

Exodus 20:16 -- "You shall not testify falsely (a witness of deception) against your neighbor"

(a) What is forbidden in the Commandment?

- [1] Lying about our neighbor or about ourselves to our neighbor
- [2] Doing anything to harm the good name or reputation of our neighbor
- [3] Concealing the truth or keeping silence when justice requires that we speak out
- [4] Perverting the truth to a wrong end, so as to harm our neighbor
- [5] Slandering, tale-bearing, gossiping about our neighbor
- [6] Making false judgments about our neighbor
- [7] Flattering or unnecessarily demeaning our neighbor
- [8] Suspecting our neighbor of evil upon imagined or insufficient grounds

(b) What is positively implied in the Commandment?

- [1] Telling the truth about our neighbor, or about ourselves to our neighbor
- [2] Doing everything to preserve the good name and reputation of our neighbor
- [3] Speaking the truth and only the truth in matters of justice and judgment
- [4] Maintaining a charitable estimate of our neighbor's words and actions
- [5] Discouraging slanderers, tale-bearers, and gossipers about our neighbor
- [6] Maintaining a readiness to receive a good report, and an unwillingness to receive an evil report concerning our neighbor

(NOTE: Strictly speaking, in order to be a lie a statement must possess four characteristics:

- (a) It must be contrary to fact
- (b) It must be intentionally contrary to fact
- (c) It must be seriously intended, not a joke
- (d) It must be made in the presence of one to whom one is obligated to tell the truth

(10) The Tenth Commandment

Exodus 20:17 -- "You shall not desire the house of your neighbor; you shall not desire the wife of your neighbor or his servant or his