

# The Ninth Commandment

We now come to a Commandment with a finer screen that should ensnare most, if not all, of us. Perhaps you have never dishonored your parents, nor murdered your harshest critic, nor broken your marriage vow or enticed another to, nor stolen anything that wasn't yours. Perhaps you have arrived at this commandment unscathed by the previous eight. Well, you will probably not leave this one unscarred, for Scripture says you would have to be a perfect person to leave this commandment unbroken.

**"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."**

Exodus 20:16

What is this commandment forbidding us to do? \_\_\_\_\_

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The scope of this Commandment includes everything from gossip to perjury. Any and every time we say something that testifies falsely, even slightly, about another person, we break this commandment. Some of us are more prone to violating it than others, but we are all enticed by our depraved sin natures to disregard this commandment for the joy of putting another person down. It is an evil delight at best, and a criminal offense at worse!

## A Member of God's Hall of Infamy

The violation of this Commandment makes the list of God's 'Seven Deadly Sins'.

- 16 There are six things which the LORD hates,  
Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him:
- 17 Haughty eyes,  
a lying tongue,  
And hands that shed innocent blood,
- 18 A heart that devises wicked plans,  
Feet that run rapidly to evil,
- 19 A false witness who utters lies,  
And one who spreads strife among brothers.

Proverbs 6:16-19

How can each of the sins listed be a violation of this commandment? \_\_\_\_\_

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It can be argued that the violation of this Commandment can be associated with almost every one of the list of seven. So despicable is this sin in God's eyes. Would it be the same in ours! And so easy do we find it to break this imperative that we are almost unaware when we do.



### Prone to Belittle

Relationships that are prone to untrue words:

- Husbands of Wives
- Wives of Husbands
- Parents of Children
- Children of Parents
- Friends of Friends
- Employees of Employers
- Employers of Employees



## Tongues of Fire

No book in the Bible dwells at length on the sins of the spoken word as does the book of James. In his definitive treatment of this topic, he uses several images to illustrate this wayward habit.

- 2 For we all stumble in many ways.  
If anyone does not stumble in what he says,  
he is a perfect man,  
able to bridle the whole body as well.
- 3 Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they will obey us,  
we direct their entire body as well.
- 4 Look at the ships also,  
though they are so great and are driven by strong winds,  
are still directed by a very small rudder  
wherever the inclination of the pilot desires.
- 5 So also the tongue is a small part of the body,  
and yet it boasts of great things.  
See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire!
- 6 And the tongue is a fire,  
the very world of iniquity;  
the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body,  
and sets on fire the course of our life,  
and is set on fire by hell.
- 7 For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea,  
is tamed and has been tamed by the human race.
- 8 But no one can tame the tongue;  
it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison.
- 9 With it we bless our Lord and Father,  
and with it we curse men,  
who have been made in the likeness of God;
- 10 from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing.  
My brethren, these things ought not to be this way.



MEMORIZE!

### Observations

- v 2
- Circle what a person is who does not err in what he says.
  - Underline what he will be able to do.
- v 3-4
- Underline what are compared to the tongue.
- v 5-6
- Underline what the tongue does.
  - Circle what the tongue is compared to.
  - Underline what the tongue defiles.
  - Underline what it sets on fire.
  - Circle what sets it on fire.
- v 7-8
- Circle who can tame the tongue.
  - Underline what the tongue is.
- v 9-10
- Underline what we do with our tongues.
  - Circle what comes out of our mouths.
  - Underline James' conclusion.

James 3:2-10

Why does James say that a person who 'does not stumble in what he says' is a

'perfect man'? \_\_\_\_\_

How is the tongue a 'fire'? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the significance of this passage? \_\_\_\_\_

### Fiery Tongues Will End in Fire Revelation 21:8

The Bible prophesied that liars will be cast into the 'lake of fire'. That, of course, includes every person capable of speaking! But those who are truly sorrowful and turn from that sin to Christ will receive His forgiveness and be spared that ultimate fiery torment.

## Tongues of Grace

As made clear by James, the tongue can be the source of fiery curses or soothing blessings, each determined by our free will. The apostle Paul exhorts us to choose to bless, not curse.

Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth,  
but only such a *word* as is good for edification  
according to the need of the moment,  
so that it will give grace to those who hear.

Ephesians 4:29

- Underline what should not proceed from our mouths.
- Underline what should.
- Circle what it will give to the hearer.

What kind of word is 'good for edification'? \_\_\_\_\_

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How can words 'give grace to those who hear'? \_\_\_\_\_


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## The Last Word

"Boys flying kites pull in their white winged birds,  
You can't do that when you're flying words.  
Words unexpressed fall back dead,  
But God Himself can't kill them,  
*Once they're said."*

Anonymous



 Matthew 12:34-37  
Colossians 4:6

