

Back to the Basics: Luther's Large Catechism – The Eighth Commandment

The Ten Commandments Preach Repentance

The Ten Commandments show us our sin and how much we need a Savior.

- C** You shall have no other gods.
- You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.
- Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
- Honor your father and your mother.
- You shall not murder.
- You shall not commit adultery.
- You shall not steal.
- You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
- You shall not covet your neighbor's house.
- You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.



Prayer: These are the holy Ten Commands
 God gave to us by Moses' hands
 When high on Sinai's mount he stood,
 Receiving them for our good.
 Have mercy, Lord! Amen.

These Are the Holy Ten Commands (LSB 581, stanza 1)

The Six Chief Parts:

1.	2.	3.
4.	5.	6.

The Eighth Commandment



Luther's Explanation from the Small Catechism:
You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
(God protects His gift of reputation.)

<i>We should fear and love God</i>	First Commandment Foundation
<i>so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation</i>	Negative command
<i>but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.</i>	Positive command

Second Table of the Law: Love for the neighbor
 Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:36-40
 Bearing false witness against Susanna (*Susanna 34-41)

The Eighth Commandment: *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*

1. How does a person’s reputation affect his standing in society? [255-256]

2. How does this commandment first apply to the realm of the courtroom? [255-259]

3. How are faithful pastors and other teachers of the Church victims of sin against this commandment? [262]

4. What is the human inclination when it comes to talking about others? [264]

5. What is the difference between public, open sins and private ones? [265-273]

6. Under what circumstances are we allowed to speak out, reject, and rebuke someone? [274-275]

7. What is the best way to proceed when confronting a brother or sister in Christ with a sin? [276-283]

8. What is the distinction between secret sins and public sins? How does this commandment apply in the case of public sin and error? [284]

9. Why, when heresy (false doctrine) is taught, must it be publicly censured?

10. What are the implications of this commandment for our everyday conversations?

Closing Prayer

“Bear no false witness nor defame Your neighbor nor destroy his name, But view him in the kindest way; Speak truth in all that you say.” Have mercy, Lord! Amen. These Are the Holy Ten Commands (LSB 581, stanza 9)

The Eighth Commandment and Vocation

From the Table of Duties, which teach of our calling, or vocation:

- **To Everyone** – Romans 13:9; 1 Timothy 2:1
“Love your neighbor as yourself” is the summary of the entire Second Table of the Law. This means that love for the neighbor is always seeking to preserve, protect, and support our neighbor’s reputation. Every positive description of the Law’s demands in the Catechism’s explanations is a description of this selfless and undeserved love for the neighbor that seeks the neighbor’s welfare. Under the Eighth Commandment, we are called to defend our neighbor, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

***Let each his lesson learn with care,
and all the household well shall fare.***