Sunday Dec. 24 Petaluma Valley BC Dr. Durst

C9 True Words: Joy to our Neighbors

Deut. 5:20; Lev. 19:18; Pro. 10:18; Matt. 12:28-31 Titus 3:1-2

Command 9: “Do not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

Words matter. Words count. Words work. We are responsible for our words and works. Mr. Rogers question, “Won’t you be my neighbor?” was an instructive invitation to practice the second greatest commandment, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Mt. 12:30-31 Note the last words in C9: “your neighbor.”

Three ways to be a false witness:

1. The false witnesses know that what they’re saying is not accurate or is only part of the truth.
2. False witnesses can inadvertently share information they suppose is true but have never verified by checking with the neighbor. Matthew 18:15
3. A witness is also false when that person knows a redeeming truth but remains silent.

Contrary to the 9th Commandment:

 “[Gossip] is a highly evolved social skill essential for interpersonal relationships, rather than a flaw of character.”

Adam Davis in [Evolutionary Psychological Science](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs40806-017-0121-9)

The 9th Command is also embedded in the Lev. 19 Holiness Code: v. 15-18 No trash talk!

**Apologetic question:** How can we take the Bible seriously when it appears make injunctions against cross breeding cattle and crops, trimming sideburns and getting tattooed **as seriously as** not defrauding neighbors or sex trafficking your daughter? **Answer:** Look to Jesus and examine the context carefully. Every word proves true, but the letter of the law kills. The spirit gives life. Give heavier weight to the weightier issues. Mt. 23:23

Is Scripture to be trusted? Absolutely, if you trust Jesus!

The Rotarian *Four Way Test* of ethical business practice: 1. *Is it the truth? 2. Is it fair to all concerned? 3. Will it build goodwill and better friendships? 4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?*

Defaming my neighbor brings no fame to God. When I defame my neighbor, I shame God’s name. When I protect my neighbor’s reputation, especially when he or she is not there, I bring credibility to the name of God.

Next week: Sunday Dec. 31

C10 Coveting or Community, Jealousy or Jesus

Deut. 5:21, Proverbs 4:23, Matt. 6:34