

The 9th Commandment

“Do not give false testimony against your neighbor”, Ex 20.16, is the 9th Commandment on the Stone Tablets. Why is telling the truth so difficult and even sometimes impossible for humans? Why, in our current day, do we witness a preponderance of deceit and false statements, even from the top of national leadership on down? In 1 John 4.6, John explains there is a Spirit of truth and a spirit of falsehood in the world. The Spirit of truth is about light, transparency, honesty while the spirit of falsehood is about darkness, cover-up, and lying. They, the Spirit and spirits, are complete opposites and at polar positions. This rule of honesty to perpetuate truth was given to the nomadic tribe of Israel and like the other Decalogue rules, it is repeated throughout the New testament. Today, our government and judges have no problem including lying as an offense and punishable one at that. Just try filing a false tax return and see what the IRS can and will do, or give false testimony in a court of law. Telling the truth may be the one universal law for man that just about everyone agrees with.

Semper Fidelis or Semper Fi is the motto of the United States Marine Corps. This Latin phrase means “Always Faithful” or “Always Loyal”—other expressions for always truthful—and other expressions to never give false testimony. We recently honored the 70th anniversary of the Normandy Invasion. The response by the U.S. was to combat and defeat the enemy of falsehood and lying. A narcissist dictator was achieving control of all of Europe based on a lie—the superiority of one race and one society over the rest of the world. The power of Satan, the father of lies, John 8.42-47, had unleashed unprecedented fury through one man, a liar and a believer of lies, to eventually cause the deaths of about 80 million people, military and civilian, in WW II. All of America, with allies as well, entered into this war totally engaged as a whole in the Marine motto. Faith, loyalty, courage, honesty, and truth were the driving forces of the Spirit of truth which ultimately defeated the spirit of falsehood, greed, murder, theft, and covetousness and brought peace and order out of chaos and certain depravity. The spirit and power of the lie was defeated by the Spirit and power of truth. But what a cost it was; and what a sacrifice it was. The “Greatest Generation” measured up to what seemed to be an insurmountable task. Truth always wins and aren’t we glad our parents were on that side.

Over 2,000 years ago a trial was held for an innocent man. “The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree.” “Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony these men are bringing against you”, asked the high priest. Jesus remained silent and gave no answer—Mark 14.55-61. Satan unleashed all of his power through the lie to try and upend God’s plan of redemption and salvation. The spirit of falsehood struck hard against the Spirit of truth. In fact this spirit had been striking the heel of Jesus ever since the day of his birth. From Herod to Pilate, these men lied and believed the lie of the spirit. Three days and three nights came with the crucifixion and all was quiet until the morning of the third day. Faith, loyalty, courage, honesty, and truth prevailed! Jesus rose from the dead and sin and death were both defeated. Jesus has paid the price, no man can pay. John 14.6—Jesus is the way the truth and the life. John 16.13—When He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth. John 8.32—You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free. Eph 4.25--

Put off all falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor. Truth always wins---Even so, come Lord
Jesus---Semper Fi.

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