

## The 8th Commandment: Your Good Name

by Rev. Richard Mau

*Do not be a false witness against your neighbor.*

-Exodus 20:16 NIV

In the Bible verse for today, the word false means untrue, and the word witness means someone who tells what happened. The 8th Commandment means, do not say things that are not true about others; do not lie about them.

- Think about some of the nicest people you know. Who are they?
- What are some things they do that are nice?
- When we tell how someone does nice things, we are being a true and honest witness. But have you ever had anyone say something untrue about you?
- If so, how did it feel to have someone lie about you?

In the Bible, King Saul was jealous of David and the blessings God gave him. King Saul wanted to kill David. Saul thought and said bad, untrue things about David. But David had always been good to King Saul. David killed Goliath; David led Saul's armies to protect Saul and Israel. David's actions showed others he was a good man. If we try to love others as God does, people will notice our actions.

Jonathan was Saul's son. Jonathan was also David's good friend. Jonathan told Saul the good things David had done and did not say bad things about David. Jonathan was an honest and true witness for David.

God wants us to speak nicely about others the same way Jonathan spoke about David. He wants our names protected. He wants all good names to be protected. (**Reread the Bible verse.**) We are to tell of God's goodness. We are to keep God's name holy. We are to respect other names, too, and speak only of the good things people do.

The Bible also tells us in Proverbs 31:8-9 to:

- speak up for those who can't speak for themselves.
- speak up for the rights of the poor and needy.
- speak up and be fair.

Sometimes it's easy to say bad things about others, especially when we are angry. Sometimes people gossip. Think about a time when you put someone down or said something mean.

- How do you think others feel when someone says something mean about them?
- Have you ever asked God to help you be kind to others, especially those who make you angry?

### Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,  
Help us speak kindly.

When we are tempted to say bad things, remind us to turn to You for help.  
Help us choose our words wisely and help us give You glory.

In Jesus' name we pray.  
Amen.