



Exodus 20:16

REJOICING IN THE TRUTH

Truthfulness in speech may be the most frequent test of our integrity each day. In ordinary life, people don't often encounter opportunities to murder, commit adultery, steal, or break other civil laws...but people do have opportunities many times every day to speak truthfully or to tell small lies... Small exaggerations of events or distortions of details of fact can be spoken repeatedly...but in each case, God is dishonored, the liar's moral character is further eroded, his conscience is progressively hardened against God's law, and he becomes more open to committing other kinds of sin as well. Each time a person speaks the truth or lies, he aligns himself either with God, "who never lies" (Titus 1:2), or with Satan, "a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44).

—Wayne Grudem, *Christian Ethics*

The Ten Commandments reveal God's righteous character. They also summarize the foundational principles for ethics and for life.

- A Relationship to God—Heart** (20:3-6)
 - B Relationship to God—Words (20:7)
 - C Relationship to God—Deeds (20:8-11)
 - D Relationship to Family—Heart, Words, Deeds** (20:12)
 - C Relationship to Others—Deeds (20:13-15)
 - B Relationship to Others—Words (20:16)
- A Relationship to Others—Heart** (20:17)

THE COMMAND

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

- **Specifically, it commands us not to lie in a _____ setting.**

The judges shall inquire diligently, and if the witness is a false witness and has accused his brother falsely, then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother. (Deuteronomy 19:18-19a)

- **Generally, it commands us not to lie in _____ setting.**

You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another. (Lev. 19:11)

*Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord,
But those who deal truthfully are His delight. (Proverbs 12:22)*

- **Relationally, it commands us to avoid all communication that hides, twists, or contradicts the truth in order to harm others.**

A man who bears false witness against his neighbor is like a war club, or a sword, or a sharp arrow. (Proverbs 25:18; cf. 12:18; 18:21; Jer. 9:3)

A lie is a snowball; the further you roll it, the bigger it becomes.

—Martin Luther (1483-1546)

A lie can travel halfway around the world before the truth can put on its shoes. —Charles H. Spurgeon

Think about how much falsehood and deceit there is in the world! How much exaggeration! How many untruths are added to a simple story! How many things are left out, if it does not serve the speaker's interest to tell them! How few there are around us of whom we can say, that we trust their word without question!

—J. C. Ryle (1816-1900)

Bear. Hebrew, *anah*, "to testify, speak, answer, respond, sing."

False. Heb, *sheqer*, "a lie, whatever deceives; fraud, vanity, a sham."

One's mere word should be as trustworthy as a signed agreement attested by legal witnesses.
—Curtis Vaughan

Anyone who has been lied to knows that lies divide people; lies are the language of war. —Ed Welch

THE REASON

But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die." (Genesis 3:4)

- God is the God of _____ (Psalm 119:160; Titus 1:2).
- Satan is the father of _____ (John 8:44).
- Truth is the _____ between following God and being deceived by Satan, between reality and illusion, between life and death (John 18:37; cf. 3:19-21; 8:45-47; 14:6).

THE PRINCIPLES

1. **Sanity depends on _____ the truth.**
The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." (Psalm 14:1a; cf. 53:1)
2. **Community depends on _____ to the truth.**
Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. (John 17:17)
3. **Relationship depends on _____ the truth.**
Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. (Eph. 4:25)
4. **Character depends on _____ in line with the truth.**
Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts. (Psalm 51:6a)
5. **Repentance depends on _____ the truth.**
Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth. (2 Tim 2:25)
6. **Salvation depends on _____ the truth.**
He desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. 2:4; cf. John 14:6)
7. **Freedom depends on _____ in the truth.**
"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31b-32)

Truth is what God thinks; it is what God does; it is what God is; it is what God has revealed of Himself in the Bible. Truth is found in its fullest form in God, for He is truth; He is the very source and origin of all truth. —Tim Challies

All the trouble in the world began with one lie. —Vernon Grounds

All lies are the vomit of the Devil; he spews deceit over the cosmos. —Lewis Smedes

Without absolutes revealed by God, we are left rudderless in a sea of conflicting ideas about justice and right and wrong, issuing from a multitude of self-opinionated thinkers. —John Owen (1616-83)

Saints not only desire to love and speak truth with their lips but they seek to be true within; they will not lie even in the closet of their hearts, for God is there to listen; they scorn double meanings, evasions, equivocations, white lies, flatteries, and deceptions. —Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-92)

He who tells a lie is not sensible of how great a task he undertakes; for he must be forced to invent twenty more to maintain that one —Alexander Pope (1688-1744)

The truth will set you free, but first it will make you miserable. —James A. Garfield (1831-81)

The worst of all deceptions is self-deception. —Plato (428-347 BC)

You never find yourself until you face the truth. —Pearl Bailey

Where I found truth, there I found my God, who is the truth itself. —Augustine (354-430)