

Sermon Series: The Decalogue

**Sermon title:** "The 9th Commandment"

**Scripture Reading:** Exodus 20:1-17

Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church

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### **Introduction:**

On the screen I have a picture of an old friend of mine.  
His name is Zack.

Last year, Zack had a heart transplant.

They literally took out his old heart and put the heart of  
someone else....into his chest.

It seems to be working fine.

As we study the 10 commandments, we need to be  
reminded that we don't need to just try harder at being  
good. We need something more than that.

We need new hearts. We need our stony hearts  
replaced with hearts of flesh.

**God's desire for us today is not that we find  
something interesting or cool in this 9th  
commandment.**

**This commandment's purpose is to call us to evaluation and repentance before a holy God about our tongues and to find our hope in the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.**

May he grant unto us changed hearts this morning.

**Let's pray.**

If you remember last week when we were talking about stealing, we mentioned that the Bible was full of thieves. Well, the Bible is also full of liars.

- The serpent deceived Eve and told her that God was lying.
- Cain lied and said he didn't know where his brother was.
- Abraham lied 2x about his wife and said she was his sister.
- Jacob lied and said he was Esau.
- The 12 spies lied and brought a bad report saying the land Promised Land was bad.
- Joseph's brothers lied and said he was killed by an animal.
- Saul lied and said he had obeyed God.
- Two false witnesses lied about Jesus.

- False witnesses lied about Stephen too and contributed to his murder.
- John 8:44 tells us that the devil's native language is lying and he is the father of lies.

Lying is a common sin.

And it is a sin we are all guilty of.

## **I. What this command says.**

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."

The command is given with the tone of judicial law. These are laws for the individual but also for the whole nation. The way to ensure that there were checks and balances when someone accused someone of something was to have more than one witness.

### **Deuteronomy 19:15-21**

15 "A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established. 16 If a malicious witness arises to accuse a person of wrongdoing, 17 then both parties to the dispute shall appear before the Lord, before the priests and the judges who are in office in those days.

18 The judges shall inquire diligently, and if the witness is a false witness and has accused his brother falsely,  
19 then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.  
20 And the rest shall hear and fear, and shall never again commit any such evil among you.

So, the 9th commandment is simple....we should never be a false witness against our neighbor.

Now, we need to go ahead and say that *neighbor* here means anyone. Jesus made it clear that everyone is our neighbor and it doesn't just mean the person next door.

The Old Testament book of **Proverbs** has a lot to say about the seriousness of being a false witness.

**Proverbs 19:5** A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who breathes out lies will not escape.

**Proverbs 24:28** Be not a witness against your neighbor without a cause, and do not deceive with your lips.

**Proverbs 25:18** A man who bears false witness against his neighbor is like a war club or a sword or a sharp arrow.

At root, **being a false witness is destroying a person's reputation or livelihood with your lips.**

To testify falsely against someone in a court of law is maybe the worst we could do but of course there are a thousand little ways we can destroy a person's reputation or livelihood with our lips.

## **II. What this command covers.**

This command is unlike any of the other 10 commandments in the Decalogue, except it is similar to commandment number 3, "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain."

Whereas that commandment has to do with your mouth and bearing false witness against the Lord, this commandment also has to do with the mouth but in relation to other people.

This is a mouth commandment.

What all does this command cover?

Lying, falsehood, slander, deceit, gossiping, back stabbing, mud slinging, distortion, fabrication or even

telling things that are true... but with the intent to make someone look bad.

All of these are ways that we destroy a person's reputation or livelihood with your lips.

Oh, brothers and sisters. **How scary it is to think of what all we have said about others with our mouths.**

If the Lord were to count the lies and falsehood that comes from our lips, even the little tiny ones, who could stand before him?

And yet Jesus says that we are accountable for every word we speak.

**Matthew 12:36** says, "on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak."

We should shudder when we read this and proclaim like **Isaiah** said, "I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips."

Let's take a look at some New Testament passages to feel the weight of what is expected of us with our lips.

**Ephesians 4:25 & 29**

**25** Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.

**29** Let no rotten talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

### **Colossians 3:8-9**

But now you must put them all away; anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self.

### **James 3**

**2** For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. **3** If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. **4** Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they

are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. **5** So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things.

How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire!

**6** And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness.

The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. **7** For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been

tamed by mankind, **8** but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

**9** With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God.

**10** From the same mouth come blessing and cursing.

My brothers, these things ought not to be so. **11** Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh

and salt water? **12** Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt

pond yield fresh water.

### **III. Ways we can repent.**

Remember, **God's desire for us today is not that we find something interesting or cool in this 9th commandment.**



**This commandment's purpose is to call us to evaluation and repentance before a holy God about our tongues and to find our hope in the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.**

So, how can we change if we struggle with lying, gossip or even telling the truth about other people but doing it to make them look bad?

### **Romans 12:2**

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.

### **Romans 8:13**

If you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

We have to fight this sin the same way we fight other sins, by battling temptation and sinful behavior with the sword of the Spirit, the word of God.

We need to put these to memory.

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May the Lord help us and sanctify us.