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Hurtful Lies Define Those Who Tell Them

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I think one of the reasons an adult gossips, or gives false evidence against another, is that she or he is modeling after a parent who spent a lot of time on the phone or with friends criticizing others. Too often we pass on our sins.



In this column we'll look at the ninth Commandment given to Moses on Mt. Sinai 3,500 years ago. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" (Exodus 20:16). A short way to say this is, "You shall not lie."

Webster's Dictionary defines a lie as: "To make a statement that one knows is false." "A false statement with the intention to deceive." The example given is, "lying his way into office."

Daniel Webster knew that in politics it is common practice to make numerous promises that one cannot keep. Yet we the public hang on to every word and sincerely hope that what we hear is "the truth."

When the media shares all the rumors about the candidates, it turns out to be one of the greatest "legitimate gossip sessions" imaginable. It's also great for ratings as the public is glued to the media hoping to learn something beneficial.

Some, of course, are listening for any gossip they can glean to use against the opposition.

History shows that George Washington, our first president, was reluctant to tell a lie.

Yet a hoax was begun about George – that he as a child cut down his father's cherry tree. Supposedly, he had to admit, "Yes, father I cut down the cherry tree."

So this false story has followed a great president's memory to the present. I know I've heard it in a joke form. It goes around just like many unfortunate hoax/lies on Internet.

A friend of mine was sued by her neighbor. She fought the false accusation for seven years in order to clear her name. What fortitude and faith she had! During what became the final court session the judge said to her, "You are a fine woman of integrity. This case is closed." In anger, the accusing neighbor pushed over the table where he and his lawyer were sitting.

It's great when truth wins.

Says Dr. Laura, "The Ninth Commandment specifically prohibits lying under oath in a court of law. We call it perjury when a person knowingly gives false testimony under oath ... More than one witness is required for convictions, especially of capital crimes" (Schlessinger, Laura. "The Ten Commandments." Harper Collins, 1998, p. 270).

"A single witness shall not stand up against any man for any iniquity or for error, regarding any sin that he may commit; according to two witnesses or to three

witnesses shall a matter be confirmed." (Deuteronomy 19:15).

How does God feel about lying, one may ask? Proverbs tells us. "There are six things the Lord hates ... a lying tongue ... " (6:16-17). "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord." (12:22).

Truth is a divine characteristic. Let us allow His divine life to shine through us to our world.

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Hebrew lesson: Let's learn the ninth Hebrew letter. "Tet" (English t) numerically is No. 9 in the *Alef-Bet*, and in ancient Hebrew means to "surround" or to "twist."

To draw this Hebrew letter, make a lower case u, several times larger than mine. Leave the left top side as it is – straight up, but make the right top beginning to twist like a snake around the letter's "shoulder."

This letter represents a person who through false speech is lying about a known or unknown "neighbor." He or she is therefore hob-knobbing with the Dark Lying Spirit – and is spiritually in a dangerous position.

Let this letter "tet" remind us of the danger of being a false witness.

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