

Series: 10 Commandments

Title: Pursuing the Truth in a World of Fake News

Text: Exodus 20:16 & Ephesians 4:25

Breaking the Ice:

OPTION # 1 – What is the first lie you remember telling?

OPTION # 2 – Are you a good liar? Why or why not?

OPTION # 3 – What do you lie about most frequently?

Discussion/Study:

1. Read Deuteronomy 17:6 & 1 Timothy 5:19 – Both Paul and Moses point out that truth should be established on the basis of two or three witnesses. Similarly, Proverbs 18:17, says, “The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him” (ESV). Why is it so important to verify whether things are true before we believe them, or share them? If we are unwilling or unable to verify the truth of something, what should our response be?
2. Read John 8:43-44 (see also Genesis 3:1) – While God is a God of Truth, Jesus tells us that when we engage in originating or spreading falsehood, we actually emulate the work of the devil who is the “father of lies.” How does understanding this spiritual dimension of breaking the 9th commandment change the way you think about your sin?
3. Read Deut. 22:1-4 – In contrast to the world’s mantra, “finders keepers losers weepers” - God’s not only calls us to avoid taking things that don’t belong to us, He calls us to preserve the property of others as well, even if that property belongs to our enemies. How is this act of “love of neighbor” driven by and reflected in the gospel? Pretend you find something that doesn’t belong to you, how do you live this out?
4. Read Deut. 17:18-21 – Moses says that when we falsely accuse others, we should experience the punishment that we opposed on others by our sinful actions. How does this principle play out with in our modern times in instances of lying, slander, gospel, false accusations, spreading rumors, etc.
5. While lying and falsehood are nothing new – they are as old as the fall of man and the presence of Satan in the garden (Gen. 3:1-2), we live in a time characterized by “fake news,” characterized by volatility and polarization in everything from the news we watch to how people engage on social media. In such a culture, what does it look like for us to stand out as Christians in contrast to the culture around us?

6. READ Matthew 15:19-20 – Jesus tells us that our sins of bearing “false witness” and “slander” are an overflow of the sinfulness of our hearts. Whether your sin is telling lies, believing lies, spreading lies, or failing to stop the spread of gossip, what does your own breaking of the ninth commandment say about your own heart? What is the “sin beneath the sin” from which you need to repent? What is the truth you need to believe?

Example:

<p>Outward SIN Quick to Believe Rumors</p>	<p>HEART/ROOT PROBLEM Bias – It fits my assumptions I already don’t like them</p>	<p>TRUTH TO BELIEVE Assume the Best Only God Knows the Heart Extend the Forgiveness of Jesus Jesus loves his enemies (me)</p>
<p>Outward SIN Don’t Stop/Confront Rumors</p>	<p>HEART/ROOT PROBLEM Fear/Cowardice Loves Praise of Man, not God</p>	<p>TRUTH TO BELIEVE Jesus gives Spirit of boldness Love confronts when necessary The Praise of God is sufficient Golden Rule</p>

7. READ Ephesians 4:25 – Jesus tells us that the gospel binds us to one another and gives us a social responsibility to one another in God’s covenant of grace. As Paul says, “we are members of one another.” What does it look like to practically live this out in the church through our obedience to the 9th commandment?
8. Michael told the story of the woman who was asked to spread a pillow case of feathers around town, and to then go and pick them up as an object lesson on the impact of breaking the 9th Commandment. What stands out to you about this story?
9. REPENTANCE & RESTITUTION – In our study of the 8th commandment we talked about the important connection between repentance (feeling sorry for our sin and turning to Christ) and restitution (paying those back with interest that we have robbed). What does restitution look like in our breaking of the 9th Commandment?
- a. Example #1:
 - i. SIN: Slandering someone in one post of Facebook –
 - ii. RESTITUTION: Posting 4 or 5 posts rebuilding their reputation and promoting their good name (Heidelberg Catechism)
 - b. Example # 2:
 - i. SIN: Telling One Person A Rumor You Heard
 - ii. RESTITUTION: Telling four or five people good things about the person to correct your sin and to restore and promote their good name