

“Ninth Commandment—Part 2”

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 Aug. 2, 2025.

By Dave Havir

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 2.”

I decided to 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 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 5:38-42
3. Examples of dealing with false witnesses
4. Speaking lies in general
5. The amazing story of Rahab

Quick reminder

Before we launch into a discussion about Matthew 5:38-42, let's take a quick look back at the conclusion of last week's presentation and at last week's article.

■ 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."

Many Bible students are aware that the Son of God gave a warning about the idea of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" in Matthew 5:38-39.

■ Matthew 5:38-39—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 . . ."

What did the Son of God say?

■ Matthew 5:39-42—"But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you and, from him who wants to borrow from you, do not turn away."

Important question

With Deuteronomy 19:21 and Matthew 5:38-42 in mind, which of the following should be your approach?

- Eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth?
- Turn the other cheek?
- recommend that you consider Ecclesiastes 3:1-8.

Mixture of authorities

As you consider how to behave and how to talk around authorities in this world, I would like to express three opinions.

■ First—For most of our lives, the citizens of the United States (which is a constitutional republic) have had to be more mindful about dealing with the civil authorities than dealing with the religious authorities.

■ Second—Citizens in many nations around the world are already dealing with civil authorities and religious authorities.

■ Third—When the prophecy of Revelation 13 is occurring, the world will deal with civil authorities and religious authorities.

Examples of the Son of God

■ Matthew 5:25-26—The Son of God said —“Agree with your adversary quickly (while you are on the way with him), lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there until you have paid the last penny.”

Notice the following scriptures mentioning both the religious authorities and the civil authorities.

■ Matthew 10:16—Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

■ Matthew 10:17—“Beware of men, for they will deliver you up to [religious] councils and scourge you in their synagogues.”

■ Matthew 10:18—“You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake.”

Different descriptions in Gospels

Let's notice how the four Gospel writers described a historical event.

■ Matthew 26:52-56—The Son of God said to Peter: “Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than 12 legions of angels? How then could the Scripture be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?”

■ Mark 14:47—Mark wrote: “And one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.”

■ Luke 22:49-50—Luke wrote: “When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him: ‘Lord, shall we strike with the sword?’ And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear.”

■ John 18:11—The Son of God said to Peter: “Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?”

■ John 18:36—The Son of God said to Pilate: “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews. But now My kingdom is not from here.”

Stephen to religious authorities

■ Acts 6:12—The elders and scribes seized Stephen and brought him before the council.

■ Acts 7:1—Stephen was giving the history lesson to the high priest.

■ Acts 7:51-60—Stephen talked strongly to the religious authorities.

National rights before civil authorities

Notice two examples where the apostle Paul asserted his national rights before the civil authorities.

- Acts 16:37-39—As a Roman citizen, Paul objected to the magistrates punishing him publicly and wanting to release him in secret.
- Acts 22:25-29—Paul asked a centurion: “Is it lawful for you to scourge an innocent Roman citizen?” The centurion warned the commander.

Getting mouthy with a religious authority

- Acts 23:2—The high priest commanded people to hit Paul on the mouth.
- Acts 23:3—Paul responded: “God will strike you, you white-washed wall! For you sit to judge me according to the law, and do you command me to be struck contrary to the law?”
- Acts 23:4—Those who stood by asked: “Do you revile God’s high priest?”
- Acts 23:5—Paul acknowledged (by quoting scripture) that he should not have spoken against the high priest—but he did not apologize for speaking strongly.

When you have more time

- Read Romans 13:1-5
- Read 1 Corinthians 6:1-8