

Exodus 20:16

## Using Ours Mouths the Way that We Were Created and Redeemed to Use Them

Friday, July 1, 2022 ◻ Read Exodus 20:16

*Questions from the Scripture text: What must you not bear? Against whom?*

**What does God expect out of how we use our mouths?** Exodus 20:16 looks forward to the evening sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In this verse of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that the God Who designed us to be speaking creatures requires that we use that speech for the good of our neighbor.

In the eighth commandment, we were reminded that God is the good Giver of possessions, and that we should therefore respect the property of our neighbor and desire to be an agent of God's good to him. Now in the ninth commandment, the Spirit extends that especially to one of our neighbors greatest possessions: his name.

Prov 22:1 says that a good name is better than great riches. There are many heart-reasons why a sinner might risk others' names by speaking that which is false.

We must guard against the enmity or envy that would desire to take this good name away from our neighbor. And we must guard against the pride that seeks to advance our own name by some twisting or embellishing of what we say. And we must guard against the ambition of trying to get something by saying what we think the listener wants to hear. And we must guard against the unbelief that thinks that God needs us to lie in order to protect from evil or promote the good.

As our larger catechism says, the ninth commandment requires "from the heart, sincerely, freely, clearly, and fully, speaking the truth, and only the truth, in matters of judgment and justice, and in all other things whatsoever."

God cannot lie (Titus 1:2), and Satan is the father of it (Jn 8:44). We were created to image God, especially in part by speaking. Our mouths exist, first and foremost to praise Him (cf. James 3:9a). But our mouths therefore exist also to bless men who have been made in the likeness of God (cf. James 3:9b). Our words, therefore, are greatly important. Whether to our neighbor's face or behind his back, we must seek to do him good with our words. There is enough that could be said here that it would fill many of these little devotionals, but it might serve us well just to consider these two paragraphs from our larger catechism:

*The duties required in the ninth commandment are, the preserving and promoting of truth between man and man, and the good name of our neighbor, as well as our own; appearing and standing for the truth; and from the heart, sincerely, freely, clearly, and fully, speaking the truth, and only the truth, in matters of judgment and justice, and in all other things whatsoever; a charitable esteem of our neighbors; loving, desiring, and rejoicing in their good name; sorrowing for and covering of their infirmities; freely acknowledging of their gifts and graces, defending their innocency; a ready receiving of a good report, and unwillingness to admit of an evil report, concerning them; discouraging talebearers, flatterers, and slanderers; love and care of our own good name, and defending it when need requireth; keeping of lawful promises; studying and practicing of whatsoever things are true, honest, lovely, and of good report.*

*The sins forbidden in the ninth commandment are, all prejudicing the truth, and the good name of our neighbors, as well as our own, especially in public judicature; giving false evidence, suborning false witnesses, wittingly appearing and pleading for an evil cause, outfacing and overbearing the truth; passing unjust sentence, calling evil good, and good evil; rewarding the wicked according to the work of the righteous, and the righteous according to the work of the wicked; forgery, concealing the truth, undue silence in a just cause, and holding our peace when iniquity calleth for either a reproof from ourselves, or complaint to others; speaking the truth unseasonably, or maliciously to a wrong end, or perverting it to a wrong meaning, or in doubtful or equivocal expressions, to the prejudice of the truth or justice; speaking untruth, lying, slandering, backbiting, detracting, talebearing, whispering, scoffing, reviling, rash, harsh, and partial censuring; misconstruing intentions, words, and actions; flattering, vainglorious boasting, thinking or speaking too highly or too meanly of ourselves or others; denying the gifts and graces of God; aggravating smaller faults; hiding, excusing, or extenuating of sins, when called to a free confession; unnecessary discovering of infirmities; raising false rumors, receiving and countenancing evil reports, and stopping our ears against just defense; evil suspicion; envying or grieving at the deserved credit of any; endeavoring or desiring to impair it, rejoicing in their disgrace and infamy; scornful contempt, fond admiration; breach of lawful promises; neglecting such things as are of good report, and practicing, or not avoiding ourselves, or not hindering what we can in others, such things as procure an ill name.*

Here is one of the great places that Christ's grace in the believer is seen: in the sanctifying of his speech.

In what situations are you most tempted to speak a falsehood or bend or exaggerate the truth? How does this relate to the purposes for which God has enabled you to speak?

*Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for creating us with the ability to honor You with our speech and also bless our neighbor with our speech. Forgive us for turning our mouths into instruments of self-service, and give us grace from Christ to use our mouths in a godly manner, for we ask it in His Name, AMEN!*

Suggested songs: ARP15 "Within Your Tent, Who Will Abide" or TPH174 "The Ten Commandments"

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Exodus chapter 20 verse 16. These are God's words. You shall not bear false, witness against your neighbor.

Since the reading of God's inspired and inherent word.

This is the ninth commandment, you shall not bear false. Witness against your neighbor and the eighth commitment we had last week. You shall not steal. And we were reminded that God is the one who has given us our possessions. And given our neighbor, his possessions and that we are to respect that which belongs to our neighbor.

Well, there is something that belongs to our neighbor that is better than riches. And that is his good name. Proverbs 22. Verse 1 says that a good name is better than great riches and so you're not really keeping the eighth commandment, if you spare onto your neighbor, or respect for your neighbor, all of his other property, but are uncaring with his name, or even treat her name as something that can be knocked down a little.

When it serves your purposes. And so there's a natural flow from you shall not steal to shall not bear false. Witness against your neighbor because we should from the heart. Sincerely freely. Clearly and fully Speak the truth, and only the truth and matters of judgment and justice. And in all other things, whatsoever.

So, we are not to exaggerate or manipulate how something sounds in order to advance ourselves or hold back or push down upon others. This comes from the very purpose for which our mouths are made. We know that we are made in God's image and we know that we are made to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.

Well, one of the great parts of being made in God's image is to be a speaking people that we can communicate with one another that we can use words to convey ideas. This is this makes us very different than the beast. Beasts can imply certain desires or warnings by sounds that they make.

But they do not form ideas are not aware of their thoughts and evaluative of their thoughts. And then communicative to get you to be evaluative of their thoughts as well, and so forth. It's because one of the ways in which we're made in the image of God is but being rational and therefore rationally communicating a creatures, God the Son Himself is called the Word and John chapter 1 and the beginning of the word was with God and the beginning was the word and the Word was with God.

And the Word was God. And so there's something very special about our being speaking creatures and taking our being made in God's image with our being made for the purpose of glorifying and enjoying God, we start to understand what is the great purpose of our being is speaking creature.

And that is not so much to express to one another or about one another. But to express ourselves unto God and to express about God, This is why in James chapter 3 when he's dealing with the idea of cursing men, which of course is a violation of this commandment, that's the worst kind of not caring for your neighbors.

Name is to curse them when he's dealing with the idea of cursing men. He talks about how mistreating one another or mishandling one another's names with our mouths. Mistreating one another with our mouths or Miss Handling, one another's names with our mouths goes directly against the great purpose for which our mouth was created.

So he says no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil full of deadly poison with it. We bless our God and Father. And so he refers to our relationship to God, with respect to our creation and to our redemption. It says, God created us for himself for his glory.

In order to praise him and God, redeemed us joined us to Christ through faith in indwelt us by His Holy Spirit, to His, a Spirit of sonship unto us adopted us in Christ. So that the indwelling Spirit teaches us to call God Father God has redeemed us in order that we might praise him.

And so he says with it, we bless our God and Father so that one phrase he says we are created and redeemed for the blessing of God's name for the praising of God. Now we said we have this purpose of the creation of the mouth and the redemptive redemption of the mouth and view.

So with it, we bless our God and Father and with it we curse men who have been made in the similitude of God, so it pulls in that idea of the image of God And he says, out of the same mouth proceeded, blessing and cursing, my brethren. These things ought not to be.

So In other words you can ought to claim to be keeping the first great commandment with your mouth to love the Lord, your God with all your heart soul, mind, strength, and mouth. That's part of who you are, if you're not keeping the second, great commandment with your mouth.

Love anchor neighbor as yourself. He says, a neighbor cursing. Mouth is not truly genuinely rightly sincerely. But God blessing mouth. It is against the purpose. And so one of the great ways that we break this commandment then is not only by gossiping about one another talent. Speaking about one another partial truths, or truths that we don't have a right to convey about them.

Private truths or disproportionate truths. So, we have no right to gossip about one another. We certainly don't have a right to slander one. Another speaking untruths about one another, So it privates gossip and slander and of course, cursing to the face, which is, especially in view and James chapter 3, but also any form of of speaking untruth whatsoever.

Why? Because at the heart of this commandment is imaging. God in the use of our mouths. Titus. One two says God cannot lie. Lying is opposite. God's character. God can kill indeed, he must and does kill his enemies. But God cannot lie. So where does line come from? Well, John 8:44 tells us Satan is the Father of lying and so if right at the heart of the eighth commandment is being made in the image of God using our mouths as those who are in his image.

Similarly, to when we were thinking, sorry, ninth commandment that is commitment. Similarly, to when we were thinking in the eighth, commandment about how when we are a blessing to our brother through generosity, we image God in being an instrument through, which he gives good to him. And so we have not only the opportunity to image God, but to participate in his good to our brother.

By speaking the truth to him, this is one of the reasons for Jesus building into his church, such a strong structure for theological instruction and Ephesians chapter 4 apostles. Prophets evangelist, Pastor teachers to to instruct us to keep us from being blown about and tossed by every wind or wave of doctrine.

So that we may do what speak the truth in love to make sure we get out theology. Right. So,

So we image God and speaking the truth, and we must not then act as children of Satan of whom. John 8 says he is the father of lying Now there's a lot more that I wanted to say when I put together the devotional and the bulletin or the booklet, and there's a lot more that I want to tell you now, but we would be here for hours.

I will read you the larger. Catechism question, The larger catechism answers on these two, the duties on this one commandment. What is, what are the duties required? And then what are the sense of it? The duties required in the ninth commandment are the preserving. And promoting of truth between man and man and the good name of our neighbor as well as our own appearing and standing for the truth.

And from the hearts sincerely freely clearly and fully speaking, the truth, and only the truth and matters of judgment and justice. And in all other things whatsoever, I should modify or help you understand the word fully there means full to the occasion full to that, which is required of you.

Sometimes someone will demand information that they don't have a right to. And if they have a right to zero truth then telling them zero is full right? Sometimes when you talk about a full quiver and Psalm 127 someone will say well how big is a full quiver? You say, well, as many has got a signs to you.

If God doesn't give someone children, you know, they may have in his providence. It turns out to be wise and feasible. Adopt. But zero is full for them two. Maybe pull four, maybe full Anyway. When you are recalled by a magistrate, just testify about a circumstance, you must give all of the truth.

That is related to that circumstance, if it's a proper call and a proper trial. Anyway, there's there's other information there But you still you don't give your whole life story and the whole life story of everyone else that was there in order to give the full quote, unquote truth.

Okay? So, So it's important. Jesus is asked things by people in which he gives them as much as they have a. Right to Sometimes that occurs by his answering with a question, He gives them zero Where were we? It also requires a charitable esteem of our neighbors loving desiring rejoicing in their good name sorrowing for and covering of their infirmities.

It's not running around running out and telling everything bad about them, freely acknowledging of their gifts and graces and defending their in its innocence. There's a wonderful thing. If we have a family climate and a congregational climate of defending one another's names and complementing, commending one another two others.

Already receiving of a good report and unwillingness to admit of an evil report concerning them here. Something negative about someone, you just let it blow away with the wind so that you use one another's. Commending of each other to build and esteem for each other. Discouraging tail. Bearers. Flatterers slanderers.

So you say, You know, if you're going to speak like that then one of us is going to need to leave because the Lord doesn't want me to listen to such things, love and care of our own good name, defending it. When need requireeth, although the Apostle Paul when he's defending his own good name.

He says I speak as a madman keeping of lawful promises studying and practicing of whatever things whatsoever. Things are true honest. Lovely. And have good report, The sins forbidden, and then 9th, commandment R, all prejudicing the truth, and the good name of our neighbors. Prejudicing means speaking in such a way as to get someone to come to a judgment before they hear the facts.

As well as our own especially in public tour. Judicator courtroom situations, giving false evidence. What's a boarding? False witnesses wittingly appearing or pleading for an evil cause outfacing and overparent. Overbearing the truth, speaking right things in a wrong way or at wrong times or out of wrong motives so that you actually harm the truth.

By being the Speaker of it. Passing unjust sentence calling evil good or good evil. Rewarding the wicked according to the work of the righteous or the righteous. According to the work of the wicked forgery concealing. The truth undue silence and adjust pause, should say that. Sometimes, you may tell a truth in which someone else's sin is what is concealing it from him, right?

So there are like Jihu says, I have a great sacrifice for bail, it's their wickedness, that loves Vail. That thinks that Jihu is going to participate with them when he's telling the truth. He's about to make bail have suffer the greatest. Sacrifice he ever has. So there are times when someone's own wickedness is really what's concealing, the truth from them even though you are speaking.

Plain true words. To them speaking. The truth unreasonably or maliciously to a wrong end, or perverting it to a wrong meaning or in doubtful or equivocal expressions. Like when Reformed evangelical celebrities, get on the talk shows and they speak in such a way so that the world will think that they agree with the world but then they can defend themselves later as to having been technically.

Theologically correct to the prejudice of the truth or justice speaking untruth lying, slandering backbiting detracting tail-bearing. Whispering scoffing. Not speaking in a low voice, but the whisperer is the one who does secretly what the slanderer does out loud. So he doesn't just speak ill about people in an open situation, but he pulls someone aside, and it often comes in the form of.

I'm concerned for sower. So, or let me share a prayer request. Or That's the kind of person that is covered by the word whisperer often. In the scripture, We had that word in those 23 sins. At the end of Romans 1 midweek, meeting week ago, scoffing reviling, rash speech, harsh partial censoring.

Misconstruing intentions words or actions flattering. Then glorious boasting. But another one, praise you. And not your own lips thinking or speaking. Too highly or too meanly of ourselves or others. There's this self-deprecation that people do to try to appear you humble because they want people to see how awesomely humble they are.

I should have put it in the first person that we do in order to appear humble because we want to be able to see how else of the how awesomely humble we are denying the gifts and graces of God. So, all of that lying preaching that says, that believers are not unbelievers are basically the same.

It's just one or forgiven now, God makes difference and he makes an increasing difference. And believers over time. Aggravating smaller faults making a huge deal out of a small thing hiding excusing or extenuating of sins. When called to a free confession, right? So, you've been caught in the sin and you're supposed to confess it, but you try to confess it in such a way that makes it a small and understandable as possible.

Unnecessary discovering of infirmities, raising false rumors, receiving or countenancing evil reports. Stopping our ears against a just defense Evil suspicions. You

don't have to entrust yourself to others necessarily but it is wrong to constantly be worrying about what someone else might be saying. Or thinking that pulls you into that web of interacting and manipulation of one another's, names, or thoughts.

And it's awfully liberating not to be continually worrying. What other people might say envying or grieving at the discredit of any sorry that didn't make sense, I should read it correctly envying or grieving at the deserved credit of any watch out.

You know what? I'll come by. Just realized there's a paragraph. I put into the written booklet that I didn't cover that. We should cover scornful contempt or fond admiration. Overly fond, admiration. In other words, fawning over someone breach of a lawful promise neglecting such things, as are of good report.

Practicing, or not avoiding ourselves or not hindering what we can in others. Such things as procure and ill name. And then the thing that I wanted to cover as a few things to guard against so that you may keep this commandment well guard against enmity or envy the root of the mouth sin of speaking in a way that brings others down or harms.

Others is a heart that desires to be brought above them or to bring them down. So guard against enmity or envy in your heart, that will desire to take a good way name away from your neighbor guard against pride that seeks to advance your own name. If we don't guard against the pride, then we'll find ourselves embellishing things and twisting things to try and get others to see us as highly as we see ourselves.

So guard against enmity at guard against envy guard against pride guard against ambition, trying to get something by saying what we think the listener wants to hear. So there's this plotting and planning and scheming that we can be doing in our hearts whether we do it to prospectively before a conversation, kind of going over and perfecting how we want to get some, how we want to get them to think or get them to act and then you can do it retrospectively as well.

When you do conversation review in your head, be careful about the way you think about speech. And don't become a manipulative schemer about how you talk. And of course, we must ultimately guard against unbelief trust and God, who gave Christ for you to make sure everything happens as exactly as he wants with you.

This is sort of the same idea as in the proverbs or it says don't take the highest seat at the feast. Take the lowest seat so that if the master of the Feast comes and he doesn't see you as high as high as he wanted you. He'll lead you to the chair rather than you be humiliated.

When he brings someone that he wanted to be in in that seat and he says, you go down to the end of the table. This guy belongs here. The God who gave Christ for us is going to make sure that everything goes according to the perfect worthiness of Jesus in our behalf.

And so the great thing to be exercised for good use of our mouth is faith. So that trusting in the Lord to seek our interests for us We are free first and foremost to seek his interests. The praise and Thanksgiving of his name, the proclamation of the gospel so that others will see who Christ is and what he has done for sinners and then secondly, to seek the interests of our brothers in that proclamation of the Gospel and the speaking of that, which is edifying and blessing unto them.

And this of course, is the great reason why there's no such thing as a righteous lie. Because the idea of the righteous lie stands upon the foundation, that in order for God, to make this work out correctly. I must become a child of the devil and do what God cannot do in order to help him out.

In this situation, that is the height of wickedness and unbelief. And so it's not a small theological question operate out of faith and how you use your mouths. My dear children, trust the Lord first and foremost and then freed by the fact that he will perfect everything. Concerning your outcomes do.

Good. With your mouth. Bless God. First and foremost, blessed men. Secondly, let's pray. Lord, thank you for the way that moving straight through your word gives us opportunities to sit down. Not only for a family time and talk, but in the context of worship to be instructed by you our heavenly Father, through the servants whom you have given us to speak the word to us.

In this case, a husband and a father with his family. So we bless your name. We thank you for this portion of the truth of your word. We ask you to fit it into the rest of our thoughts about creation and redemption what you have made us for what you have redeemed us for how we, thank you, O God, that the great thing for which you have made us and redeemed us is to enjoy you to worship.

You to bless your name and be blessed in the knowledge and admiration and praise of you. And so having formed our mouths and given us the faculty, the faculty of speech. In order to do this We pray that you would help us to use our mouths at all other times in ways that are consistent with this chief and highest end help us O.

Lord for this is the sin that if a man be perfect in every other way and this life, he still would not have tamed the tongue. And so we are needy bless us Help us by your spirit to apply Christ to us who spoke. Well, always and will forever.

So we ask it even in Christ's name. Amen.