

“A Passion for the Truth”
“The Ten Commandments” — Part 9
Exodus 20:16

“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.”
Exodus 20:16

1. There’s no such thing as a white lie.

Definition: A lie is any attempt to distort, shade, or misrepresent the truth.

Three reasons this Commandment is so important:

- It promotes justice in our courts of law. (Lev. 5:1)
- It protects life in community life. (Eph. 4:25)
- This commandment is rooted in the nature of God.

There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers.
Proverbs 6:16-19

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...
Isaiah 65:16

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.
John 8:44

2. Why do we lie?

- We lie to make ourselves look good.
- We lie to avoid hurting feelings.
- We lie because we are afraid of consequences.
- We lie because we like to act as though we are entirely competent.

3. How do we lie?

When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise.
Proverbs 10:19

- We bear false testimony.
- We assassinate a person’s character.
- We gossip.
- We exaggerate.
- We state half-truths.

For our offenses are many in your sight, and our sins testify against us. Our offenses are ever with us, and we acknowledge our iniquities: rebellion and treachery against the Lord, turning our backs on our God, fomenting oppression and revolt, uttering lies our hearts have conceived. So justice is driven back, and righteousness stands at a distance; truth has stumbled in the streets, honesty cannot enter.

Truth is nowhere to be found, and whoever shuns evil becomes a prey...

Isaiah 59:12-15

4. The goodness of truth

- Truth exists.

What's true for you is your truth; what's true for me is my truth. Don't push your truth on me.

...Jesus answered, "In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

John 18:37

- The truth sets us free.

"Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:32

- Jesus claimed to be truth.

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

John 14:6

- The Holy Spirit leads us into truth.

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth...

John 16:13

- The Bible teaches us to know truth.

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

John 17:17

- The truth helps us grow up in love.

Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart...Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

1 Peter 1:22 & 2:1-3

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.
Ephesians 4:15

5. We can use the truth in a sinful way.

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. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
Ephesians 4:29-32

Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.
Colossians 4:6

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.
1 Peter 3:15-16

Application:

“The fact is we are all guilty of some form of lying. The answer isn’t just trying harder to tell the truth. No, we are called to put our faith and our lives into the hands of the only person who never uttered a single lie. When we do that not only will He forgive us, but His grace will compel us to love the truth and become truth tellers.”
(Mark Mitchell)