

UPPER ROOM ADULT BIBLE CLASS

Fall/Winter, 2018

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“Foundational Truth for a Confused World: The Ten Commandments”

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Session Twenty-Four: The Eighth Commandment: You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

We should fear and love God, that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, slander, nor defame our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything. (M. Luther)

In the Narrow Sense: Making any untrue statement (perjury) against anyone in court or in depositions.

- a. **Proverbs 19:5.** *A false witness will not go unpunished, and whoever pours out lies will not go free.*

In the Broader Sense:

- a. **Telling lies to someone, withholding the truth in order to harm or lead him/her astray.**
 - a. **Ephesians 4:25.** *Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body.*
 - b. **Acts 5:3-4.** *Then Peter said, “Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? ⁴ Didn’t it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn’t the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God.”*
- b. **Betraying someone by revealing his/her confidential or private information without their informed consent or permission.**
 - a. **Proverbs 20:19.** *A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid anyone who talks too much.*
 - b. **Proverbs 26:20.** *Without wood a fire goes out; without a gossip a quarrel dies down.*
 - i. What is the difference between “gossip” and “processing my feelings?”
 - ii. **Three Questions to Ask Yourself:**
 - 1. Who am I talking to and how trustworthy is he/she?
 - 2. What is my motive in saying these things?
 - 3. Will this person help me, so that I can go to the other person and talk this through?
- c. **Slandering or speaking evil of someone, directly or by innuendo, thus injuring or destroying their good name/reputation.**
- d. **Revealing “truth” about someone else, which may also injure their name or reputation.**

a. Three Questions to Ask Yourself:

i. Is this “truth” truly true (or just my perspective of the story)?

ii. Is it necessary for reasonable decision making?

iii. Will it get in the way of “putting the best construction on everything?”

b. If you are still unsure of the right thing to do, talk with a trustworthy, mature, and godly counsel for help.

c. If you end up hurting the other person (unintentionally), be prepared to repair the hurt you caused.

e. Harbor evil thoughts or plot harm (revenge) against someone else.

f. Failing to exercise verbal or written self-control when upset at someone else.

a. **James 1:1-12.** *Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. ² We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.*

³ *When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. ⁴ Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. ⁵ Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. ⁶ The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one’s life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.*

⁷ *All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, ⁸ but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.*

⁹ *With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God’s likeness. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. ¹¹ Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?*

¹² *My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.*

g. The Beloved of God can honor God and protect each other’s reputation by...

a. Defending other people’s names and reputations, verbally and in social media:

i. Proverbs 31:8-9. *Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute.*

⁹ *Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.*

b. Shielding him/her against false accusations.

- c. Speaking well of someone by honoring the 5/1 ratio of praises & encouragements/criticisms.
- d. Put the best construction on everything, so far as it can be done and still be truthful (denial is not truthful):
 - i. Overlooking small things
 - ii. Forgiving bigger things
 - iii. Problem-solving most things and moving forward.
 - iv. **1 Peter 4:8.** *Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.*
- e. Speaking truthfully to each other, with a respectful tone.
 - i. **Ephesians 4:15.** *Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.*
 - ii. **Galatians 6:1-2.** *Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. ² Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.*
- f. Graciously receiving honest and fair admonishment, correction, and feedback from those in spiritual/temporal authority over you.
 - i. **Proverbs 15:5.** *A fool spurns a parent's discipline, but whoever heeds correction shows prudence.*

h. How do you accomplish this in real time?

- a. **James 1:19-20.** *My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, ²⁰ because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.*
 - i. Know yourself: what triggers your anger, frustrations, upset-ness?
 - ii. Recognize what form of "fight/flight" you most often go to.
 - iii. PAUSE to calm down/breathe.
 - iv. Check out the accuracy of what triggered you.
 - 1. What you heard may not be what was meant.
 - 2. How you interpreted it may not have been accurate.
 - 3. Ask: "I hear you saying... is that what you meant?"
 - 4. Listen well.
 - 5. Then speak or act.