

**XXXV. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS**  
**LESSON THIRTY-FIVE**  
**... ABOUT DISCERNING GOOD AND EVIL**

**INTRODUCTION**

We learn from Hebrews 5:12-14 that one of the proofs of being skilled in the Word is the ability to discern both good and evil. To discern good and evil is to understand that good, all that is really good comes only from God; and that evil comes from the devil; and that we who are children of God through the new birth in Jesus Christ are to hate evil and to cleave to that which is good. Amen?

In this lesson, we would see what is good and what is evil according to the Eighth Commandment, in order that, we might accordingly, order the course of our lives.

**THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT**

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." Exodus 20:16.

**... DISCERNING GOOD**

According to the Eight Commandment, what GOOD (godly behavior) are we to discern?

James 4:11

Ephesians 4:25

Proverbs 31:8,9

Ecclesiastes 5:4

Zechariah 8:17

I Peter 4:8

1 Corinthians 13:7

Bible example: Jonathan spoke well of David. 1 Samuel 19:4. - The people of Capernaum spoke well of the centurion. Luke 7:4,5.

**Conclusions:** We would discern from the Eighth Commandment that it is GOOD to:

1. Defend our neighbor; that is, to take his part and shield him against false accusations;
2. Speak well of our neighbor; that is, to praise his good qualities and deeds so far as it can be done in keeping with the truth;
3. Put the best construction on everything; that is, to cover up his faults and explain in his favor whatever can be so explained.

**... DISCERNING EVIL**

**According to the Eighth Commandment what EVIL (ungodly behavior) are we to discern?**

**Zechariah 8:17**

**Matthew 9:4**

**Exodus 23:**

**Proverbs 12:22**

**Proverbs 19:5**

**Ephesians 4:25**

**Proverbs 29:5**

**Psalms 5:6,9**

**Matthew 23:14**

**Acts 5:2,3**

**Ecclesiastes 5:4**

**Proverbs 20:19**

**James 4:11**

**Psalms 50:19-22**

**Bible examples: False witnesses arose against Jesus. Matthew 26:59-61. False witnesses arose against Naboth. 1 Kings 21:13. - Abraham and Sarai lied to the Pharaoh, and again the same lie was told to Abimelech. Genesis 12:11-20. - Isaac lied about Rebekah to Abimelech. Genesis 26:7. - Rebekah and Jacob deceive Isaac. Genesis 27:18. - Gehazi lied about Elisha and then lied to him. 2 Kings 5:22,25. - Deog betrayed Ahimelech. 1 Samuel 22:6-19. - Judas betrayed Jesus. Matthew 26:14-16. - Judah did not keep his word to Tamar. Genesis 38:11,26. The chief butler failed to keep his Word to Joseph. Genesis 41:9.**

**Conclusions: We would discern from the Eighth Commandment that it is EVIL is to:**

- 1. Make any untrue statement against our fellow man in a court of law, or for that matter, under any circumstance, or for any reason;**
- 2. Belie our fellow man; that is, to lie about him or to him, or withhold from him the truth in order to harm him;**
- 3. Betray our fellow man; that is, to reveal his secrets;**

4. Slander or defame our fellow man; that is, to speak evil of him and thus injure or destroy his good name;
5. Have evil thoughts against our fellow man to plot against him;
6. Not to keep a promise;
7. Neglect to protect or defend the good name of our fellow man.

#### **QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION**

Honesty is not only the "best policy," it is also God's will. Honesty characterizes the Christian's dealing with his fellow men. Understanding this, what about "social" lies?

#### **RESPONSE TO THE TRUTH**

This commandment means, that we should fear and love God that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, slander, nor defame our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything.

Is this reflected in your life? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No If not, why not?