

You Shall not Bear False Witness

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Preacher: Nathan Rambeck

[0 : 00] All across the country and quite a variety. But I love this song. You know, there's a lot of great things about America.

We talked about America being an exceptional country. But America has flaws as well. And it has from the very beginning. But this song is really a prayer.

A prayer to the Lord. And I love that line. It says, America, America. Will God shed his grace on thee? We're looking for God to be involved in our work in this country.

But it says this, God, mend thy every flaw. And also, may God thy gold refine. And every nation has flaws.

And why? Because nations are made of what? People. People. And people have flaws. But we want God to continue to be a part of this nation.

[0 : 59] The government of this nation. The culture of this nation. And in every way. And so, that's a great hymn for us to sing. And ask God to continue to work in our nation.

All right. Let's open up our Bibles. We're in Exodus chapter 20 this morning. We're looking at the ninth commandment. And for those of you who have memorized the Ten Commandments, you may recognize what that commandment is.

It's, you shall not bear false witness. Before we look specifically at this scripture and start to get into it, throughout this series, I've been kind of starting each message with a reminder of what our perspective is as Christians today when it comes to the law of Moses, the law in the Old Testament, and specifically the Ten Commandments.

And our perspective is this. The Bible says that as Christians, we are no longer under the law. That we are under grace. We've been memorizing verses over the last few months about that.

That the law no longer condemns us. We actually, Roger, read that this morning. That the law no longer has any power to condemn us who are in Christ.

[2 : 16] Now, if you're not in Christ, it actually still does have that power to condemn those who are under the law. But for those of us who are in Christ, who have trusted in Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins, we're no longer under the law.

We are under grace. And so the law does not condemn us. And it also, by the way, cannot make us more righteous. It can't somehow endow righteousness to us.

Jesus does that for us. He is our righteousness. Through the cross. But what do we do with the law?

Do we throw it away? Do we throw it in the trash? Do we ignore it? No. No. In fact, Paul himself, the one who said those very things, that we're under grace, that we're not under the law, he says this.

He says the law is righteous and it's holy and it's good. It teaches us right from wrong. We can learn right from wrong by looking into the law. It sets boundaries for our lives and for the lives of everybody in the world to avoid sin, which, by the way, sin leads to what?

[3 : 23] Misery. It leads to pain. It leads to even death. So we shouldn't ignore, we shouldn't diminish the law, but we do need to have the right perspective.

And that applies to the ninth commandment that we're going to be looking at today. And here it is, Exodus chapter 20 and verse 16 from the Ten Commandments. It says this, it's a fairly short one, not as short as the last two, which were just two words in the Hebrew each.

But here's Exodus 20 verse 16. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. That's it. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

One of the things we've talked about with the last few commandments, some people call it the second table of the law, it's the kind of second half of the Ten Commandments, is a lot of them really relate to criminal justice and our relationship between our neighbor in a community, in

civilization, in culture, in society.

And we've talked about, especially starting with you shall not murder, how the law provides a foundation for two things. One is human rights. We started with the you shall not murder, and that provides a foundation for the right to life.

[4 : 39] The right to life. And then the Eighth Commandment is you shall not steal, provides a foundation for a right to property, that as human beings, God designed us to own things, to have property rights, that people cannot steal from us.

And then even really the Seventh Commandment, about you shall not commit adultery, provides a foundation for a right to what? Marriage and fidelity in marriage. Marriage. We actually use the law, right?

And less and less today than we have in the past to make sure that people stay married, that you can't just have divorce for no reason at all, that there is some kind of enforcement of marital fidelity. And so this commandment also offers a foundation of rights in the same manner.

And I really want to, we're going to look at two things today. One is a foundation for a right to your reputation. To your reputation.

[5 : 48] How you are known in the world. And then also just a foundation for a right to justice in this life. A right to what we might call today a right to a fair trial.

You know, really honesty and truth is the glue that holds any justice system together. And without it, you don't really have a justice system. So with that in mind, let's first start on the justice system strain here.

If we go back to this commandment and read through it a little bit more carefully, look at some of the words used, we see legal language in play here. You shall not bear false witness.

A witness takes the stand, right, in a courtroom. That word bear is, you know, we think today more like carry. But if you look at the actual root Hebrew word, it's a word that could be translated to testify.

To testify like you would in a court of law. So in a literal sense, you might translate it this way. You shall not testify against your neighbor as a lying witness.

[6 : 58] And so the language of this commandment really is the kind of language you might find in a legal textbook. Today, the legal term that we would use for this kind of infraction is perjury.

When you are in a court of law and you are standing as a witness, whether you are the accused or whether you're just some witness to what happened in some kind of way, you are expected to what?

Tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. So help me God. Many times, putting your hand on the Bible to testify that you are going to tell the truth.

And that is the foundation of any justice system. You can have hundreds of laws to protect people's rights. But if there is not truth and integrity in the actual cases and trials that take place, you don't really have a justice system.

Turn, if you would, to the book of Deuteronomy. We're going to be looking at Deuteronomy chapter 19. And this is going to provide, you know, kind of an expansion of this law against perjury, against bearing false witness, and talking about how things ought to work in a criminal justice system.

[8 : 22] Let's see, Deuteronomy chapter 19, and we'll start with verse 15. It says this, One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits.

We can put in there crime. We might use that terminology in a legal sense. It says this, By the mouth of two or three witnesses, the matter shall be established. And so here is being provided saying, Hey, listen, if there's any kind of accusation against someone regarding a sin or a crime, in legal terms, then you have to have more than just a single accusation by one witness.

There needs to be at least two, and even better, three witnesses to that accusation for any matter to be established in a court of law.

Now, what is a witness? You know, in any kind of trial, you have many kinds of witnesses. A lot of times we just think about that one person who stands, who maybe saw the crime, right?

And they stand there in the witness seat, and they give an account of what they saw. And that is one type of witness, an eyewitness, somebody who maybe saw the crime.

[9 : 39] But you know, there are some crimes where some crime took place and nobody saw it, except for the criminal, right? And so what do you do then?

Does the Bible indicate that, well, since there weren't any eyewitnesses, or maybe there was only one, then that means that the criminal just gets away with it? Well, no, not necessarily.

There are other witnesses when it comes to a trial or a court. Another kind of witness might be an investigator, the police, or a detective, a police detective, right?

And they are, maybe they didn't witness the crime, but they came to the crime scene. They took the fingerprints. They looked at what was in the area. They looked at all of this evidence in the crime scene, and they give a report in the court of law to what they saw after the crime was committed.

Of all the evidence, and that kind of thing is admissible in a court of law. And even those immaterial, or excuse me, those material kinds of evidence can be considered as a witness.

[10:49] And those experts, like the investigator, are the ones who provide that authoritative statement as a witness to the evidence in the crime. You also have circumstantial type of witnesses.

Hey, I didn't see the crime, but I saw so-and-so in the same area that the crime happened around the same time that it happened. And that's circumstantial, and that actually can contribute to testimony in a court of law, in a case.

Or maybe the opposite, right? I was with so-and-so. We were watching a movie at my house when the crime happened, so they couldn't have done it. That's also a witness.

Or you might even have a character witness. Hey, I know so-and-so personally, and yeah, they're not really a good person. And yeah, actually, they've made threats about committing this kind of crime in the past.

Or maybe you're giving a character witness in the opposite vein, testifying to their credibility or their honesty or their integrity.

[11:49] You know, one question, why does it say two or three? Well, like I said just a little bit earlier, two is required, but it's always better to have even more witnesses or more evidence when it comes to a crime before any matter is established.

And by the way, this whole idea of two or three witnesses comes up over and over and over again throughout the scriptures, even on into the New Testament, that there should be two or three witnesses to established matter.

Even Jesus himself, when he was preaching his message during his ministry on earth, he says, hey, don't believe just me, but also look at these other witnesses to what I'm saying to settle it as true.

Don't believe just my word. He said, look at these other witnesses. And he mentioned the miracles that he did. Those were witnesses to the truth of what he said. And also he said, look to the prophets of old and what they said would come to pass in the future.

You can take all those things together and it establishes something as highly credible. We do the same thing in a court of law. Well, continuing on in Deuteronomy 19, we'll go on to verse 16.

[13:12] It says this regarding a false witness. It says, if a false witness rises against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing, then both men in the controversy shall stand before the Lord, before the priests and the judges who serve in those days.

And so it's mentioning, well, what happens when you have a false witness? And so what does a false witness look like?

Well, again, it could be that false eyewitness, somebody who lies through their teeth and says, I saw so-and-so do this. But you also might have a false witness from the accused, right?

And so they actually committed the crime, but they swear on the Bible that they didn't do it. That's also a false witness. They're witnessing toward themselves.

You can have a false victim, someone who makes an accusation that is not true.

[14:22] I think that this thing that comes to mind is there was an incident, I can't remember how long ago, in the last 10 years, there was a lacrosse team, some kind of sports team.

And these guys were dumb and really kind of corrupt in their character. And they brought in some kind of, I don't know, we'll call her a call girl.

We'll just use that kind of language. But she accused, well, she accused them of rape. In fact, I've seen this also with people who are famous, especially men who are famous, sports stars.

And they will have some kind of one-night stand with somebody, which is sinful and it's wrong and it's bad. But it's very different from the crime of rape. But they'll be accused of that, right, in order to get some maybe money or something like that.

And so that is a false witness. You claim to be a victim, but you are not, at least not a victim of the kind of crime that you're claiming. You can have a false investigator, right? We talked about investigators.

[15:24] We see this a lot in the movies, right? You have the bad cop that plants evidence on the crime scene that wasn't really there. You might have that false circumstantial witness.

You, maybe you stole something or you committed a crime at this time and you tell your girlfriend, hey, just tell the police that we were together watching a movie at your house.

And so that girlfriend becomes a false circumstantial witness. You even have deceitful attorneys. Did you guys know that?

That sometimes lawyers lie? You know, I was in a trial jury years ago, many, many years ago, and I just remember sitting in that courtroom and this defense attorney, and the case was just as clear as could be who was guilty.

It was a case of domestic violence. And the woman who had been attacked, and she was attacked anyway, physically. It was kind of a physical assault type thing.

[16:29] He was in prison and she wrote a letter to him, because, you know, both of them were bad cases. Anyway, saying, you know what? She wrote in her letter, and I'm talking to your family, and, you know, they're making these accusations, and it's all my fault.

That's what she said. And as you read that, right, it's all my fault. What she's saying is they're saying it's all my fault. But the attorney, he presents to the jury, well, here, right here, this lady is saying that she's taking responsibility for what he did, for what happened in this situation.

And I just thought to myself, does he really think we're that dumb? But this is his job, I guess, to lie to the jury about what happened to the victim or in the case.

Also, you can have corrupt judges in a trial, or even we have juries in this country. You can have a corrupt member of the jury. We've seen those things.

In Exodus 23, verse 7, it says this, Keep yourself far from a false matter. Do not kill the innocent and the righteous, for I will not justify the wicked. And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the discerning and perverts the words of the righteous.

[17:45] But we see sometimes people that take bribes, a member of the jury, sometimes a judge. And maybe the bribe doesn't look like, you know, cold, hard cash.

Sometimes it's just a trade of favors or political power or whatever it might be. You know, when it comes to false witnesses, we actually see this taking place. We see accounts of false witnesses several times throughout the Bible.

The most famous one is the most famous court trial in all of history. The trial of Jesus Christ himself, right? And there was actually, so the Sanhedrin, the council of Jews, the leaders of the Jews, they're trying to accuse Jesus of something that can put him to death because they want this guy gone.

They can't find anything. They can't nail him with anything. And so you know what they do? They look for false witnesses, the Bible says. You can read that in Matthew 26. And they finally found two people that were willing to be a false witness to lie about what Jesus said.

And that's what was used to convict him in a Roman court. Let's continue, or let's look at this a little further.

[18:54] Deuteronomy chapter 19. Back to verse 18, it says this. And the judge, the judges shall make careful inquiry. And indeed, if the witness is a false witness who has testified falsely against his brother, then you shall do to him as he thought to have done to his brother.

So you shall put away the evil from among you. And those who remain shall hear and fear and hereafter. They shall not again commit such evil among you. Your eyes shall not pity.

Life shall be for life. Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand and foot for foot. That last part is a principle of justice in which it's, you know, justice, the punishment must fit the crime.

But it's used in the context here of saying, hey, listen, if you are a false witness in a court of law, whatever is at stake in that trial, in that accusation, if you are found to perjure yourself, if you are found to be a false witness, to lie to a court regarding that case, then you are guilty of the same thing that the accused is being adjudicated for.

If this is a capital case, a murder trial of some kind, and you lie in order to pervert justice, what is the punishment?

[20 : 18] Well, it's capital punishment. Because death penalty, the death penalty is what's on the line. And so if you lie in a capital trial, if you dare to pervert justice in that way, here's what God says in the law.

Your life shall be taken. Life for life. If it's a property crime, you accuse somebody of stealing, or you are bare false witness of them stealing something. What's the punishment in that case?

The penalty is restitution. You have to pay back. And so now, you, your property is on the line. You have to pay back, or you have to pay a prime, excuse me, a fine of some kind to the victim of your false witness.

And so God takes truth in a court of law very seriously. because justice is important to God.

When we, if we undermine truth in a court of law, we undermine justice itself. And we undermine the entire legal system. Like I said earlier, laws do not matter if, if lies prevail in a court of law.

[21 : 29] And so the ninth commandment provides a foundation for a fair trial. a foundation for fairness in the court of law. But also, this commandment, this ninth commandment provides a foundation for the integrity of your reputation.

You know, when we talk about the right to life or the right to property or the right to our marriage and integrity in our marriage, these are very, like, tangible things.

The right to our reputation, our reputation is quite intangible. You can't really put your hands on it. But that doesn't mean that it's any less important to us.

In fact, really, if you think about your reputation, your reputation is what you use to build your life on top of. People build their life on top of their reputation.

Who they marry is based on their reputation, how they're known in their social circles. Your business, your career is built on your reputation, your wealth.

[22 : 40] All of those things are built on your reputation. And so, if you don't have a good name, if your name is tarnished, and by the way, we can tarnish our own name, right?

You can tarnish your own reputation by doing evil and corrupt things. But if your name is tarnished through a false witness, that is an injustice.

In Proverbs 21, verse 1, it says this, A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, loving favor rather than silver and gold. So really, even more important than your property, it says here, is your good name, your reputation.

And so, God has in mind through this commandment, he wants people's good name to be protected from those who would slander them. In Leviticus, chapter 19, verse 16, it says this, You shall not go about as a tail bearer among your people, nor shall you take a stand against the life of your neighbor.

I am the Lord. Here we've got two things. We've got bearing false witness in a court of law and being a tail bearer or a slanderer in your community. And both of those things are spoken of in the same breath.

[23 : 59] Exodus, chapter 23, verse 1, you shall not circulate a false report. Psalm 101, verse 5, Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy, the Lord says.

Verse 7, He who works deceit shall not dwell within my house. He who tells lies shall not continue in my presence. God takes these things seriously.

Proverbs, chapter 6, verse 16, These six things the Lord hates, yes, seven are an abomination to him, a proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, a false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among the brethren.

These are things that God hates. And over and over and over again throughout the Proverbs, the Psalms, all throughout the Old Testament and into the New Testament, we see that God does not like, in fact, he hates slander.

Proverbs 10, 18, Whoever spreads slander is a fool. Proverbs 19, 9, A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who speaks life, or excuse me, he who speaks lies shall perish.

[25 : 21] Proverbs 25, 18, A man who bears false witness against his neighbor is like a club, a sword, and a sharp arrow. These are weapons of violence. You slander somebody, when you mar or tar or drag their good name through the mud, it is like violence towards them physically.

Let's talk about some examples. We really talked about the court of law, but now kind of let's shift to things that are more social in nature when it comes to telling lies, bearing false witness, slandering others.

Now the number one thing I think most of us think of when it comes to slanders and telling lies in the public is politics. Right?

Every single day. How long do you have to turn on the TV to see another lie spoken? These ones are pretty easy to expose.

You know, it's easy for us to become somewhat tribal and think, you know, and I think it is actually quite true that you're going to see a ton of lies on the left. Does that mean there's no lies on the right from conservatives or sometimes even Christian conservatives?

[26 : 37] God forbid that there would be. But I think about just some things in the recent past. The Russian collusion hoax, as it's called now, that was in the news for so long and the news media went wild with it and it turned out to be a complete and total fabrication.

The other one that was in the news and we're still talking about it today was that you guys know about five or six years ago there was this thing called the novel coronavirus.

Anybody remember that? And it started in this place called Wuhan, China. That's kind of where it started. And there was this guy named Anthony Fauci and he said, you know, there's a novel coronavirus lab in Wuhan, China but the virus definitely did not come from there.

And so, we're supposed to believe him. We have one of the, as you're checking out through the checkout aisle of the grocery store you'll see some magazines.

And there are some health magazines but one of the most popular magazines on the checkout. It's the gossip ones. The People magazine or I don't even know what the rest of them are called.

[27 : 56] People love to hear gossip about people. It doesn't matter if it's true or false as long as it's juicy. Proverbs chapter 18 verse 8 says this, the words of a tail bearer or a slanderer are like tasty trifles.

Mmm. Delicious. And they go down in the inmost body. Tail bearers. Slander. Stories about people that are not true.

Hey, they, they're nice, they go in like a delicious treat. We don't just see it with gossip magazines, we see the same thing with mainstream news.

Lie after lie after lie. And is that new? Is it just in America where these things happen? No, this has been from the very beginning where newspapers or media in whatever form have been telling lies. Has anybody ever had a newspaper story or an article written about either them or maybe some event that you were at and then you read it and you realize that about 70% of it is false?

[29 : 08] I don't know if anybody's ever had that experience. I haven't had any articles written about me but I've been at events and people write about them and they just get basic facts wrong. It's so common and so if you see something that you have first hand knowledge of then you can kind of guess that well most of the other things that they write about are you know they're playing fast and loose with the truth quite a bit.

You know there are some news organizations that try to commit themselves to ethical standards of truth and veracity but I think those are few and hard to find and if you find an organization a news organization like that or an individual then hey that person is a good person to follow to listen to because they're trustworthy and why do newspapers why do these media organizations tell so many lies?

Well because it's profitable people like it those are tasty trifles and so there's a there's a saying and I tried to find where this saying came from and nobody really knew it's kind of one of those sayings that's kind of been around for a long time and this one's been around for a few hundred years but it says this let me see if I can find it where'd it go a lie will go around the world while the truth is pulling its boots on have you ever heard that?

A lie will go all the way around the world while the truth is just trying to put on its boots because lies are more a lot of times more interesting sometimes truth truth is stranger than fiction but usually the truth is just kind of boring and lies are a lot more interesting many times but even with new media today you know because of so many lies coming from the mainstream media there have been many new media things come out recently and you've got especially with the internet and social media media you have the citizen journalists and youtubers and all kinds of things and I think many of them are great and do have a commitment to the truth but does that mean all of them do and does that mean that just because these new media these youtubers or social media personalities just because they are maybe on our side of the aisle or maybe they expose some of the corrupt things that are going on that everything that they say is true does that even mean that they're trustworthy all the time not necessarily but there are some good but there's also some bad and we need to be

discerning as Christians and be careful too about what we propagate about what we share you know I mentioned there's a huge profit motive involved right when it comes to the economy today a lot of it is based on clicks and views the more clicks you can get the more views you can get the more power the more money that you can get

Proverbs 23:23 says this though buy the truth and do not sell it we want to buy the truth we do not want to buy the lies social media has made it easier than ever for individuals regular people to get to communicate with the masses to get the word out to try to bypass the mainstream media but you know what you can bypass the liars with truth you can also bypass the liars with more lies and there are there are two people that I think about today when it comes to this that have positioned themselves as people who are on the side of the truth and on the right wing or the conservative wing of politics and even culture and I see lie after lie after lie after lie after lie and questions about people's character and integrity I'm talking about people like Tucker Carlson and Candace Owen who have decided that they are going to build media empires on accusations against people or people groups many times it's the Jews and conspiracies about the Jews and they've done this or they've done that and it's all just made up stories not all of course you the best way to sell a lie is to do what sprinkle in a good amount of truth with it right you can sprinkle in a little bit of truth or maybe even a lot of truth and just throw in a few deceitful lies to try to sell them but conspiracies have become actually quite popular today and even among conservatives and conservative Christians even and it's easy

[33 : 56] I see why it's become the case we've become so jaded because of all the constant lies coming at us you know the communists of old would just lie through their teeth every single day and who's the guy that wrote the book Live Not By Lies I can't remember his name but there's a book out there Live Not By Lies and he talks about what happened during the communist regimes and how the people just lived under lie after lie after lie and they were told just to believe the party whatever we say is true regardless of whether it was true or not and today it seems like we're just fed lie after lie after lie and we're expected to just believe it and our neighbor seems to believe these things and it's like the emperor has no clothes this is obviously not true and so it's easy to become jaded and think that everything that we hear every established truth well we just have to question everything and that's not healthy either we become suspicious of even basic established fact did we really land on the moon is the earth really round and so we have people questioning these very basic things

I even hear people today questioning well who were the good guys and bad guys in world war ii well maybe winston churchill was the real villain and hey you know nobody's people aren't perfect and I'm not even saying winston churchill was perfect but hey that's a pretty wild conspiracy to be engaging in so what do we do with all of this as Christians like I said technology has made it easier than ever to make our voices heard and we want to have a voice in the world and so today we might get an email and it's like oh there's a story in here and I want to make sure my friends know about it I'm going to forward that email or even easier right today of social media Facebook and Twitter and Instagram and the other ones that I'm not as familiar with TikTok I guess there's that share button somebody shares something and it's some salacious story about the most despised politician in your mind and you just know it has to be true because of course that person would do this thing and so I'm going to share this story with all of my friends but I'm not going to take the time to look into whether it's actually true and is that what we as

Christians should be doing going back to Exodus 23:1 which I think was written explicitly to address the share button in our modern age you shall not circulate a false report just because some report some post is a juicy trifle does not mean that we should share it with everyone around it let's look into the evidence is it coming from a trustworthy source is there evidence behind it you know what the world is full of crooks and liars and there's plenty of things that people do right out in the open things that they support and promote that are obviously godless but those things kind of become boring right and so we want to share the most kind of their secrets the things that they've done in secret that nobody knows about yet a lot of times they're just completely made up and we become slanderers you know what as Christians we are supposed to be witnesses ourselves we are supposed to take the stand in the court of human opinion about the greatest message in all the world that Jesus

Christ died for the sins of the world and if we are known as those who just promote every lie that comes our way because of pure tribalism will people listen to that message that we have no they'll

just assume that that's just one other thing that we're spreading one other lie that we're willing to promote just for our own whatever we need to be known as those who stand on truth who love the truth who want the truth to come out we need to be the most trustworthy of all people you know all of this is founded on who God is what does the Bible say about God the God who cannot lie it says in Titus in Hebrews for it is impossible for God to lie God is truth Jesus himself said I am the way the truth and the life our whole lives both our temporal lives and our eternal life even is founded on the trustworthiness of God the trustworthiness of God the Son of God the Father and what does it say is the name of the arch nemesis to God

Satan he is a liar and has been a liar from the beginning that is his reputation I'm going to end with this you know we talked in the beginning about how we are not under the law but how the law is good and so we're looking to the law and we want to provide we want to have boundaries in our life to prevent ourselves from getting into slander or false witness and the law is good to set those boundaries in our lives to protect the rights of innocent people to avoid pain and misery and death but the law is not sufficient to living a good life if we just avoid false witness that is not good enough to live a thriving Christian life Romans 13 verse 8 we've repeated this several times through our last few messages excuse me Romans 13 8 oh one oh one oh no one anything except to love one another for he who loves another has fulfilled the law for the commandments you shall not commit adultery you shall not murder you shall not steal you shall not bear false witness you shall not covet and if there's any other commandment are all summed up in this saying namely you shall love your neighbor as yourself love does no harm to a neighbor therefore love is the fulfillment of the law you know

[40 : 25] God wants for us more than just boundaries more than just you shall not he wants us to grow in love and the law says don't lie about your neighbor don't slander them don't circulate false reports about people but even beyond that what love says is speak the truth even when it's hard stand up for your neighbor when other people are lying about them even if it's to your own detriment speak the truth even if it doesn't sell very well even if it takes a while to make way around the world even sometimes when it leads to our own persecution or hurt and finally this there are reasons right why we should avoid slandering others why we should avoid being a false witness in the law there were penalties involved if you break this law there are criminal penalties but then also in the court of God there is judgment to come remember that verse from Psalms for those who lie for those who bear false witness God will destroy and that can be an incentive right not to lie but for us as Christians we have a different incentive a different motivation here's what Paul says Ephesians 4:25 he says this hey guys put away lying let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor for we have become members of one another your life has been changed your identity has changed God has done something in you and so because of that speak truth don't speak lies Colossians 3:8 says something similar but now you yourselves are to put off all these anger and wrath and malice and blasphemy and filthy language do not lie to one another since you have put off the old man with his deeds and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of him who created him when we became

Christians when we trusted in Jesus Christ the Bible describes that as we put on a new man we've become a new creation in Christ Jesus we've put off the old man with its deeds and so we shouldn't go back to that old man we should live as the new man not to avoid the punishment of the law you know why because that punishment was already dealt with those lies were already dealt with on the cross the punishment was put on Jesus Christ and so that's not a punishment we really need fear anymore so what's our motivation instead of fear it's love love for God and love for our neighbor and we're grateful that he made us a new creation and through that gratitude we want to be more like him and are you glad that God did that for you this morning amen let's close and ask the Lord to make us more like him this morning father you are a God of truth you are the way the truth and the life and the truth is so important to you a life of truth and honesty and integrity you your whole life your divine life is built on truth and father we want to be like you in that way help us to build our lives on truth every day to always uphold what is true even when it's hard to uphold what is true to defend the truth to be a witness especially of the truth of the gospel in our world in our community in our circle of influence we ask you to do that for us help us in that way we're ever so grateful to you for making us new creations in Christ we thank you for all these things in Jesus name amen amen alright thanks everybody

Thank you.