

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Proverbs 6:16-19**.
- B. The 9th commandment (Ex. 20:16).
“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”
- C. A story to illustrate why God has given this commandment.
A preacher was harmed by the false rumors said about him. Once the truth was known the offender repented and asked for forgiveness. The preacher said he would forgive, and then made a request. The offender was a chicken farmer and he was asked to kill a chicken, take all its feathers off, count them and put them in a bag. Then take the bag to the top of the city water tower and empty it. Then go throughout the town and pick up all the feathers. As impossible as that would be is as impossible it is to stop rumors and gossip.
- D. Of the Ten Commandments, two of them concern the use of our tongue:
 - 1. (#3) Taking His name in vain.
 - 2. (#9) Do not lie.
- E. Solomon said of the tongue (Prov. 18:21).
Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.

I. **POISON?**

- A. Whenever you say something to an individual or about an individual that is less than what God would say to that individual, you are bearing false witness (giving bad testimony). God takes such matters very, very seriously.
- B. What kind of words ought we to speak? Building words. Benefiting words. Helpful words. Uplifting words. See Eph. 4:25,29,30.
Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH, EACH ONE *of you*, WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another. [29] Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such *a word* as is good for edification according to the need *of the moment*, that it may give grace to those who hear. [30] And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
- C. Our words can be like poison (Jas. 3:8). What does poison do? Poison sickens and kills. And it doesn't take very much! Nor does it take much poison from the tongue to sicken a relationship, alienate a loved one, or destroy a friendship of many years.
But no one can tame the tongue; *it is* a restless evil *and* full of deadly poison.
- D. From time to time we read of a person mauled by an animal, supposedly tamed. But somehow this “tamed” cougar, leopard, wolf, or dog will suddenly revert back to an old instinct--to attack, to lash out, to maim and kill.
Our tongue has that same awful potential. Just when we think we've got our mouths under control, just when we think our tongue has been tamed and gentled and civilized, something will set us off and we will *maul* someone with our angry or bitter words. Our tongue is like a wild animal and James said that no man can tame it. There's a simple reason for that, it is *because only God can*. See Psa. 19:14.
Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Thy sight, O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.
- E. God intended for our words to bring counsel and encouragement (Prov. 16:24; Col. 4:5,6).
(Prov 16:24) Pleasant words are a honeycomb, Sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.
(Col 4:5,6) Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. [6] Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, *as it were*, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person.

II. THE GREAT AMERICAN LIE.

- A. Some lies in American have been used so often they are joked about. Doug Mushrow has written an article entitled, "19 Great American Lies." Here are 12 of his classics:
1. The check is in the mail.
 2. I'll start my diet tomorrow.
 3. We service what we sell.
 4. Give me your number, and the doctor will call you right back.
 5. Money cheerfully refunded.
 6. One size fits all.
 7. This hurts me more than its hurts you.
 8. I just need 5 minutes of your time.
 9. Your table will be ready in a few minutes.
 10. Let's have lunch sometime.
 11. It's not the money; it's the principle.
 12. I'm from the federal government, and I'm here to help you.
- B. Even though we joke about the subject, deep down most of us don't think lying is really all that funny. We can pay a heavy price for not living with the truth.
- C. God doesn't think lying is funny, either. Lying destroys relationships, and it perverts justice. Lying destroys trust and fractures families. And, for people who claim to follow God, telling lies misrepresents the One whose basic nature is truth (see again Prov. 6:16-19).
- D. The guiding principle of the 9th commandment is that in all areas of our lives God demands honesty. He never intended His people to be involved with deceit and dishonesty. If we model our life after God's character we will be honest, because God never lies.

III. WHAT IS A LIE?, WHY DO WE LIE?

- A. **What is a lie?** It is an *intentional* deception.
- B. It is possible to err without lying. To tell you the Bears' game begins at 3:00pm, and believing that to be true, when in actuality it begins at 12-noon is a mistake it is not a lie.
- C. To lie is to know the truth and intentionally say something different.
- D. **Why do we lie?**
1. One reason is because our culture encourages and rewards it. In fact, we've reached the point when, as a recent *Time* magazine essay stated: "[Our culture is] a huckstering, show-bizzy world, jangling with hype, hullabaloo, and hooey, bull, baloney, and bamboozlement."
Dr. Leonard Keeler, the inventor of the lie detector machine, interviewed and studied over 25,000 people in his research, and his findings led him to conclude that people are basically dishonest. There seems to be something deep within our nature that draws us to deception.
 2. The main reason is, we have a heart problem. Lying is not just a bad habit. It is symptom of heart disease, for it is the heart that harbors either bitterness and deceit or godly values. Notice the following; Mt. 12:34,35; Prov. 4:23,24; 10:20; 15:14.
(Mt 12:34,35) "You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. [35] "The good man out of *his* good treasure brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of *his* evil treasure brings forth what is evil."
(Prov 4:23,24) Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it *flow* the springs of life. [24] Put away from you a deceitful mouth, And put devious lips far from you.
(Prov 10:20) The tongue of the righteous is *as* choice silver, The heart of the wicked is *worth* little.
(Prov 15:14) The mind of the intelligent seeks knowledge, But the mouth of fools feeds on folly.
- E. **Conclusion.** Here's the point: too often, we excuse what comes from our mouths, whether it is deceitful or simply hurtful words, as just a "slip of the tongue." But God says it is a slip of the heart.

IV. TO WHOM DO WE LIE.

- A. First, **we lie to our neighbors.**
1. We lie to those God has placed around us. We all remember that nursery rhyme that says, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." But that is just not true! Words can destroy us. They can horribly fracture our lives (Col. 3:9).
Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices,...
 2. There are a lot of ways to hurt others through lying. There's perjury, of course. And there's also slander and gossip. What about insinuation? Flattery? Even remaining silent and be used to keep a person from telling the truth which is a form of lying.
- B. Second, **we lie to God.**
1. All deception is an affront to God, for His nature is the epitome of truth (Heb. 6:18).
...in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement,...
 2. His insistence on the truth helps explain the example He made of Ananias and Sapphira (Ac. 5:4).
"While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God."
- C. Third, **we lie to ourselves.**
1. We are experts at lying to ourselves, aren't we? (Jas. 1:22). For example:
But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.
 - a. "I don't have a drinking problem."
 - b. "It's not hurting anybody but me."
 - c. "I can stop anytime I want."
 - d. Or, "I don't go to church anymore, but I've never been closer to God."
 2. See 1Jn. 1:8-10.
If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. [9] If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. [10] If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

V. LIVING HONEST LIVES.

- A. First, **monitor your heart.**
1. Give the HS opportunities to work in us to change our nature.
 2. We pray, study the Bible, and participate in worship.
 3. Make yourself accountable to other people of character. Do not quench the Spirit but allow Him to work in your life to cultivate fruit.
- B. Second, **diet on wholesome conversation.**
1. I believe we are too prone to listen to and talk about ugliness.
 2. We've got to be more dedicated to promoting the honor and reputation of others (Phil. 4:8).
Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.
 3. One cannot consume garbage and develop character.
- C. Third, **encourage others.**
1. See Eph. 4:29,30.
Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear. [30] And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
 2. We need to take every opportunity to speak good instead of evil words.
 3. God gave us the power of speech in order for us to use it for good in His world.

4. He wants us to talk about justice, mercy, and love, and about a God who has a plan for how people can live lives of character so that they can be at peace with themselves, with each other, and with Him.
- D. Fourth, **consider your reflection.**
1. God never intended deceit to be part of His world. It was introduced by Satan (Jn. 8:44).
 “You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*; for he is a liar, and the father of lies.”
 2. See Eph. 4:22-25.
 ...that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, [23] and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, [24] and put on the new self, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. [25] Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH, EACH ONE *of you*, WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another.
 3. See Col. 3:10.
 ...and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him
 4. People of character reflect God’s character. And part of His very essence is truth. Only when we reflect His truth can we build communities and families where respect and trust abound.

CONCLUSION & INVITATION.

- A. A story about Emmanuel Kant.
 Kant was making a dangerous trip through Poland to the country of Silesia. He was approached by robbers who after taking what was in sight asked, “Have you given us everything?” Kant replied, “All.”
 Then when safely away from the thieves Kant remembered that he had sown some gold into the inner lining of his coat for safe keeping. He promptly turned around caught up with the thieves and told them he had lied and gave them the gold! He said, “I have told you what was not true; it was unintentional. I was too terrified to think. Here, take the gold in my robes.”
 The thieves were absolutely astonished! They in turn refused the gold and were so amazed to find a man of such honesty they returned all they had taken from him. Truth had triumphed over thievery. Truth will always triumph.
- B. The 9th commandment is about telling the truth--God says, “you shall not lie!”
- C. Give your life to the One who is Truth--JC.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.