

Pentecost Day – The Ten Commandments – Part 7

Exodus 20

16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

The Ninth Commandment, like all the others, is spiritual at its roots (Rom 7:14). And, in this commandment, God lays out the relationship of men (and women) towards the good name and reputation of ones neighbors. Now, of course, this command applies to the court of law. And this is still a law in most of the Christian nations albeit not one that is enforced very often. We're given more details about it elsewhere in the Bible...

1 Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.

2 Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment:

Ex 23:1-2

To 'wrest' judgment is to *stretch, spread out* or to *bend away* (#5186). In other words, no matter how much peer pressure you get, we are not supposed to pervert judgment nor our testimony (witness). As our Heavenly Father said through Zechariah...

*16 These are the things that ye shall do; **Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour**; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates:*

*17 And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all **these are things that I hate**, saith the LORD.*

Zech 8:16-17

God **hates** false witnessing. *Let that soak in...*

11 Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another.

12 And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.

Lev 19:11-12

If you hold your hand on the Bible and swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth - and then lie... you are bound to be judged by God Himself for your false testimony. For you are profaning the name of YHVH (God Almighty) when you swear by His name, which is His Word (the Bible). God's Law demands the same punishment be afflicted upon the false witness as they are seeking to inflict upon the innocent person they are falsely witnessing about. God promises that *whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer* (Ps 101:5). To cut off means either to make a person a non-citizen or to kill them. Neither one is good! God certainly knows how to take vengeance

upon his enemies, and those who break His commandments willingly (and un-repentantly) are His enemies.

To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

Deut 32:35

While God does take vengeance, He has still delegated us to have a righteous court system set up for those who refuse to abide by His Laws. As the Holy Spirit, through Paul, pointed out...

8 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; [i.e. the law is not to be weaponized]

*9 Knowing this, **that the law is not made for a righteous man**, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,*

10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

1 Tim 1:8-10

God gave His Laws to control those who refused to abide by His Laws *from the heart*. This is why Gal 5:18 says that, *if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law*. It does not mean that we are not supposed to obey God's Laws. Quite the contrary: it means that, when we obey God's Laws *from our heart*, we won't break the law physically because we cut the sin out of our heart before it manifests into a physical sin. This is what Paul meant when he said: *for sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace* (Rom 6:14). We are under 'grace' when we have accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior and King. And, in doing so we've also accepted His Laws, which means we agree to obey His Laws *from the heart*. When you obey God's Laws *from the heart* (and sincerely repent when you fall short) then you won't let sinful thoughts and desires manifest into a physical sin... at least not very often. None of us are perfect and we all fall short. But those who truly strive to obey God's Laws *in their heart* will usually be able to keep the sin from manifesting into a physical sin that needs to be taken care of in the courts. However, in this world, there will always be people who do not care about obeying the law. And that's why we still need courts to enforce God's Law *without partiality* (everyone is to abide by it, not matter how much money, power or influence they have).

However, this does not mean God's Law is not useful to Christians. As Paul pointed out in the book of Romans - *Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, **I had not known sin, but by the law**: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet... Wherefore **the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good**... but I am carnal, sold under sin*. (Rom 7:7, 12, 14). The entire chapter explains how God's Law is good and we need it to be able to learn the difference between right and wrong. Paul laments, though, at how hard it is to obey God's Laws *from the heart* because our heart is a *carnal* mind (which is why he said he is 'carnal' and 'sold under sin') and it is thus *very difficult to control*. But God's Holy Spirit will help us get stronger

if we continue work hard (persevere) and sincerely every day to obey His Law from our heart. This means, of course, cutting the sinful thoughts and desires out *before* they manifest into sin.

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.
2 Tim 1:7

The word ‘sound’ is #4995 and means: *discipline*, i.e. *selfcontrol*. It comes from #4994, which means *to make of sound mind*, i.e. (figuratively) ***to discipline or correct***.

To have a ‘sound’ (healthy) mind simple means you have a disciplined mind that can clean out the evil thoughts and desires that come into (or form in) your mind, so they do not contaminate your thought process and make you mentally (spiritually) sick. Our physical body is designed to clean itself too but we must make sure we are putting good clean food and water into it in order for our flesh body to function properly, and our soul is the same way. That’s why we need to study and think about God’s Word each and every day along with allowing His Holy Spirit to guide and teach us. We also must refrain from taking in the things that defile (poison) our soul so our mind and heart does not get overloaded (Lk 21:34). God’s Word is the Bread of Life and His Holy Spirit is the Living Water (John 6:35, 48, 4:10-14, 7:38-39). So, God’s Law provides the standard for us as to what is right and what is wrong, which is very important for those who are trying to do what’s right! We must have some standard to try to obey. That’s why God’s Word calls His Law the ‘Light’ and the ‘Path’ and ‘THE Way’ (Ps 119:1, Prov 6:23, 10:17, 29, John 14:6). God’s Law provides us the set of instructions we are to try to abide by because, in obeying them, we find the path (THE ‘Way’) to eternal life (John 14:6, 17:3).

So, having court of law is still important in this life. And, if our courts were in obedience to God’s Law on the matter of false witnessing, they would need to make sure the witnesses were examined separately and out of the hearing of others. This minimizes the possibility of collaboration between witnesses as well as the opportunity to escape detection if testimony is falsified. The story of Susanna in the Apocrypha is an excellent example of the way justice concerning false witnessing *should* work. When judges detect the possibility of falsification, the case should *stop* and the judges should make a thorough examination. If the testimony (or testimonies) is found to be false, *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*. The procedure for court proceedings and what to do in the case of false witnessing is found in Deuteronomy 19:15-21 and it’s important to note that the law also *requires* two to three witnesses to testify to the same thing for any ‘matter’ to be established, which means before a judgment can be made. Abiding by God’s Law concerning the testimonies given in courts will ‘put the evil away’ from any nation that obeys them. But if not, the evil will continue to grow because, when people see they can get away with false testimony, *they will begin to do so for money*. In other words, bearing false testimony will become an occupation for some and at the expense of justice.

We have many examples of how this works and, also how God feels about it. Consider the following...

1 And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.

2 And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it.

3 (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)

4 And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out.

5 And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.

6 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

7 My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.

8 With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

9 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed.

10 And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.

11 And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned.

12 Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb.

13 And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.

14 And the LORD said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again.

15 And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again.

16 And afterward the people removed from Hazeroth, and pitched in the wilderness of Paran.

Num 12

First off: as we've noted before in our studies on this great book of Exodus, Moses' wife was *not* an Ethiopian (or a Kenite). She was actually a Midianite, who was a child of Abraham by his second wife, Keturah. But, because of the geographical areas she had lived, she was called different things much like you might be called an Oklahoman if you live in Oklahoma but that does not mean your race is native American. You could be white, black, yellow, red, or something in between and you'd still be called an Oklahoman *and* an American. Geographical locational names have nothing to do with your race.

Secondly, this is a very good example of what God thinks of those who slander their neighbors, which amounts to false witnessing. God was ready to *kill* Miriam for her wickedness; leprosy was a death sentence – *a slow and painful death sentence*. Although Aaron went along with the gossip, Miriam was apparently the one who instigated it because she was the one smitten with the leprosy. God only healed her at Moses' request and she still had to suffer with it for a whole week. Miriam and Aaron's slander against Moses was a serious charge for they were basically saying Moses was trying to be a dictator when, in fact, Moses was a very faithful servant to God. Our Heavenly Father (YHVH) heard it and it angered Him immensely. So much so that He personally came down in the cloud and literally stood at the door of the tabernacle to give Miriam and Aaron a thorough reprimand. ***False witnessing is a very serious sin in the eyes of God*** and we need to be very careful what kind of conversations we participate in. We must learn how to nip them in the bud. One good way to do that is to simply ask a person where they got their information. This usually embarrasses them (or angers them) enough they won't keep trying to ensnare you into gossip anymore. Why? Because they don't want to fess up to the fact that they really don't know what they are talking about. It's just something they heard from a second-hand source, *at best*.

But this is not the only example of false witnessing, even while the children of Israel were in the wilderness. Consider the following...

*1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2 Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them.
3 And Moses by the commandment of the LORD sent them from the wilderness of Paran: all those men were heads of the children of Israel.*

Num 13:1-3

*25 And they returned from searching of the land after forty days.
26 And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land.
27 And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.
28 Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.
29 The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.
30 And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.
31 But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.*

32 And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature.

33 And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

Num 13:25-14:4

1 And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night.

2 And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!

3 And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt?

4 And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.

Numbers 14:1-4

God commanded the children of Israel to spy out the Promise Land, not to see IF they could take it, but to get a good idea of their military tactics they would need to use. This is wise but ten of the spies did not understand the point of the mission. And sadly, because of the false testimony of ten cowardly men, an entire generation lost the opportunity to inherit the Promise Land. This is an excellent example that shows the detriments false witnessing can have upon, not just one or two people, but an entire nation. False witnessing is truly evil; we must remember that.

Most of the people of Israel were weak hearted; they wanted to go back to *slavery* after they heard the slanderous report about the Promise Land. Truly they were already in slavery: mental slavery, because they *because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved* (2 Thess 2:10). This is the same reason so many people will worship the antichrist (Satan) when he is here during the great Tribulation of Rev 13 [<https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/235>]. Simply put, they would rather believe a lie than the truth because they have *pleasure in unrighteousness* (2 Thess 2:12). They believed the slanderous gossip of ten cowards, even though two of the men who spied out the land testified to the truth. Likewise, false witnessing can rob people of their spiritual inheritance: eternal life. This is why Satan's rebellion is so wicked. Due to the lies he tells, people remove themselves from the one and only source of true life: YHVH, our Heavenly Father (our Creator). Therefore, no one who follows Satan's false witnessing when he's on the earth pretending (lying) to be the Savior of mankind (2 Thess 2) will inherit the Kingdom of God during the Millennium, which means they won't be in Jesus Christ's righteous government (a.k.a. the Body of Christ) – (Mth 7:21-27, Luke 13:24-28). And eventually, if they don't repent, they will cease to exist at all (Rev 20).

We could also study the account in 1 Kings 21 where Jezebel (the queen of Judah) had Naboth killed via false witnesses. But, for the sake of time, we won't cover it here but you might want to read the entire chapter yourself, if it's been a while since you have, for it's another excellent example of what happens with false witnessing. A righteous man lost his life because of breaking

the Ninth Commandment and the entire government (local and federal) were involved in colluding to use false witnesses to be able to murder an innocent man (there really is no new thing under the sun – Ecc 1:9). God had very good reason for this command!

Another example can be found in the account of Jesus' trial (1 Cor 10:11). The crooked religious men of the day sought out false witnesses and they had to buy them off to get them to get them to witness falsely in the manner they wanted them to (Mth 26:60). They did this to Stephen also (Acts 6:8-10). *This is not justice*, of course. It's an abomination to God, as well as to those who are afflicted by such unrighteousness. Abiding by the laws of testimony concerning the courts is a vital part of keeping peace and prosperity in any nation because, you cannot have peace without justice; and good judgment is how you get justice. That's why Deut 32:4 says of our Heavenly Father that: *He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for **all his ways are judgment**: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he*. All God's ways are judgment means righteous judgment and He cares so much about this (Isa 49:14-26) because He wants righteousness to reign [learn how deeply He cares in Isa 49 - https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Isaiah/1202]. That is, after all, what brings life (Deut 30). We're also told in Prov 16:6 that: *by mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil*. So, giving people mercy and truth is part of how God brings people to repentance. God's Laws are designed to bring people to repentance and get rid of those who utterly refuse to repent. That's why it's written that *the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ* (John 1:17). God wants us to repent. If our courts ran by God's Law it would bring people to repentance much faster because people would fear to do evil and learn to keep their sins in check and there would not be the need to take so many problems to court. God calls enforcing righteous judgment: 'putting away' evil from the nation (Deut 17:12, 22:22, 24).

Therefore, it is easy to see that this command is not limited to the court of law. Bearing false testimony is much greater in scope than testifying in court cases alone. It applies to our everyday life and in all things we do. Looking at the Hebrew of some key words is very helpful in grasping the breadth of this command, so let's take another look at it...

Exodus 20

16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

“Bear” #6030, a primitive root that means: *to eye or (generally) to heed, i.e. pay attention; by implication, to respond; by extens. to begin to speak; specifically to sing, shout, testify, announce*. It's been translated in the KJV as - give account, afflict [by mistake for OT:6031], (cause to, give) answer, bring low [by mistake for OT:6031], cry, hear, Leannoth, lift up, say, scholar, (give a) shout, sing (together by course), speak, testify, utter, (bear) witness. See also OT:1042, OT:1043.

“**False**” #8267, an *untruth*; by implication, a *sham* (often adverbial). It’s been translated in the KJV as - without a cause, deceit (-ful), false (-hood, -ly), feignedly, liar, lie, lying, vain (thing), wrongfully.

It comes from #8266, a primitive root that means: *to cheat*, i.e. *be untrue* (usually in words). It’s been translated in the KJV as - fail, deal falsely, lie.

“**Witness**” #5707, a *witness*; abstractly, *testimony*; specifically, a *recorder*, i.e. *prince*. It’s only translated in the KJV as - witness.

There are so many ways in which one can bear false witness regarding his neighbor. Through word, act, deed or even a simple lift of the eyebrow or shrug of the shoulder at the mention of a name. Body language indeed can be a form of witnessing, *even without a word spoken*. Many times, our actions are a more powerful method of communication (for the good or the bad) than any words we say. However, it’s important to note that the word ‘bear’ (as in ‘thou shalt not bear false witness’) does not only mean ‘to speak’, ‘testify’, or ‘announce’. It also means ‘to pay attention to’ as well as ‘to respond’. This lets us know that it’s just as bad to *entertain* false witnessing as it is to speak it. While it takes listening to someone to be able to discern where they are going in their conversation, someone with good discernment won’t have to wait very long to be able to tell when someone is starting to gossip and we should cut the conversation off quickly. We cannot be on the ‘inactive’ end of gossip and think we’re innocent of breaking this Ninth Commandment. **Gossip is a two-way street** and those who both speak and listen to (believe in) gossip are both at fault. They are both guilty of false witnessing because they are *perpetuating* the false witnessing. This is why, in a court of law, once false witnessing is suspected the whole case should be suspended until the validity of the witness is found out. The entire case might be dropped on account of not having enough witnesses.

The Word of God, of course, has much to say about those who harm their neighbors by false witnessing and the Bible has different terms for it, just as we do today. It’s often called ‘talebearing’ and ‘slander’ instead of gossip. Consider the following...

Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the LORD.

Lev 19:16

12 He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace.

13 A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.

Prov 11:12-13

6 A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.

7 A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.

8 The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

Prov 18:6-8

He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.

Prov 20:19

20 Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth.

21 As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife.

22 The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

23 Burning lips and a wicked heart are like a potsherd covered with silver dross.

24 He that hateth dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him;

25 When he speaketh fair, believe him not: for there are seven abominations in his heart.

26 Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the whole congregation.

27 Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.

28 A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin.

Prov 26:20-28

He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.

Prov 12:17

A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape.

Prov 19:5

A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall perish.

Prov 19:9

A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.

Prov 25:18

Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.

Ps 101:5

18 He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool.

19 In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.

Prov 10:18-19

Paul also addresses this in the New Testament...

*13 And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, **speaking things which they ought not.***

1 Tim 5:13

‘Learning to be idle’ in this case means we are not to run around gossiping, which Paul terms as ‘tattlers’ and ‘busybodies’ (a term we still use to this day). A person like this is not trusted by anyone and only used to either get dirt on others or to plant a lie to harm someone else. Paul tells us that, those who have accepted Jesus Christ shouldn’t be this way. Instead, we should...

10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

12 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

2 Thess 3:10-12

God expects us to work to provide a living for ourselves and our families. And, we shouldn’t be part of the grapevine while at work (or anywhere else for that matter). This doesn’t mean we can’t hold on conversations with other people. But we should be *very* careful about what we say. Jesus Christ warned us...

35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Matt 12:35-37

The word ‘idle’ here is #692 in the Greek and means: to be *inactive*, i.e. *unemployed*; (by implication) *lazy*, ***useless***. So, Christ is warning us that we’ll be held accountable for the useless (even destructive) words we use (if not repented for [Mk 3:28]). James also warns of the trouble that comes from having no self-control over our tongues...

1 My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, [‘perfect’ here means to be ‘complete’ in ‘mental and moral character’ - #5046] and able also to bridle the whole body.

3 Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.

4 Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!

6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:

8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?

12 Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

James 3:1-12

James gives us a very helpful key here. He says in verse 2: *If any man **offend not in word**, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.* As is noted above, the word ‘perfect’ means to be ‘complete’ in ‘mental and moral character’ (#5046). However, the word ‘offend’ in this verse is #4417 and it means: *to trip*, i.e. (figuratively) *to err, sin, fail* (of salvation). This means our tongue is the most used body part to sin with. It is where our sin is manifested most often, more than anything else. Body ‘language’ is probably next in line. So, if we want to be ‘perfect’, or, ‘complete’ in mental and moral character (i.e., spiritually mature) then we will learn what causes us to sin with our tongue, so we can learn how to stop this sin *in our heart* before it manifests into the physical sin. Jesus warned that false witnessing is one of the things that defiles us inwardly because the desire to falsely witness against our neighbor comes from within our heart...

18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

20 These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.
Matt 15:18-20

But what causes the desire to witness against others falsely? Why do people love to both hear gossip and to speak it? Why is it so hard to refrain from listening to gossip, let alone from passing it along? One of the Proverbs we covered earlier gives us insight into the motivation of false witnessing...

*12 He that is void of wisdom **despiset** his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace.*

13 A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.

Prov 11:12-13

The word ‘despiset’ in verse 12 is #936, a primitive root that means: to *disrespect*. In the KJV it’s translated as - *contemn, despise, utterly*. In Webster’s Dictionary, to despise means: to look down on with disrespect or aversion. It can also mean to regard as worthless or distasteful. Aversion is a feeling of repugnance towards something with a desire to avoid or turn from it. It also means antipathy, which is a strong feeling of dislike. So then, despising others in our heart is what leads us to *hating* them. And this is specifically forbidden in God’s Law.

Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.

Lev 19:18

And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

Mark 12:31

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Rom 13:8-10

For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Gal 5:14

If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

James 2:8

So, the root of false witnessing is despising (even hating) others. Now, we must understand there is a difference between hating the sins people commit versus actually hating them. We are supposed to hate evil. God Himself hates evil (Ps 11:5, Prov 8:13, Isa 61:8, Jer 44:4, Amos 5:21, Zech 8:17, Rev 2:15). And we are expected to rebuke evil, with discretion; especially when confronted with it (Lev 19:17, Prov 9:8, 24:24-25, 27:5, Ecc 7:5, Lk 17:3, 1 Tim 5:1, 20, 2 Tim 4:2, Titus 1:13, 15, Jud 9). But it is a different thing totally to hate people ‘just because’. The epistles of John are very clear about having hate in our heart...

*9 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.
10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.
11 But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not
whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.*
1 John 2:9-11

*14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that
loveth not his brother abideth in death.
15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life
abiding in him.
16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay
down our lives for the brethren.
17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels
of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?
18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.*
1 John 3:14-18

*19 We love him, because he first loved us.
20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother
whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?
21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.*
1 John 4:19-21

Of course, we usually have ‘good reasons’ for disliking (and hating) other people. But are the reasons really valid? Only God’s Word can help us differentiate in our mind if we are being prejudiced in our heart or if someone truly is breaking God’s Law in a manner that deserves rebuke and/or shunning.

*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing
even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner
of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*
Heb 4:12

Regardless if the person is wicked or righteous (i.e., whether or not they are a true Christian who is working to overcome their carnal mind or if they let their carnal mind rule them and habitually sin without regard to God’s Law), we should still refrain from gossiping about them because it is still false witnessing and thus, breaks God’s Law. And we should not hate (or despise) them personally in our heart. We can hate the sin and treat them according to God’s Law without hating them personally. And, if they do something that you are truly witness to (such as breaking the law – like stealing) then you are duty bound to be a faithful witness. In fact, you should go to authorities and inform them of what you saw and go also to God in prayer and inform Him of

what you saw (not that He doesn't already know but He likes hearing from you). But, to go to other people and tell what you saw is spreading gossip (even though it's 'true') and that's what God hates because ***there is no justice in it***. Did you catch that? There's nothing good that comes from spreading gossip. Even if you do see the neighbor man go to the neighbor ladies' home for an hour each day... that does not mean you actually witnesses adultery. It takes more than one witness to 'circumstantial evidence' to 'establish' any matter. Do you get the point? Gossip and slander are so very common that most people have become hardened to it. We tend to think we are justified in this sin just because it's common. We cannot forget that we humans have a tendency to think in our mind that all ***our*** thoughts are true, *when they are not*. We all too often pervert justice (reality) *in our own heart* because we have sin that perverts our ability to see clearly. This is why Jesus said...

1 Judge not, that ye be not judged.

2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother; Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Matt 7:1-5

'Judge' is #2919 and means: to ***distinguish***, i.e. ***decide*** (*mentally or judicially*); by implication, to try, condemn, punish.

It's not that we are not to ever judge. We all must make judgments each and every day because, to make any decisions in life at all, you must judge. ***Judgment is how you make decisions***, as the meaning of the word (shown above) clearly explains. But to try to get someone else punished (be it in the courts or just by your gossip) just because you think they did something wrong... that's what the spiritual aspect of the Ninth Commandment addresses. And Jesus is warning us to get the sin out of your own heart first (the beam) and then you'll be able to see clearly to 'judge' others... is that what He said? NO, He said then you will be able to see clear enough to ***HELP*** others. If you think you know that someone is doing something wrong, at it bothers your conscience, but you don't have the 'proof' to go the authorities about it... do NOT gossip about it! Just go to God in prayer and allow HIM to see that justice is done.

If there's an opportunity to say something to the person you think is committing the sin do so (as Lev 19:17 tells us) but make sure you do some with the right spirit and with great discernment and discretion. Gal 6:1 tells us that: *if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the ***spirit of meekness***; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted*. But Prov 9:8 warns: *Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love*

thee. Choose your words and timing wisely and with the help of the Holy Spirit. And, if you are not led to say or do anything about it, simply go to God in prayer. We must learn to trust that God is able to take care of injustices. And, if you're really honest with yourself, it's likely that the things you have done in your past are not much better than anyone else's sins. Truly, *we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away* (Isa 64:6). This should help us approach others with a humble attitude and in a way that they will be receptive to the reproof. Note that people do not take reproofs from self-righteous hypocrites very well at all, so you'd better get your act together before trying to help anyone else (as Jesus told us in Mth 7).

So, the spiritual aspect of this law is that people have sin hidden away in their heart that causes them to seek vengeance upon others *through their words and actions*. Or, they are so cheap they are willing to lie and hurt others just to gain money. Both reflect a corrupted mindset and defiled heart. The book of James gives additional insight...

13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

James 3:13-18

Peace is made when justice is established. We therefore need to first have peace in our heart by making peace with our Creator. We do this through sincere repentance to God, in the name of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. When we accept His great sacrifice on the cross for us, we get forgiveness for our sins. But God then expects us to clean our heart and mind and strive to obey His Laws from the heart. And, as we learn to obey God's Laws from the heart (for the law can only truly be kept from the heart, that's why it's 'spiritual' – Rom 7:14), we will learn how to do what is right. This means we'll learn how to rightly judge (discern, make decisions) in our own life. Justice in our heart (being forgiven by God for our sins) will bring peace in our heart, which will remove the desire to gossip, slander and false witness about our neighbors. Anytime we cannot refrain from these things we must check deep within our own heart to see what unrepentant sins lies in there and repent for them. Thankfully, this is exactly what the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ is there to help us with (John 14:26, 16:8).

However, if we don't clean our heart, envy and strife will rule in our hearts and that is another instigator of gossip. What kind of strife? 'Strife' in the Greek is #2052 and means: *intrigue* [secret scheme], i.e. (by implication) *faction* [contentious or self-seeking]. So, envy and

contention inside one's heart is something that motivates people to lie about others to their hurt. We must be careful we don't entertain these feelings or thoughts in our heart and mind.

What this boils down to is that: **we have a tendency to see our sins in other people but not ourselves**. And, **if we don't face our own sins and clean them out, we will thus strike out at others (usually through gossip) to condemn them**. **Because our conscience is convicting us, we want to convict others of the same thing we're doing instead of dealing with our own sins first.**

An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.

Prov 11:9

Remember Mth 7 where Jesus told us to get the beam out of our own eye first? We've got to face ourselves (our sins) and clean them out before we can help others. Once we have our own sins cleaned then we'll have compassion in our hearts to help others, not condemn them. Their own sins will condemn them; they don't need our help (John 12:47-48). The Holy Spirit, through Paul, 'hits the nail on the head' in 2nd chapter of the book of Romans...

*1 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, **thou condemnest thyself**; for thou that judgest doest the same things.*

2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

Do you think you can escape God's judgment by ignoring your sin and condemning others?

4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

Does it make you mad that God does not punish people the way you want them to be punished? Is that why you gossip about them? To judge and execute punishment upon them through your false witnessing (gossip, slander, talebearing)?

5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

Your hardened heart won't allow you to see your own hypocrisy and thus, you won't repent. You will therefore be judged harshly by God – *For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again* (Mth 7:2) Consider also the

parable Jesus told about the man who would not forgive others but begged to be forgiven by his master. God will not forgive you if you don't forgive others (Mth 19:21-35, 6:12-15)

6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

11 For there is no respect of persons with God.

Rom 2:1-11

So, hypocrisy, among other sins, is what causes us to bear false witness against our neighbors through gossip and slander. ***A troubled (or seared over – 1 Tim 4:2) conscience is therefore the largest motivator for gossip or any form of false witnessing.*** Those who have peace inside their heart have compassion on others and seek to find justice God's Way, not by their own kangaroo court via the 'grape vine'. So, it is because we do not clean our heart that this Ninth Commandment is broken. And, even if we somehow manage not to engage in gossip (which is very unlikely if you don't clean your heart) then you still are breaking the Ninth Commandment ***if you even think about the gossip you've heard (believe it) or if you are (in your heart) thinking untrue things about others.*** It's not bad to take in information and judge wisely (also called discernment). God actually expects us to do this. But, ***when we begin to get angry and make speculations in our heart, we must stop it.*** Give it to God in prayer and leave it alone (might wanna repent for it too). But, stop thinking about it. Think, rather, about the many ways *you sin* against God, in your heart, and by word and action, each and every day. That'll humble you enough to stop being angry at the sins of others. And it won't take away from righteous indignation. God expects us to be grieved when we see sin but we are not to worry or get uncontrollably made about it.

1 Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.

3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

6 And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

9 For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.

10 For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.

11 But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.
Ps 37:1-11

This Psalm tells us not to ‘fret’ about evil doers. The word ‘fret’ in the Hebrew is #2734 and it means: *to glow or grow warm*; figuratively (usually) *to blaze up, of anger, zeal, jealousy*. In other words, we aren’t to get all worked up about it. [Learn more about this important subject in the special study on Psalms 37 - <https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/297>]. Once we learn to control our anger, and trust in God to take vengeance upon it, we can then learn how to utilize our anger in a righteous way. You’ll eventually learn when, where and how to manifest that righteous indignation *when you clean your heart out*, for God promises wisdom to those who obey His Laws from their heart. *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding* (Prov 9:10).

The bottom line is: if you truly love your neighbor as yourself, you will not privately bear witness to his harm, be the gossip true or false...

22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

James 1:22-2:1

Remember, those who obey God’s Laws *from the heart* are those who will govern with Jesus Christ...

1 A Psalm of David

LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

2 He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

*3 He that backbiteth **not** with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, **nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.***

4 In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.

5 He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

Ps 15

Therefore, let us leave this Ninth Commandment with a couple more reminders of the benefits of keeping this great commandment...

A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall perish.

Prov 19:9

A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!

Prov 15:23

We'll pick this up in Part 8...

AMEN.