

# Commandment 9: Thou Shalt Not Bear False Witness

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[ 0 : 00 ] I'm also glad that Gary's here, and the Lord was merciful to him through that whole ordeal. And it does, I'm sure it brought the thought to his mind, it should bring it to all of our minds, that one day that will be real to all of us, that it'll be our last day here.

And you better be ready. And you better do your best to make sure your family's ready, and your kids are ready, and that your neighbors are ready. Everybody, when you're gone, you can't tell them anymore.

And when you're gone, they're going to lose a light in this world that God placed beside them to lead them and to teach them and to tell them the truth. And so while you can, do what you can, because that day's coming, and it's coming quicker than you think.

Yesterday is gone, today you're a day closer to seeing the Lord, but you're a day closer to death as well. So, all right, let's find Exodus 20 this morning. Please turn your Bibles to Exodus chapter 20.

And a couple weeks ago, we were in the seventh, the eighth. The eighth commandment a couple weeks ago was, Vow shall not steal. And I gave you a few ways of how that, what that can look like for you.

[ 1 : 20 ] And just a quick rehash of the last command. You could steal by taking advantage of the resources of others, by manipulating them or oppressing them if you have the, if it's in your power to do so.

And you may not be taking something and putting it in your pocket, but you're still, by taking advantage of others, and of their resources, you're stealing. You can be dealing unjustly or undeceitfully with others, as in your business agreements, in those kind of contracts, dealing unjustly and deceitfully, and that's taking from them.

Also withholding that which is to be distributed or dispersed. And we studied that and saw that the blessing of God is upon the one that will give. And the specific application of what we owe to God in our tithes and offerings, that can be called, that's, God called it robbing God.

And so we concluded that command of not stealing with Paul addressing the church on how to replace that mind and have a renewed mind and to replace the dishonesty and the deceit and all the greed and lust with a giver's heart, a cheerful giver.

And that's something that God wants to see out of us. He is able to make all this abound to you. If you'll give liberally and distribute to be a pleasure to Him, then He is able to make all these abound in your life.

[ 2 : 50 ] One person said, you cannot outgive God. Impossible. And He'll check you on that too. And you don't want to be scared and you don't want to operate in fear.

God has not given us the spirit of fear. He's given us faith and we need to exercise that faith. So, all right, let's move out of that one. I guess you got a little bit more of that last Sunday as well.

So I hope you're picking it up. Now verse 16, Exodus 20 verse 16, command number 9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. Now in a list of 10 commandments, like these are the top 10. These are the things, again, God had written and engraven in stone and a permanent thing to be seen and taught.

In a list of things that you need to be aware of or you need to avoid in order for this nation to be holy. This one stands personally.

[ 3 : 53 ] It stands out to me as the most peculiar. Because it's a very specific situation that he's addressing. Read it again. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Witnessing against your neighbor falsely. It's very specific. It does not say thou shalt not lie. That's not what it says, is it?

But that's what everybody interprets it to say. Go read the commentators. God is forbidding lying in any way. It doesn't say that. Now he's not condoning and I'm not condoning lying either.

Paul says put away lying and speak every man truth with his neighbor. God in, I think it's in Leviticus, I feel like it's 19. He tells them thou shalt not lie. And it has to do with to thy neighbor, to thy brother.

But this command says thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. It's very specific.

[ 4 : 55 ] And if he said thou shalt not lie. Let me say it this way. Have you not read through your Bible? Have you not come across certain stories in the Bible where somebody lies, but it's the right thing to do?

Somebody lies, but it's not condemned? Or it's blessed of the Lord? Like, have you not read those and felt like, how am I going to teach my kids that lying's bad?

But it's okay here. Like, you feel this paradox. Well, there doesn't have to be one. Because, first of all, the command doesn't say what some people suggest and teach that it says.

It doesn't say that. It says something else. Now, lying is wrong to your brother. I don't think I need to even talk about that. There's cases where God allows it or where it's the right thing to do.

And often that's lying toward an enemy. Lying toward a wicked king who's going to kill or toward wicked hands. Like, that's not something God condemns.

[ 5 : 56 ] And it's not something we're going to really talk about. I hope that doesn't just put a whole, like, question mark out there. But I hope that you'll see that I kind of made this command to say this. And then there's these places where it seems to be violated, but it's okay.

And I don't know how to handle that. Well, let's just kind of dismiss that because that's not what the command says. So let's study what the command says. That's one thing I want to point out. And then I think, I say that this is a peculiar command.

Because the command has to do with bear a false witness against your neighbor. Like, you're in the gate of the town in this economy. You're in the gate and you're standing before the judges.

And you're lying about your neighbor's actions or about the situation or whatever the controversy is. And you're falsely declaring something to the judges.

You're perjuring yourself in front of court. And that's forbidden. And the reason I feel like, man, this is kind of peculiar. Because how often is that a real life scenario? Like, how often are you called to court to testify against your neighbor?

[ 7 : 00 ] It just seems to be something that's not an everyday thing. But God gave this as one of the ten commands. And so there's something to it. And I think studying this out, there's more than meets the eye.

Because it's true that God typically, or rather that you aren't typically subpoenaed. And it doesn't seem to happen enough to make a big deal about it or put this one on the top ten.

But let's look at a key word in this verse is the word false. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. Bearing witness against your neighbor is okay.

As a matter of fact, it's expected if your neighbor is doing wrong and sinning. And I want to show you some Bible on that first. Let's go to Deuteronomy 13. I just want to punch a few items here before we get into the message of this.

But look at Deuteronomy 13. It was expected. If your neighbor is guilty or breaking the law, it was not just expected but commanded that you bear witness against them.

[ 8 : 04 ] Deuteronomy 13, I'll start in verse 6. If thy, not just your neighbor, but if thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom.

Like it doesn't get any more personal and closely intimate in the relationships than these. If that close person to you, as close as it gets, or thy friend which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods which thou hast not known, thou nor thy fathers, namely of the gods of the people which are around about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth, even unto the other end of the earth.

Thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him, neither shalt thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him, but thou shalt surely kill him.

He's talking about your wife, or your son, or your daughter, or your friend, who's as your own soul, the closest person on earth, and there to be put to death.

Thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of the people. And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die, because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

[ 9 : 25 ] And notice this, all Israel shall hear and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this is among you. So the command is there.

It's again in chapter 17, and if you want to write it down, 17 verses 2 through 7, it says, the hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death. Talking about somebody who's an idolater, or seeking to go astray from the law of God.

And so, just to give an indicator of our society, and how our society has gone away from God, you know what's very common? A common concept amongst our society is to not be a snitch.

Now the word snitch, or a rat, that's not righteous people coming up with that terminology. That's unrighteous people, you know, coming up with a term to attack an innocent, righteous person, saying, don't you be that.

Like, that's a bad thing. Because they're trying to conceal their own sin. And so this thought of snitching, it's just like the rule of the streets, is you never snitch.

[ 10 : 35 ] Never. Because it'll come back on you. Why? Because the bad guys are going to be worse towards you. It's horrible. It's a horrible way to have a society, to think that way, and actually like demonize the mobster, mafia mentality of you look the other way, or you didn't see anything kind of thing.

And that's just become somewhat of a norm, is that we have police, and they can do their job. If they can't, you know, figure it out and make it right, then too bad. It's just the way it is. That's not the way God set up this society here at all.

He expected you, if you knew of something wrong, he wanted the sin to be out of the nation. He didn't want it to be able to grow, and fester, and influence others. If you hear about it, you don't conceal it.

And so there's another case in Leviticus 5, where God condemns a person that knows of a sin, but doesn't speak up, in Leviticus 5 and verse 1. So bearing witness against a guilty neighbor, or a family member, or a spouse even, was expected, because God sought to put away evil, from this people, this holy nation.

So let's notice those two things. It does not say, thou shalt not lie. And it says, thou shalt not bear false witness, but bearing witness against, was expected, of God's people.

[ 11 : 57 ] Okay. So I want to say three things about this command. The first thing is that this command, is protective. Thou shalt not bear false witness, against thy neighbor.

It's protecting someone. Who would that be? Well, easily said, it's protecting an innocent person. But to understand this, you have to realize, it really applies, very directly, within a certain space. There's an arena, where this command, strongly applies, and it's not so much, trying to prevent, slander against somebody, or defaming, your neighbor's character.

But instead, it's protecting somebody, that cannot protect themselves, or that is an easy target, for powerful people, or leaders. Take a look at chapter 23.

Exodus 23. And check this out. Look at verse number one. Thou shalt not raise a false report.

[ 13 : 04 ] Put not thine hand with the wicked, to be an unrighteous witness. Now, just think for a moment. Why would the wicked, raise a false report?

Why would, why would they ask one, to put their hand in with them, to be a false, or an unrighteous witness, about something? They're trying to cover something up.

Their guilt, a plan, a plot, something they're trying to accomplish. They're telling you to, to lie about it, or to turn the other way. There's something they seek to gain from this, and so they're working something illegal.

It's got to be along those lines, that they would call someone in, to be an unrighteous witness. Thou shalt not follow a multitude, to do evil, neither shalt thou speak in the cause, to decline after many, to wrest judgment.

Now, carefully looking at those words, he says, neither shalt thou speak, that's your witness, in a cause, to decline after many, to rest, to pervert, to destroy, what would be right, or true judgment.

[ 14 : 23 ] So, it's in the courts. It's giving testimony, to where, it's going to benefit somebody else.

And you're getting in collusion with them, to speak your word, to give your word, your word, an oath against somebody, or something, when it's false.

A little bit later, look at verse number seven. Keep thee far, from a false matter, and the innocent and righteous, slay thou not, for I will not justify the wicked.

And thou shalt take no gift, for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous. Do you see the whole construct here, of the wicked paying you off, to say something, the mafia paying you off, to look the other way, or to testify against somebody, so they can get what they want, and you're in cahoots with them.

Do you see, this is something God is, he's trying to keep from this society. And the command that he gives, to not bear false witness, is protecting the poor, and protecting the underprivileged, from being taken advantage of, from the rich, and the powerful, rigging the system, and using their gifts, and their monies, and their deals under the table, and raising a false report, and raising a false matter, as chapter 23 says, these are injustices against others.

And so this command, that we're studying here, this ninth command, is not just don't lie, don't, make sure you're honest, but it's operating in a space, where injustices occur, in a society.

[15:58] And it's trying to prohibit the wicked, or the powerful, from taking advantage of the weak, from the poor, from the fatherless, from the widows. Do you not, you read your Bible right, do you not read, where God is strong, on protecting the poor, and the widows, and the orphans, the fatherless.

He's strong on that, and taking advantage of, that underprivileged, he says, I'm gonna, I'm gonna take advantage, or I'm gonna take care of you, if you put your hand against them. He claims that he himself, will defend them.

And so God put several laws in place, to prevent, or, to prevent their neglect. For instance, you're not allowed, to harvest the corners of the field, you're not allowed, to go over it again, because that's to be left, for the fatherless, and the poor, the widows.

And so God puts laws, to make sure they're not neglected, and to make sure they're not abused, knowing that sinful man, will take advantage. Sinful man, with lust and greed, sees an opportunity, doesn't care who he hurts, if he can get more money, or get more power, if he has the position.

I want to give you an example, of this very thing. Flip over to 1 Kings 21, a real life Bible example, where this happened. But God set this command up, to be protective, against this.

[17:24] The book of 1 Kings, chapter 21, and just a brief background, we got a king named Ahab, and he's got a very wicked wife, named Jezebel.

And Ahab desires, a vineyard, that is not his, but it's near to his house, the man's name is Naboth, in verse 2, verse 1 and 2, and Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, give me thy vineyard.

And Naboth knows, he can't do it. Verse number 3, look at what he says, Naboth said unto Ahab, the Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance, of my fathers unto thee. And so Ahab goes home, and he's heavy and displeased, because he wouldn't get it.

But you know what? Ahab, just understand this, Ahab recognized, the response of Naboth, as that's the Lord, that's the law, that's the word of God, and I'm the king.

I can't, I can't usurp the word of God, on this thing. He won't give it to me, and he told me why, because it's not legal, in the law of Moses, to do that.

[18:31] And so he's upset about it. Doesn't say he went home in a rage, doesn't say he's going to, take vengeance upon him. It says he went home like, man, I really wanted that.

But Jezebel, his wife hears about it, and her response, in verse 7, Jezebel's wife said unto him, dost thou not govern, the kingdom of Israel? She doesn't give a rip, about the word of God, she says, you're the top, you're the king, whatever you want goes, and then she says, I'll take care of it.

And so she wrote letters, in Ahab's name, in verse 8, and sealed them with the seal, and set the letters, unto the elders of the nobles, that were in the city, dwelling with Naboth. And she wrote in the letters, saying, proclaim a fast, and set Naboth, on high among the people, and set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, thou didst blaspheme God, and the king, which is false.

So they're false witnesses. And then carry him out, and stone him that he may die. And so exactly what happened, they witnessed against him, they carried him forth, out of the city, stoned him with stones, and he died.

And then God sends the prophet. And the prophet says, hast thou killed? And where's that at? In verse 19, and also taken possession.

[19:55] And so not only is he guilty of coveting, his neighbor's field, he's guilty of killing, and he's guilty of, having the false witnesses against him. It's, there's an example now, what did we see?

They took possession of the property of another, abuse of power, by this bearing false witness, against thy neighbor. And so God puts this command in as protective, protecting the innocent, protecting the law-abiding, protecting the God-fearing citizens, as well as, as I mentioned, the poor, and the fatherless, and the widows.

And why is that needed? Because sinful, selfish, and wicked men, will try to take advantage of others. And they're always looking for opportunities, and they'll use any means necessary. And when the judges do their due diligence, as we'll see later, they're supposed to, that will be absolved, and that won't be permitted to happen. But when it's a wicked king, all the way on the top, well, look at the Proverbs, what it says, when a wicked king bears rule.

Things aren't good. So the command is protective. There's something else, the command is, it's preventative. Thou shalt not bear false witness, against thy neighbor. It's preventing something. [ 21 : 07 ] It's acting as a safeguard, not just protecting those poor, and those underprivileged, but it's protecting, or preventing, corruption, and greed, and lust, from raising up, and reigning, in society.

And for those to be, remember, God is trying to form a holy nation. And this is a very new thing, and he's giving these commands, because he wants them to be peculiar, and he wants them to be a kingdom of priests, and a holy people unto himself.

And he knows what's in the heart of man. And so here's what he's doing, is giving commands to prevent some of things from taking over this society. What is God preventing from taking over this society?

I'm going to laugh when I say it. Capitalism. Well, maybe not exactly that. But, that to you sounds like, what?

Capitalism is good. This nation's built on it. It's the best thing ever. And maybe, maybe not exactly capitalism, but you know what the people attack capitalism, the socialist hate about capitalism, in our society, is the rich get richer, and the poor get poorer.

[ 22 : 27 ] Isn't that what they say? That's their line? And, and while we look at that and say, well, yeah, but they work hard, and they, and we look at that, and, I know that that, that statement doesn't, like, embody capitalism in its entirety.

I know that. But it is, I think it, the attack is, maybe in a, it does expose a flaw in it. It's true. Because you can't knock that that's what happens in this system.

But understand something. Capitalism, I'm just going to talk, talk about this for a while, because it comes out of this. It is not godliness. This as an economic system, or philosophy, it is not Christianity, at its base.

That's not true. For, for certain conservative guys, to have a voice, and a platform now, and to say, I take Jesus as my savior, and the greatest thing in our land, is our capitalist society. Don't confuse the two, like they're one and the same.

That's not the truth. It's not in the Bible. Capitalism is not God's law, for his people. And of course, socialism is not godly either. I'm not going to lean that way, if you're getting nervous.

[ 23 : 32 ] These are just man-made systems, of government, and economic philosophies. And they divide us today, in this land, left, right, and there's debate, and there's strife, and, but neither of these, are established by God.

That's what I want you, to just take away. Not any of that stuff, is established from God. If I would say, what God established, was a little bit of both. In a sense, they're working hand in hand together, to do something, that neither one can do, by themselves.

Now, what God allowed, in this society, was capitalism, and I'm using that term, very loosely. So, he allowed this mentality, of capitalism, but he allowed it, for a limited time frame, for 49 years.

Because the 50th year, was the year of Jubilee, and when that year's hit, everything went back, to, it was a reset. It dropped, so it was like, socialism, for a year.

Everybody's back to equal, in a sense. So this is, this is kind of very loose, but get the idea. He allowed the one, to go for a while, the rich could get richer. If you, if you were not diligent, if you were a sluggard, you were going to lose, and lose, and lose, and your inheritance, would be swallowed up, by those who were diligent.

[ 24 : 47 ] But, when that year of Jubilee, it all goes back. And if, you have to read that, I don't have time, to take you there. But, what you see, is that rich, can get richer, and they can grow in power, but not perpetually.

To where the sky, is the limit. That's the case, in our land today. Is the rich, can get richer, but there's no, checks on them anymore. Once they get to that plateau, where it becomes, very easy, to just take, what I've worked for, and gained, to just, to go through the roof with it.

And then the socialists, complain and cry, that, that they're, getting favored, and they're getting more power. And they are. It's just true. So, what God instituted, was a reset.

Where you can gain, and grow, and prosper, but then get reset. And in this way, this great division, of rich, and poor, where one is ruling, and one is dominating, over the other, and one is overriding, the laws, and manipulating, the judges, that can be canceled out.

And that can be, prevented. And so, God's way, is, putting what we call, capitalism, and socialism, balancing each other out, in a sense.

[ 26 : 05 ] So, this command, works to prevent, such a takeover, where the one, gains all the power, and all the position, and then can manipulate, and do what he wants. And then, the concept, that command of, love thy neighbor, as thyself, just goes right out the window.

Because, nobody's loving anything. Money is king. Power is the greatest, the greatest thing, rather than godliness. And, whether you like it or not, a capitalistic society, the United States of America, moves that way.

Money is king. And, power and position, is the greatest thing, not godliness. People want to say, that God's blessed our land, and look what we've done with it.

I don't, you can say whatever you want. That's the, that is the end of this system. It goes that way, to where, men get greedy, men want more, the love of money, is the root of all evil, which while some have coveted after, they've, erred from the faith, pierced themselves through, and it goes downhill.

So, the command is, protective, against certain people, from being taken advantage of. It's also, preventative, against a society, of God's holy people, from, having it overtaken, of the greedy, and the, the powerful.

[ 27 : 19 ] And then, one more thing, is that this command, is purgative. Purgative, meaning it purges, the mindset, when it's followed, it purges this activity, from God's holy people.

Take a look at, Deuteronomy chapter 19. Because, I said this earlier, God knows the sin, that dwells within their hearts, and history bears out, how evil this people were, when they, disregarded God's law.

And, you know, in Jesus Christ's day, this is, this is ultimate irony. In, in the day of Jesus Christ, the religious leaders, were using their position, over the people, to confiscate houses, devour widows' houses, and for a pretense, make long prayers, and say, Oh, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we do this day, consecrate this widow's land, to thy name, and, and they're taking it, and by the way, did we get the money?

We got the, okay, we got the money. And we do, and they go back, into their pretended, long prayer, having a form of godliness, and this, that's the, that's what was, in Christ's day, religious leaders, guilty of working the system.

I showed you that, when it was honoring thy parents, where they were, making traditions, that were enabled, to make the word of God, of none effect, where they weren't to, they didn't have to honor, their father and mother, and care for them.

[ 28 : 48 ] And so, they're getting around, God's law. Now, Deuteronomy 19, and, look at verse 15. I just want to read, from 15 to 21, how this command, thou shalt not bear false witness, against thy neighbor, it's, it's purgative, meaning it's going to purge, and clean up, that sin, that's in the people, or in the land.

Verse 15, one witness, shall not rise up, against a man, for any iniquity, or for any sin, and any sin, that he sinneth, at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter, be established.

If a false witness, rise up, against any man, to testify against him, that which is wrong, then both the men, between whom, the controversy is, shall stand before the Lord, before the priest, and the judges, which shall be in those days.

And the judges, shall make diligent inquisition. And behold, if the witness, be a false witness, and have testified, falsely against his brother, then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought, to have done unto his brother, so shalt thou put, the evil away, from among you.

And those that remain, shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth, commit no more, any such evil, among you. And thine eye, shall not pity, but life, shall go, for life.

[ 30 : 13 ] Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot. So those sons of Belial, that were set up, to falsely witness, against Naboth, they should have been put to death.

Because they were seeking, the death penalty for him. And what they thought, to do unto him, so shall be done to them, put away the evil, from among you. The thought here, is that this command, when followed, purges, the society of that evil, that's inside of their hearts.

The Bible says, in Proverbs 19, verse 5, a false witness, shall not be unpunished. And he that speaketh lies, shall not escape. So it's protective, preventative, and thirdly, it's purgative.

Now, at the beginning, I said, this seems like a peculiar, an oddly specific command. But, it actually has, great impact, upon making this, a holy people, unto God.

They're entering this covenant, with him, in Exodus 20. This is, this is innovative, it's new, it's never been done. And this is something, God's saying, this, this is important to me.

[ 31 : 22 ] That, that this is not permitted, in society. And when it shows up, it's dealt with, severely. Because I don't want to see this, this, this, the atmosphere, that's to be fostered, is loving your neighbor, as yourself.

You're to be a holy people. But this command, if it's not followed, will have great impact, on the society. And the rich, will take the power.

And they'll, use that power. It's all over this book. And I was reading, in the Proverbs, I was thinking, oh I know there's so much of this. And I started reading yesterday, like chapter after chapter. And, and I decided, I'm not even going to bother.

Because, because it's almost, in every chapter, at least in certain sections. It's, you can read this, all over the thing. where there's warning, against this, and against the wicked, getting into power.

So God put, certain safeguards, into place.

Protective, preventative, and purgative. To keep the evil out, and growing, and establishing, upright behavior.

[ 32 : 28 ] Righteous behavior, amongst themselves. Where they'd love, and care for one another. In the fear of God, and not be seeking, prosperity above everything. Now, to finish this off here, just make some quick application, to a local church.

Because, this is a society, that we're not really trying, to mimic, right? We're not trying to imitate, this society, that God's establishing. Although, we will follow, his laws, and his rules, as they are right for us, and where it fits.

It's about, bearing false witness, against thy neighbor. And I guess, in the church, thy neighbor, would be your, brothers and sisters. And the application, I think, we can take it, beyond just going, to the courtroom, and following, some legal procedures.

But I bet you, bearing false witness, against your neighbor, can just be as simple, as what Paul calls, tail bearing. Or gossiping, in a, in partial truths.

And spreading things, we don't know, to be sure, but spreading them, nonetheless. and making sure, everybody knows about it. Thou shalt not, bear false witness, against, thy neighbor.

[ 33 : 41 ] If God wanted, to purge his people, his holy people, from this sin, and he wanted, to restrict one, from rising up, and lording over another, and he desired, that they would love, one another.

Does he not, desire the same, for us today? To love one another? Isn't that what he tells us? Isn't that what Paul tells us? In loving one another, in humbling ourselves, among, does he say, speak evil, one to another?

In Proverbs chapter 6, there's seven abominations. One of them, is a false witness, that speaketh lies. It's an abomination, to God.

And right beside that one, is he that soweth discord, among the brethren. And so this command, is protective. Just like it is, for this holy nation, to protect those, innocent, and those that can't, stand up for themselves, against others.

This command, can be protective, in a church too, where innocent people, need to be protective, from a lying tongue, and from, destructive behavior, because you and me, we got it in us, to talk.

[ 34 : 54 ] We have it in us, it's inside of your flesh, to flap your tongue, and a lying tongue, is destructive, and it worketh ruin, and it can destroy, a local church, just like it can destroy, a society, and those that are innocent.

Not only protective, but preventative. Believing, and observing this command, can prevent, much harm, to a local church, just like in that society, the rich could get richer, and then they could start,

using that power, to hold down the others, so in a local church, cliques can form, and one child of God, can then despise another, that's not part of their inner circle, and they can, somebody could use position, or use influence, that they've gained, and tenure, and those kind of thoughts. Man, you get into the south, this is everywhere in the south, where families run the churches, and run the churches, or churches are run by the deacon board, and they're never going anywhere. They'll run the preacher off quick, but the deacons never leave. They get power, and they want to keep it. And this command, is to be preventative, of that kind of thing. Take you to one place, we're almost done, go to all the way, to the back of your Bible, go to 3 John.

There's a guy, that fits this bill, really well. 3 John, the third epistle, it's right before Jude, and Revelation. It's a real short one, but God wants to prevent people, in the local church, from using influence, or from setting themselves up, over others.

[ 36 : 35 ] And so he tells us, to submit ourselves, one to another, in the fear of God. 3 John, verse 9, there's a man named, Diotrephes. Verse 9, he says, I wrote unto the church, but Diotrephes, but Diotrephes, who loveth, to have the preeminence, among them, he set himself up, to a position, he's got some power, inside this church, he loveth to have the preeminence, he receiveth us not.

Who? John, the one that's beloved, of the Lord Jesus Christ, and this man is puffed up, that he won't receive, John, and the brothers, that are with him.

Verse 10 says, Wherefore, if I come, I'll remember his deeds, which he doeth, prating against us, with malicious words. It says, mouth, not content therewith, neither doth he himself, receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them, that would, and casteth them, out of the church.

This guy's a cancer, in a church. He's destructive, and it's his mouth, and his malicious words, and he's seeking power, and this command here, in that society, is preventing all of that.

And then thirdly, I said it was purgative, that means, there was sin, that was in them, God wanted to get it out, and the sin, that dwells in our hearts too, if it's not purged, it'll create problems.

[ 37 : 57 ] I mentioned the word cancer, if you get cancer, in your body, if it's in an organ, and it's possible, they'll remove that organ, or they'll attack that cancer, if they can do it, they'll attack it, with the strongest stuff, they can attack it with, because they want to get it, out of the body.

They want to remove the sin, they want to purge, and this sin, of sowing discord, or false witnesses, it needs to be purged, from the body, so the body can be healthy, so that the body, can function, to the praise of his glory, and to be at peace, and to have joy, in the Holy Ghost.

In Exodus chapter 20, God sets up parameters, to guard, and to guide, this holy nation. He wants them to be a people, that are pleasing to himself, that he fellowships with, above all people of the earth.

And I see the parallel, just as clear, that he wants nothing less, from us today. We've been bought, with the blood of his son. He wants us to have, that same fellowship, with him.

So, Christian, this morning, let's consider this command, and observe his will, for us today, and not bear false witness, against our neighbors, or our brothers, for any reason, whatsoever.

[ 39 : 15 ] And then, may God be pleased, with that attitude, or may he bless, our obedience, because we'll submit, ourselves one to another, and we'll, we'll operate in charity, amongst ourselves, and we'll seek to edify, one another.

In this case, somebody's saying, something false, so that they can get, themselves further ahead, and inevitably, push somebody else down. And this, this is not to be, once named among us.

And it was despised, in that society, as just as despised, in our local church. And so, take the edification, this morning, let's be innocent, in any of these matters.

Let's guard our tongues, and be very cautious, that our words, are not malicious words, and that our words, are not harmful, that our words, are absolutely truth, or they don't come out, of our mouth.

Father, please, instill this in us. We're not trying to be, the nation of Israel. We're not trying to operate, in that manner, but we are trying, to be pleasing to you.

[ 40 : 18 ] We're trying to live, righteous lives, and where this sin, dwells in us, whether it's just, in our heart, or whether it's in our minds, or in our mouths, rebuke us, reveal it to us, and may we submit, ourselves to you.

God, it's very easy, I know this to be a fact, from my own personal life, it's very easy, to open my mouth, and to let things, come out. And so Lord, give us wisdom, help us to be obedient to you, and to keep our mouth, and to keep our tongue, from evil, and may Jesus Christ, be glorified, may

saints be edified, and grow, together, in Christ.

I know that Bible tells the, Christ told them, if you're without sin, then you can cast, the first stone, and sometimes, we just want to cast stones, it just feels good, for some reason, to put others down, it makes us feel better.

And so Lord, wash us from that, from that iniquity, in the blood of Christ, help us to love one another, in Christian love. We pray this in Jesus name, Amen.

Amen. Let's stand together, got a song?