

Exodus 20:16

1/15/23

“You Shall Not Bear False Witness Against Your Neighbor”:

*Pronoun Hospitality & the Future of the Great Commission
Sermon Notes*

➤ **Our mission to be and make disciples of Jesus grinds to a screeching halt when we are willing to bear false witness**

**3 coordinates for navigating the high seas of pronoun hospitality in the midst of the transgender revolution...*

1. Tell the truth (Exodus 20:16; 23:2; Eph. 4:25; Rev. 21:8, 22:15)
2. Lead with love (Ephesians 4:15; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; 16:14)
3. Walk in wisdom (Colossians 4:5-6; Pr. 26:4-5; James 1:5; 3:17)

Next Sunday: “Life After the Death of Roe”:

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday 2023

Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of January 15th-21st

Getting Started

1. Do you have any personal relationships with individuals who publicly identify as transgender¹? If so, please share a bit with the group about your experience.

Digging Deeper

2. The Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law published a study in June of 2022² revealing that 1.6 million people in the United States identify as transgender. Furthermore, nearly 1 in 5 of these individuals are between the ages of 13 and 17. Moreover, that percentage of teenagers who identify as transgender has doubled from the Williams Institute's previous estimate. What do we learn from these data points? Why is this an important reality for us to come to grips with as a church?

Open Your Bible to Exodus 20:16...

3. While the immediate context for the 9th commandment is the prohibition of bearing false witness in a Jewish court of law, the application of this commandment is far-reaching. Any form of falsehood would fall under the purview of this command, including: lying, exaggerating, telling half-truths, flattery, misleading, misinforming, distorting the

¹ A person who identifies as transgender is someone whose personal sense of gender identity or gender expression differs from their biological sex.

² <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/trans-adults-united-states/>. Accessed 1/12/23 @ 9:30pm.

truth, equivocating on the truth, little white lies, and so on. Have you ever broken this commandment? (*hint: you might as well say yes, because if you say no...you've just broken it*). When was the last time you remember doing so? What were the circumstances? Have you since confessed it and asked for the Lord's forgiveness (or for the forgiveness of those involved)? If not, do you plan to do so?

4. *That* we are tempted to break this commandment is obvious. The reasons *why* we are tempted to break it are sometimes a little less so. How many different reasons can you name that have a tendency to set the table for lying? Jesus proclaims that “the truth will set you free” (John 8:32)? Why is it that we have such trouble believing that?
5. If a person in your web of relationships who is clearly a biological male requests to be known by a traditionally feminine name, would you honor that request? What if this same person requests to be known by female pronouns (she / her / hers)? Would you honor that request? Why or why not? What is the difference between the first request and the second one? More importantly, what biblical principles (chapter and verse, please) are governing your answers?
6. Ephesians 4:15 calls us to “speak...the truth in love”. 1 Corinthians 16:14 says: “Let all that you do be done in love”. Using 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 as your guideline, what aspects of love in particular are mission-critical for us as we seek to engage in God-honoring ways with those around us who identify as transgender? Why is it not enough to simply speak the truth? What's love got to do with it?

7. Colossians 4:5-6 and Proverbs 26:4-5 remind us that truth and love aren't the only considerations when we ponder our response to the transgender revolution. Wisdom is just as crucial. Why is this so? What does wisdom bring to the table in this discussion that truth and love alone don't provide? James 1:5 urges us to pray for such wisdom from God. What promise do we have from the Lord in that same verse? At the same time, what's our responsibility as we ask him for wisdom (according to James 1:6-8)? According to James 3:17, what does "the wisdom from above" look like?

8. This week's sermon made the claim that in a very real sense, the future of the Great Commission (see Matthew 28:18-20) is on the line when it comes to the matter of 'pronoun hospitality'. What's the connection? Do you believe that our mission grinds to a screeching halt when we are willing to bear false witness? If so, are you willing to tell the truth even in the (ostensibly) mundane matter of preferred pronouns? Furthermore, what specific aspects of love and wisdom (by God's grace) do you need to ratchet up in your life so that you will be prepared for the next time you have an opportunity to respond to this increasingly important issue in our culture?