

The Truth will set you Free

Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

Ephesians 4:25

Looking at the command

The 9th Commandment: "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor"

- False = untrue, insincere
- Witness = a person who sees an event (so can attest to what happened); evidence, proof

Framework to interpret and apply the Law (see handout)

Where it all began and why it matters

- God - the source of all Truth
- Satan – the father of lies (John 8:44)

Genesis 3:1-13

1. Note the various ways truth gets distorted in this encounter. Consider what falsehood is being introduced at each turn.
2. How is life altered with the introduction of falsehood? What is lost?
3. What does this reveal about how foundational truth is to all of creation?

Why we lie

The root of all sin: Exchanging the truth about/of God for a lie (Romans 1:25)

Sin deceives – presents falsehood as truth, or truth as falsehood.

And we are all sinners. (1 John 1:8)

Let's think back over each command. What is the lie hidden in the temptation to break each one?

The Command

- 1st – You shall have no other gods before me
- 2nd – You shall not make and worship images
- 3rd – You shall not take name of the LORD in vain
- 4th – You shall keep the Sabbath day holy
- 5th – Honor your father and mother
- 6th – Do not murder
- 7th – Do not commit adultery
- 8th – Do not steal
- 9th – Do not bear false witness
- 10th – Do not covet

The Lie within the temptation

What's so hard about living in the truth?

Let's read **Matthew 26:57-75**.

1. Note how Jesus is subject to false witness in 2 different forms here. How is each one destructive?
 2. Though we may not often be tempted to the more flagrant form of bearing false witness (vv. 57-68), Peter's form (vv. 69-75) is perhaps easier to relate to. What's going on for Peter, such that he's now not willing to even acknowledge the truth for which, just hours earlier, he said he was willing to die? What's so hard about living in the truth, for him in this moment?
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1. What other dynamics can be at play to make living in the truth difficult? What is it about the truth, in any given situation that tempts us to twist or change to deny it?

For Reflection

Jesus, throughout his ministry, repeatedly affirms that he is bearing witness accurately and truthfully to the Father. He also makes the connection that being his disciple means knowing the Truth and walking in it, and that this Truth sets his disciples free. (John 8:25)

This can be a little counterintuitive – constraining ourselves to believing and speaking the Truth doesn't always feel freeing.

1. How have you known the freedom that comes of walking in the Truth (about God, about yourself, about others)?
2. What truth is it currently hardest for you to accept and believe today?
3. How is this shaping how you're speaking and acting?
4. What truth do you need to confess to the Lord about yourself, so that His Truth can more fully set you free?