

“Ninth Commandment—Part 1”

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website (churchofgodbigandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of July 26, 2025.

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BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I continued with our series. The topic is the Ten Commandments. The presentation was titled “Ninth Commandment—Part 1.”

Although I previously discussed the first two commandments in two presentations each and the next six commandments in one presentation each, I decided to actually spend five individual presentations on the Ninth Commandment.

Foundational scripture

■ Exodus 20:2—“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”

Then, the Lord proceeded to remind the children of Israel about the Ten Commandments.

Old Testament lesson = After God delivered them from Egypt, He reminded them of His expectations from them.

New Testament lesson = When God offers His bountiful grace to New Testament disciples, He still has expectations of them (Romans 6:1-2, Ephesians 2:8-10 and Titus 3:4-8).

Ninth Commandment

■ Exodus 20:16—“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

Two major concepts

Following are two verses in the book of Proverbs that mention two major concepts associated with the Ninth Commandment.

■ Proverbs 19:5—“A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who speaks lies will not escape.”

■ Proverbs 19:9—“A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who speaks lies shall perish.”

Many Bible students (as do I) view the Ninth Commandment as dealing with being a false witness in the legal system and with speaking lies in general.

Five presentations

Here is a list of the topics for the five presentations in this series.

1. False witness in a legal setting
2. Matthew 5:21-26 and Matthew 5:38-42
3. Examples of dealing with false witnesses
4. Speaking lies in general
5. The amazing story of Rahab

False witness in a legal setting

- Exodus 23:1—Don't help a criminal by giving false evidence.
- Exodus 23:2—Always tell the truth in court, even if everyone else is dishonest and stands in the way of justice.
- Exodus 23:3—Don't favor the poor just because they are poor.
- Proverbs 19:28—A lying witness makes fun of the court system.
- Proverbs 24:28—Don't accuse anyone who isn't guilty.
- Proverbs 25:18—A person who bears false witness against his neighbor is like attacking them with a club, a sword and a sharp arrow.
- Zechariah 8:17—Do not love a false oath.

Deuteronomy 19:15

I view Deuteronomy 19:15-21 as the core of the Wednesday-night presentation and of this article. Let's start with verse 15.

- Deuteronomy 19:15—One witness shall not rise against a person concerning any iniquity or sin that he commits—but by the mouth of two or three witnesses shall the matter be established.

Before we continue on with the rest of Deuteronomy 19, let's take time to see the other scriptures in the Bible about the concept of two or three witnesses.

Mouths of two or three witnesses

- Numbers 35:30—One witness is not sufficient testimony against a person facing the death penalty.
- Deuteronomy 17:6—Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death by the testimony of two or three witnesses—not by only one witness.
- Matthew 18:16—When the Son of God discussed dealing with conflicts among people, He referred to Deuteronomy 19:15.

- John 8:17—The Son of God said: “It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true.”
- 2 Corinthians 13:1—The apostle Paul quoted Deuteronomy 19:15.
- 1 Timothy 5:19—When the apostle Paul discussed dealing with accusations against a leader among a congregation (the same principle that applies to everyone), he referred to the concept of Deuteronomy 19:15.
- Hebrews 10:28—“Anyone who has rejected Moses’ law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.”

Back to Deuteronomy 19

Let’s return to Deuteronomy 19.

- Deuteronomy 19:16-17—If a false witness rises against any person to testify against him of wrongdoing, then both people in the controversy shall stand before the Lord—before the priests and the judges who serve in those days.

Imagine how much better the world would be if people prioritized the concepts of Deuteronomy 19:18-19.

- Deuteronomy 19:18-19—And the judges shall make careful inquiry. And if the witness is a false witness (testifying falsely against a person), 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.”

Wow! Brilliant!

- Deuteronomy 19:20—Such an approach would stop a lot of evil.
- Deuteronomy 19:21—“Your eye shall not pity: life shall be for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.”

But wait a minute

What did the Son of God say?

- Matthew 5:38—The Son of God said: “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I tell you . . .”

Now would be a good time for you to study Matthew 5:21-26 and Matthew 5:38-42. We will look at those passages next Wednesday night, and I will write about them next weekend.