

RULES TO LIVE BY!

10. Do No Speak Falsely About Others



Introduction

In the Gospel of Matthew, we read the words of Jesus: “Do not think I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets ... whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.” We have been studying the Ten Commandments. As we have learnt, the first 4 deal with our relationship with God, the 5th, our relationship with our parents, and the last 5 with our relationships with other people. Let’s go through them and see if we can remember those we have studied. Now we will look at the 9th commandment.

Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 5:20

- ❶ What else does the Word of God warn us not to do that relates to the 9th commandment?
Exodus 23:1, 2, 7, 8

(It warns us not to spread false reports i.e. gossip, not to help a wicked person by giving a malicious report about someone, not to change your testimony to please the crowd, not to be involved in a false charge being given to someone, and not take to a bribe or it will influence your testimony.)

- ❷ When we read these verses it brings to our minds the picture of a courtroom, but the 9th commandment does not only refer to this. Why do you think God says not to give false witness against your **neighbor**? Who is our neighbor and why do you think that word is used?

- ❸ What does it really mean to ‘give false testimony’? Look at these verses: Proverbs 14:5, 25, 25:18.

(Giving false testimony includes lying and deceiving others by our words. The word ‘deceive’ means to give a false impression or to lead someone astray.)

A false testimony may be a mixture of truth and lies, but it conveys a wrong impression to another person. This is what Satan did in the Garden of Eden.

- ❹ How did Satan change God’s words and what was the result? Compare Genesis 2:16-17 and 3:1, and then Genesis 2:17 and 3:4. See Genesis 3:13

(God had said to Adam and Eve that they could eat from any tree in the garden, however Satan totally misconstrued what God had said, by saying: “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’” Secondly, God had said there was one tree they could not eat and if they did, “you will surely die.” Satan again said the opposite, “You will not surely die”, and then went on to say it would open their eyes. Later Eve told the Lord God that Satan had deceived her.)

- 5 What was happening at the time of Jeremiah? Read Jeremiah 9:3-9. How did God feel about what was going on?

(During the time of Jeremiah no one was speaking the truth, and they were deceiving and slandering one another. God said that He would need to refine them, and punish their sin.)

- 6 Have you ever had someone speak nicely to your face, but you found out that behind your back they spoke very differently about you? See Jeremiah 9:8. How should we react as Christians in this kind of situation?

Conclusion

Most of us have experienced the hurt that comes when we find out that someone has spoken badly about us, especially when it is not true or fair. It is clear from the Word of God that when anyone speaks deceitfully or untruthfully about another person, it displeases the Lord.

However we may have done the same things ourselves at times! Let's spend a few minutes in silence and allow the Holy Spirit to speak to us, and ask Jesus to cleanse us from any sin. As we close, we will read Colossians 3:1-3, 8-10, 12-14, and 17 together.