

## 10 Keys To Successful Living 9 – Speak The Truth Ex 20.16

This commandment is about our speech. What do we say? Why do we say it? How do we say it?

### What do we say?

We tell stories all the time. Some are true, some not. The essence of a lie is the intent to deceive.

### Why do we say it?

But this command isn't just about telling the truth in some kind of abstract way, as if our speech exists in a vacuum. It's also about not harming other people.

Lying destroys relationships by destroying the trust that they need to survive.

We don't always have to tell all the truth that we know.

People love to confuse honesty with rudeness. "Honesty means that everything you say must be true, not that everything that is true must be said."

### How do we say it?

In John 1.14 Jesus is described this way, *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

If we are going to be true to God's character we need to be both; committed to speaking the truth, and committed to doing it in a way that causes no more pain than is absolutely necessary.

### It's not always easy to say the true thing

Three questions that can help:

"Is what I'm saying true?"

"Is it my intent to do this person harm?"

"How can I say it in a way that does least injury to this person?"

The command says, "*You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.*" The intent is to safeguard people from malicious accusations, to safeguard their reputation.

Most of the time that means telling the truth.

Sometimes not giving false testimony means not saying anything at all.

Very rarely, usually when it involves someone else's life, it may be permissible to lie.

By God's grace, let us be people of truth.