonest). Be consistent. Speak the truth whatever the circumstance, situation or position you are in.
3. **Encouragement & Praise:** There's always something positive that can be found in a person. Be an edifier instead of a destroyer (slanderer). Always give the benefit of the doubt, never assume. When you slander someone you assume--and that is lying!
4. **Accountability:** Hold yourself accountable in everything you do. If you find yourself making excuses and justifying your actions, chances are that you are being dishonest to those you are letting down and deceitful to yourself. Wake up and let the Spirit transform you into a person able to give an account!

May the Lord richly bless you!

SERMON OUTLINE

“You Shall Not Give False Testimony”

Introduction: Last Week

1. The eighth commandment dealt with the importance of moral action!
2. “You shall not steal” applies physically and spiritually!
3. We rob God when we don’t sacrifice our best.
4. We rob God with our words!
 - a. We rob him with faithless words *Malachi 3:13-ff*

I. Ninth Commandment: Moral Speech

Exodus 20:16

“You Shall Not Give False Testimony Against Your Neighbor”

A. Do not give false testimony

1. Who is my Neighbor?
 - a. Who does Jesus consider to be a neighbor?
 - b. *Luke 10:25-37*
 - c. Anyone you come across is your neighbor!
 - d. How does false testimony effect people?
2. The Perils of False Testimony.
 - a. *Numbers 13:26-14:1-4*
 - b. A nation is lead astray by false testimony--The faithless deprived the promised land.-- Joshua and Caleb’s faithful response and their inheritance of the promised land!

B. Speak Faithful Words to One Another!

1. A vision for the faithful.
 - a. *Malachi 2:4-9*
 - b. Our lips need to preserve knowledge (speak what you know).
 - c. Never assume!
 - d. Nothing false should be on our lips.
 - e. Speak faithful words!

C. Speak Wholesome Words To One Another!

1. *Ephesians 4:22-ff*
 - a. Wholesome = nutritious for the soul.
 - b. Don’t talk anything which is not good for the soul-- spiritual “Wheaties™”!!

II. Conclusion: *Hebrews 13:15*

1. Combine speech with action!

2. This is pleasing to God.

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Warm-up:

Can you illustrate how it is possible to say something that is factually true but morally false?

See To It

Psalm 15

1. To whom does the opening question of this Psalm refer?
2. What is the underlying theme of this short yet powerful Psalm?
3. How is true happiness achieved in light of this Psalm? Explain.
4. **Read verse 3.** Explain how not being these thing can attribute to the breaking of the ninth commandment?
5. **Read verse 4.** Explain how not being these thing can attribute to the breaking of the ninth commandment? What does it mean when the Psalmist says, “*who keeps his oath even when it hurts*”?
6. **Read verse 5.** Explain how not being these thing can attribute to the breaking of the ninth commandment?

Seeing It Closer

1. Is there a distinction in your mind between lying about trivial matters and lying about important things?
2. Is it possible to lie by being silent? Can you illustrate how this might happen? Have you ever been guilty of it?
3. Imagine for a moment that people’s noses actually grow when they tell lies. Would your own appearance be altered?
4. How can you guard your heart against the temptation to lie?

Getting To It:

Lying is not a fine art to be practiced. It is an offense against God and man. There should be a quality of honesty and integrity in us--whether in business, professional life, filing a tax return, or simply in casual

conversation--that sets us apart. Let us be a people who do not excuse themselves in dealing with lies!