

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

Commandment # 9 - Honor the Truth

Exodus 20:16

¹ The Ninth Commandment is to honor the truth. ² Exodus, chapter 20, verse 16, says, **You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.** ³

I. What Did This Mean to Them?

What did this mean to the original recipients of this command? ⁴

What is the meaning of the phrase **false testimony**? ⁵ The word **false** ¹ means to lie, to utter a falsehood. The word **testimony** ² means is one who is a witness, one who gives a testimony. The phrase implies not only false speech, but also false actions. It describes a deceptive type of character.

There is a good example of this type of character in the Apocryphal Book of Susanna found in the Roman Catholic Bible. Here is a summary of that book.

¹ שקר.

² עד.

“The Book of Sussanah (Sefaria) is an apocryphal short story about an attempted rape of a righteous married woman by two Jewish elders. When she resists their advances, the elders accuse her of adultery, and she is condemned to death. She beseeches God for mercy, and is proven innocent when the elders, interrogated by the prophet Daniel, disagree about the tree under which the adultery allegedly took place.”³₆

You are not only not to lie yourself, **but you are also to avoid liars! Exodus, chapter 23, verse 7, Have nothing to do with a false charge and do not put an innocent or honest person to death, for I will not acquit the guilty.₇**

Lying shows **you are not in touch with reality. Romans, chapter 1, verse 25, **They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator.**₈ Again, in First John, chapter 1, verse 6, **If we claim to have fellowship****

³ Introduction to the Book of Susanna at [The Book of Susanna | Sefaria](#).

with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. ⁹

Deceitfulness identifies you with Satan rather than God! One of the biggest distinctions between God and Satan is falsehood verses truth. ¹⁰

The word devil ⁴ in the Bible, means deceiver, liar, false witness or malicious accuser. When you falsely accuse someone, you are following in Satan's footsteps! ¹¹

Lord Jesus said to some religious leaders once as He was hammering this home, **You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.** ⁵ ¹²

⁴ Διάβολος.

⁵ John 8:44.

Addressing false teachers in the church, the Apostle Paul said, **For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.** It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve. ¹³

In contrast to Satan, **God is truth!** ⁶ ¹⁴ His law is truth! ⁷
¹⁵ His commandments are truth! ⁸ ¹⁶ His word is truth! ⁹
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It is impossible for God to lie! Hebrews, chapter 6, verse 18 - . . . it is impossible for God to lie . . . And again, Titus 1:2 - . . . a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time . . . ¹⁸

⁶ Isaiah 65:16 - Whoever invokes a blessing in the land will do so by the God of truth; he who takes an oath in the land will swear by the God of truth. Again, John 3:33 - The man who has accepted it has certified that God is truthful.

⁷ Psalm 119:142 - Your righteousness is everlasting, and your law is true.

⁸ Psalm 119:151 - Yet you are near, O LORD, and all your commands are true.

⁹ Psalm 119:160 - All your words are true; all your righteous laws are eternal.

Lord Jesus is truth! ¹⁰ ₁₉ He was the word Who became flesh, full of grace and truth. ²⁰

He said **I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.** ¹¹ ₂₁ He promised us He would send the **Spirit of truth.** ¹² ₂₂ This Spirit would guide us **into all truth.** ¹³ ₂₃

How does God punish liars?

Ananias, and his wife, Sapphira, sold some of their property to give to the church to support many Christians who were in poverty. That's the good news. The bad news is that they lied about how much money they had received implying they were giving all the profits from the sale. Barnabus did that and received much praise for it.

¹⁰ John 1:14 - The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹¹ John 14:6.

¹² John 14:16-17 - And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever — the Spirit of truth.

¹³ John 16:13 - But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.

When asked, they deliberately lied. As a result, they were each instantly struck dead! ¹⁴

We have got to be so careful that we honor the truth!

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¹⁴ Acts 5:1-10 - Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet. Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God." When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. Then the young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him. About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?" "Yes," she said, "that is the price." Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also." At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

II. What Should This Mean to You?

What should this mean to you? ²⁵

What should it mean to you about being a false witness? Is making an accusation important enough to do it? Is the supposed offence too petty to bother with? ²⁶

What is the cost of making an accusation? Are you guilty of gossip? Are you guilty of slander? You know your accusation could destroy your victim's reputation. ²⁷

Do you have enough evidence to support your accusation? Usually accusations are made because of "hear say", with no evidence but gossip. So, you tend to jump to conclusions before you hear the whole story. ²⁸

When someone is accused, use the biblical plan! Matthew, chapter 18, verses 15 through 17 says, **If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you.** If he listens to you,

you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector. 29

First, go privately to see if you can convince your brother to change. If you succeed, you have corrected without drawing attention to the issue. 30

If that fails, go back to him with a witness or two. This establishes the issue with minimum support without the embarrassment of having to make it public. 31

If that fails, you have no other choice to correct the issue than to go publicly with it. Hopefully, the problem is solved before you have to go to this extreme. 32

What should it mean to you about lying? ³³

What about unwholesome talk? Ephesians, chapter 4, verse 29 says, Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. ³⁴

What about swearing? Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 4, Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.

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What about gossip and slander? The Letter of James says, With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. ¹⁵ ³⁶
Again in chapter 4, verse 11, Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. ³⁷

¹⁵ James 3:9-10.

What about “White Lies”? ¹⁶ How important does a lie have to be before it becomes a “real” lie? Who decides if a lie is a “white” lie or some other color? ³⁸

What if telling the truth might get someone in trouble or get someone hurt? Rarely are situations completely black or white. So, who makes the decisions here? The question here is, can I really tell the truth and trust God for the outcome? ³⁹

What should it mean to you about deceitful behavior?

⁴⁰ Hypocrites in the church are the main excuse most people have for not being involved. ⁴¹ What constitutes a hypocrite? ⁴² If you “play church” without striving for a corresponding changed life, you are a hypocrite! ⁴³ Even worse, the biggest hypocrites are the ones who claim to be Christians but don’t go to church. They just sit at home at a distance and take critical potshots at the ones who do! ⁴⁴

¹⁶ A harmless or trivial lie, especially one told to avoid hurting someone's feelings. [white lie meaning - Search \(bing.com\)](#)

Here is God's advise about representing Him with your speech. Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. ¹⁷ 45

God is truth!

Lord Jesus is truth!

God's word and His way in your life is truth!

God wants you to live a life of truth to accurately represent Him!

<http://www.biblelifemessages.org>

¹⁷ James 1:19.