

EIGHTH, NINTH, AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS

LESSON 11

The Eighth Commandment

The eighth commandment is YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST YOUR NEIGHBOR.

Before a serious discussion of this commandment can begin, the term "false witness" needs to be defined along with several other terms that will be used in this lesson.

What is a witness? one who sees and talks about what he saw

What would be a false witness? one who does not correctly tell what he saw

What does the term "bear" mean as used in this commandment?

- A. Wild animal
- B. Without cover
- ☞ C. Carry or support

Then, what would be a good definition for "bear false witness"?

spread talk that is not true about what was seen

Other terms that have to do with "bearing false witness" are "slander," "defame," "best construction," and "derogatory." Do the following multiple choice questions. Determine the best meaning for the underlined word.

Ellen accused Alice of slander after Alice told the neighbors that Ellen had once been committed to the mental ward of a hospital in a nearby town.

- ☞ A. False statement
- B. Being too curious
- C. Being over enthusiastic

The politician defamed his opponent when he called him a "drunken polecat."

- A. Embarrassed
- B. Defeated
- ☞ C. Harmed the reputation of

Everyone liked Lenore because she always tried to put the best construction on what she saw and heard.

- A. Draw a logical conclusion
- ☞ B. Put a good interpretation on things
- C. Put in exciting details

During World War II, "Kraut" was a derogatory term used for referring to Germans.

- A. Colorful
- ☞ B. One used to lessen the value of
- C. Complimentary

Which of these terms are ways of bearing "false witness"?

- ☞ A. Slander
- ☞ B. Defame
- C. Put the best construction on things
- ☞ D. Use derogatory terms

Which of the above is a way to keep the eighth commandment? _____ *C* _____

We have considered what "false witness" means, so now we will look at what the Bible has to say about who our neighbor is and how we should treat him. One of the most famous illustrations of this point that Jesus gave was in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Look up Luke 10:25-37.

According to this passage, we should love our neighbor as ourselves.

Who proved to be the neighbor of the hurt man? the Samaritan

Who then is your neighbor? Anyone

How should you treat him? with mercy

Saying bad or untrue things about people is a sin against God and man. Even Jesus suffered from people making false statements about Him. Read Matthew 26:59-61.

What kind of witnesses came forward to testify against Jesus?

False Witnesses

Did the two witnesses who finally agreed have Jesus' words or meaning correct?

No

The Bible has quite a lot to say about people who gossip and say bad things about people. Read James 4:11.

If you speak against someone or judge him, you speak against what?

the Law

What do you judge? the Law

The "law" is the ten commandments with their inherent understanding of loving your neighbor. If you do the above, are you keeping or breaking the commandments of God?

Breaking

There is much more the Bible has to say about speaking badly of others. Read Psalm 50:16-22.

If we speak about others in a bad way, what two things will God do to us?

A. Rebuke B. Accuse

If God's warning is not heeded, what will He do? tear them to pieces

Luke 6:37 gives us more insight into this matter.

What will happen to those who judge? they will be judged

What will happen to those who condemn? they will be condemned

What will happen to those who forgive? they will be forgiven

The discussion so far has concerned our behavior toward others. What about someone else's negative behavior toward us? Read Matthew 18:15 .

What should you do if someone sins against you? go and show him his fault

People are always trying to make good look like evil. It happened to Jesus. He was accused of being a colleague of Satan. And that accusation came in response to the good He did.

As Christians, we can expect similar bad talk. Jesus tells us how to handle this situation. Read Matthew 5:44.

What should we do for our enemies? love them

What should we do for those who persecute us? pray for them

When we are verbally attacked, we should not return the bad talk with bad talk. We do not have to like the evil things people say about us, but we should separate the words from the person. Read Luke 23:34.

Did Jesus love the people who were crucifying Him? yes

Now read Matthew 22:37-40.

What are the two great commandments? (Each summarizes one of the two tables of the ten commandments.)

A. Love the Lord your God with all your soul and all of your mind

B. Love your neighbor as yourself

What does this commandment require of us? Read John 15:12.

What should we do instead of gossiping and slandering others? Love each other

Read Proverbs 31:8,9. What are we to do?

1. Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves

2. judge fairly

3. defend the rights of the poor and the needy

Finally, we are called upon to put the best construction on our neighbor's actions. Look on page 86 in *Luther's Small Catechism*. How should we explain our neighbor's actions?

in the best possible way

Remember, we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. According to I Corinthians 13:7, what are we always to do?

1. _____ *protect* _____ 2. _____ *Trust* _____
 3. _____ *hope* _____ 4. _____ *Persevere* _____

The Ninth and Tenth Commandments

The ninth and then commandments deal with the same topic. Both have to do with wanting something that does not belong to you at the expense of another person. (This refers particularly to a destructive desire that dominates one’s thinking and activity.) The tenth commandment seems to be an amplification of the ninth commandment.

The ninth commandment is YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR’S HOUSE.

This commandment seems to be dealing with specific things that a person wants that do not belong to him. Some of the applications are obvious. Your friend gets a new pair of tennis shoes. You would like to have a pair like them. There is no way you or your parents can afford these particular shoes. You are so jealous that you start treating your friend badly.

Other applications of this commandment are perhaps not so obvious. Think about all of the advertising to which we are exposed in this country – television, magazine, radio, internet, mailing, etc.

What is the purpose of advertising? _____ *to get you to buy something* _____

Another application of this commandment is in the area of international coveting. What often happens as a result of a nation coveting what another nation has?

_____ *war* _____

Coveting may not seem like such a bad thing, but the results can be devastating.

Read Micah 2:1,2. Who is being addressed? _____ *those who covet* _____
 What is “woe”? _____ *grief, heavy calamity, affliction, sorrow* _____

What is it then that this commandment requires? Read Hebrews 13:5.

What are we to do? _____ *be content with what we have* _____

Why? _____ *God will never leave us or forsake us* _____

The tenth commandment is YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR’S WIFE,

MANSERVANT, MAIDSERVANT, CATTLE, NOR
ANYTHING THAT IS YOUR NEIGHBOR'S.

This seems to broaden the meaning of covet. Not only are we not to covet things, we are not to covet relationships and lifestyles. Think of some examples of coveting relationships and lifestyles.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Earlier in this lesson we discovered who "our neighbor" is. The ninth and tenth commandments include the term "neighbor." This term refers to whom?

_____ *everyone and anyone* _____

What does this commandment require us to do? How are we to treat our neighbor when it comes to his possessions? Read Philippians 2:4.

- For whom are we to look out? 1. _____ *ourselves* _____
2. _____ *others* _____

What can we conclude we should do for our neighbor when it comes to the things he owns and the people with whom he has relationships?

_____ *help him to save his possessions and support his relationships* _____

God wants us to be content in Him. If we love God, we have all the treasure we need.