

Final draft-

The Evangelical Trinity Lutheran Church and School

The twelfth of October, 2008

SERMON ON THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT:

“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor”. {Exodus 20:16}

God’s Gift of a Good Reputation

What do God’s Commandments mean to us?

The word commandment used in the English Bible translates a number of Hebrew and Greek words meaning law, or ordinance, statute, word, judgment, precept, charge, and so on. When God flashed the Ten Commandments on the two stones to Moses, it was to be for all of us a rule or guide for living our lives. It is a compass to direct us to the right path which leads to eternal life for those who abide by the Commandments of God Almighty. No one should take lightly God’s commandments. The idea of authority conveyed by these words comes from the fact that God as Sovereign Lord has a right to be obeyed. The instruction of Jesus is full of

**ethical teachings which have the force of divine commandments. What He says is as authoritative as what was said of Jehovah in the Old Testament times. That is true even when He does not use the word “Commandment” or its equivalents, as He often does. But what is said of Jehovah and Jesus Christ is also true of the apostles. Paul, for example, does not hesitate to say “the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord” (1Cor. 14:37). Paul’s commands are the Lord’s commands and are to be followed. In a situation where so much stress was being placed on gifts, Paul insists that any genuinely gifted person will recognize the Apostles’ God-Given authority (They are not self-proclaimed, they were called and bestowed with power). The Bible makes it abundantly clear that God is not satisfied with mere external compliance with His commandments, but expects willing and joyful obedience, coming from the heart.*

Let us look in Luke chapter 10:25- 37 -The question Christ answered in the parable of the Good Samaritan. He showed that our neighbor does not mean merely one of the church or faith to which we belong. It has no reference to race, color, or class distinction. Our neighbor is every person who needs our help. Our neighbor is every soul who is wounded and bruised by the adversary. Our neighbor is every one who is the property of

God. And I add, Such as the homeless, the poor, the unemployed, they are include in our neighbor and the unborn babies who have no one to speak on their behalf we must be their voices.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

Fear is having respect or reverence for God.

Love is of God, and he who loves is born of God. He who does not love does not know God; for God is love. John 8: 31, 32.

Definition according to the large Catechism:

“Tell lies about” our neighbor means to spread a false statement or to withhold the truth.

Hurt one’s reputation: to injure or destroy a person’s position, status, or character in the eyes of others.

“Betray” our neighbor- It is to reveal that which our neighbor has told us in secret. Slander is a vicious act- a crime-that does lasting harm. Martin

Luther said this; "The slanderer has the devil on the tongue, and the listener has him in the ear."

What does God forbid in the eighth Commandment?

God forbids us to tell lies about our neighbor in a court of law or elsewhere, that is, to lie about, lie to, or withhold the truth from our neighbor.

Offenses against the truth express by word or deed a refusal to commit oneself to moral uprightness: they are fundamental infidelities to God and, in this sense, they undermine the foundations of the covenant: Covenant, which signify mutual obligation or a gracious disposition: out of gratitude for favors received. "It is in accordance with their dignity that all men, because they are persons are both impelled by their nature and bound by a moral obligation to seek the truth, especially religious truth.

"The disciple, ambassador, and follower of Christ consents to 'live in the truth,' that is, in the simplicity of a life in conformity with the Lord's example, abiding in his truth. This is what we are in a broad Spiritual sense Detraction and calumny destroy the reputation and honor of one's neighbor. Honor is the social witness given to human dignity, and everyone enjoys a natural right to the honor of his name and reputation and to

respect. Thus, detraction and calumny offend against the virtues of justice and charity. Truth must prevail in all circumstances:

What does God require of us in the Eighth Commandment?

We should defend our neighbor that is we should speak up for and protect our neighbor from false accusations. Christ's disciple "put on the new man, is being born again (the new birth) created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. "By putting away falsehood," They are to "put all malice and all guile and insincerity and envy and all slander." False witness and perjury; when it is made publicly, a statement contrary to the truth takes on a particular gravity. In court it becomes false witness. When it is under oath, it is perjury. To avoid rash judgment, every one should be careful to interpret insofar as possible his neighbor's thoughts, words, and deeds in a favorable way. And if the latter understand it badly, let the former correct him with love. If that does not suffice, let the Christian try all suitable ways to bring the other to a correct

interpretation so that he may be saved.(Why all these? Because God does not want any one to be lost)

LIVING IN THE TRUTH (1)

The Old Testament attests that God is the source of all truth, His Words is truth. His Law is truth. His “faithfulness endures to all generations.” In Jesus Christ, the whole of God’s truth has been made manifest. “Full of grace and truth,” he came as the “light of the world” he is the Truth. Man tends by nature toward the truth, He is obliged to honor and bear witness to it. They are also bound to adhere to the truth once they come to know it and direct their whole lives in accordance with the demands of truth.

“Men could not live with one another if there were not mutual confidence that they were being truthful to one another.” The disciple of Christ consents to “live in the truth,” that is, in the simplicity of a life in conformity with the Lord’s example, abiding in his truth.”

TO BEAR WITNESS TO THE TRUTH (2)

Before Pilate, Christ proclaims that he "has come into the world, to bear witness to the truth." The Christian is not to "be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord." In situations that require witness to the faith, the Christian must profess it without equivocation, after the example of St.

Paul before his judges. We must keep "a clear conscience toward God and toward men." The duty of Christians to take part in the life of the Church impels them to act as witnesses of the Gospel and of the obligations that flow from it. This witness is a transmission of the faith in words and deeds. Witness is an act of justice that establishes the truth or makes it known. All Christians by the example of their lives and the witness of their word, wherever they live, have an obligation to manifest the new man which they have put on in Baptism and to reveal the power of the Holy Spirit by whom they were strengthened at Confirmation.

OFFENSES AGAINST TRUTH (3)

Lying is the most direct offense against the truth. To lie is to speak or act against the truth in order to lead into error someone who has the right to know the truth. By injuring man's relation to truth and to his neighbor, a lie offends against the fundamental relation of man and of his word to the Lord. The gravity of a lie is measured against the nature of the truth it deforms, the circumstances, the intentions of the one who lies, and the harm suffered by its victims. If a lie in itself only constitutes a venial sin, it becomes mortal when it does grave injury to the virtues of justice and charity.

Respect for the truth (4)

Charity and respect for the truth should dictate the response to every request for information or communication. The good and safety of others, respect for privacy, and the common good are sufficient reasons for being silent about what ought not to be known or for making use of a discreet language. The duty to avoid scandal often commands strict discretion. No one is bound to reveal the truth to someone who does not have the right to know it. The information provided by the media is at the service of the common good. Society has a right to information based on truth, freedom, justice, and solidarity: (LYING IS NOT ACCEPTABLE AT ALL IF YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN THAN TRUTH MUST PREVAIL IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES).

Social Communication (5)

The means of social communication (especially the means media) can give rise to certain passivity among users, making them less than vigilant consumers of what is said or shown.

*As we have heard from the beginning of the sermon one word which is centered of the whole topic is **truth**. I am about to cite some of John chapters and verses that are in harmony with the **word truth**. Pilate said to Jesus, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this I was*

born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth.

Every one who is of the truth hears my voice.” Pilate dared said to Jesus

*“**what is truth?**” In John 8:37, 38.*

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” John 14:16. He,

who does what is true, comes to the light. John 3:21. And I will pray the

Father, and he will give you... the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot

receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; for he dwells with you,

and will be in you. JOHN 14:16, 17. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will

guide you into all the truth. In John 8:31, 32 Jesus said to the Jews who had

believed in him, “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and

you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” Amen.