

Don't Lie

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

—Exodus 20:16

Why did God give this commandment, “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor”?

First, God wants His people to tell the truth when they speak. In ancient times two or three witnesses were required in a court of law. “One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of a crime or offense he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses” (Deut. 19:15). This was to protect an individual from being maligned by a personal enemy, from a vendetta, or from someone who just wanted to bring another down.

The second reason God gave this command is that He wants to protect us from being falsely accused. He does not like it if anybody lies about you, for it hurts you. And if you feel that way, so does God. This is your comfort when you are lied about. Are you prepared to believe that God cares even more for you than you do? God cares about His children.

If you are a parent, how do you feel if somebody says something about your child that is not true? I myself can handle many things said against me, but when I hear of something said against either of my children, I have to work hard to contain myself.

You should know that God the Father feels that way about His children, too. Perhaps you have nobody who will defend you when people lie about you. But God heard it, and He does not like it. He said, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay.” In other words, He will vindicate you. The word vindicate means “to have one’s name cleared.” It’s what God does best. Anything God does, He does well. But if He has an “area of expertise,” it is this.

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