

Duane

**Theme: Truth is Sacred**

“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor” (Ex. 20:16)

“There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.” (Prov. 6:16-19)

“Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body.” (Eph. 4:25)

“Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices.” (Col. 3:9)

The ninth commandment prohibits us from making false testimony against each other. In Psalms and Proverbs, the authors mention how much God detests falsehood, but values honesty. In the New Testament, Paul reminds the churches not to lie to each other, but to speak in truth. There are two reasons why the Bible brings up the danger of falsehood and the sanctity of truth. First, falsehood can ruin the trust between people. It creates conflict that prevents people from loving each other. As described in Proverbs 6, arrogance, deception, oppression, scheming, and disputes are closely related to each other because people lie to cover up their own weaknesses, to take advantage of others, or for selfish gains. Consequently, no matter the purpose, lying can only bring hurt to a relationship. Second, falsehood bears the image of Satan rather than that of God. While Satan uses lying to lure people into sinning against God, God, through His truth, draws people to repentance. As a result, putting off falsehood is the process of taking off our old self and putting on the new. When we speak truthfully and treat each other in truth, we will reflect the image of God and bear witness of Him.

How then can we denounce falsehood and speak truthfully? First, we need to know that although we are sinners we have been saved by grace. God knows all of our weaknesses. Through Christ dying on the cross, we have received salvation and redemption so that we no longer need to lie to cover up our weaknesses or to put up a false image of ourselves. Second, we must believe that God's grace is sufficient enough. He knows all of our needs so we do not need to lie to take advantage of others, for selfish reasons, or to take revenge and hurt those who treat us poorly. Let's ask God to help us rely on His grace and be a person of truth.

**REFLECTION**

- Have we covered up our own weaknesses or created a false image of ourselves through lying?
- Have we lied for selfish reasons or to get back at those who treated us poorly?

**RENEW**

- May we know that we are sinners but have been saved by God's grace so that we have the courage to face our own weaknesses.
- May we know that God's grace is sufficient enough for us. Even when we need to pay the price, may we speak truthfully and act honestly.

**PRAYER REQUESTS**

- Pray for God's healing among those brothers and sisters who hurt others through falsehood or have been hurt by lies.
- Pray that we can denounce falsehood and speak truthfully as ways to reflect God's image and bear His witness.