

## Lesson 9

# SPEAK THE TRUTH



In the letter to the Ephesians St. Paul says: “Son then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another” (Eph 4:25). Since God is true, we, God's children, are also called to live in truth (Rom 3:4). **The Eighth commandment—“you shall not bear false witness” reminds us to keep away from all kinds of lies, and to speak and act always truthfully.**

### **Relevance of Truth**

Each one of us is obliged to be truthful in our thoughts, words and deeds. The basis of human life is mutual trust. **“Let your words be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'; anything more than this comes from the evil one”** (Mt. 5:37). We must show such faithfulness to God and man. If we can't believe anyone, what a difficult situation will it be?

Each man is created with the divine ability to be honest. God is the fullness of truth. Jesus said: “I am the Truth” (Jn. 14:6). Those who receive Jesus and live in Jesus are bound to be honest in their lives.

### **Bear witness to truth**

Jesus said to Pilate that he came into this world to bear witness to the truth. It is the duty of Christians to bear witness to truth. All statements against truth are

lies. Others have the right to know the truth. To deny it is equal to telling lies. If we consciously speak against our knowledge and conviction for selfish motives, we are doing wrong. The seriousness of the evil (sin) in the lies will vary according to the seriousness of the matter and the circumstances. Still we should avoid even small lies. Telling lies destroys the authenticity of the person. When we state something against truth, especially in courts, it becomes false witness. It is a mortal sin.

## **Sins Against Truth**

### **Denigration**

Denigration is spreading things about a person which has a secret nature or which is against truth. Very light acts of such a nature have created great loss. Those who do that, and those who encourage and enjoy that sin against the eighth commandment.

### **Calumny**

The purpose of calumny is to cause quarrel or enmity between two persons. Such people spread news which may or may not be said to other people and thus causes to be a means of quarrel. There are people who do it for enjoyment and for one's own interest. It is a serious sin.

### **Lie**

Telling lies is speaking against one's own knowledge and conviction. Others listen to our words with the conviction that our words are true. When we say lie, the listener gets cheated. To hide the truth in conversation ie, to make false statements is violation of the eighth commandment.

### **Revealing Secrets**

Nobody has the right to enter the privacy of others without their permission. We are bound to respect the secrets of others. It is wrong to peep, to overhear purposely, to read another's letters without their permission etc. If we happen to know any secret about others, we have the obligation to keep it secret. If there is a possibility of more danger if we do not reveal it, then we can reveal. But the priest should never reveal confessional secrets.

## Defaming Persons

It is a grave sin to attempt consciously to spoil the good name of others. By defaming, we accuse a person falsely and bear witness to it.

## Copying in the Examination

Copying is a sin against truth. Here, the student gives a false impression to the teacher that he had studied when he actually did not and thus gains undeserving marks. Both copying and helping to copy in the exam are equally sinful. An honest student will never copy in the exam.

## Flattery

Flattery is the use of words in attributing certain virtues or talents, which a person, in fact, does not have and the act of encouraging and confirming the evil deeds of others. It becomes evil because it does not correct the mistakes of others, instead it encourages them to remain in their sinful state.

The moral problem in telling lies is the violation of one's rights. Man has the right to get correct knowledge. When we tell lies, this right to know the truth is violated. When we tell lies and when we do not tell the truth at the right time this right is violated. When the right to know the truth is violated, social life becomes difficult. Hence, we must be truthful for a happy social life and to be justified before God. Society respects people who are honest in thoughts, word and deed. Let us bear witness to truth throughout our lives.

### Let us Pray

Jesus, the truth, bless us to bear witness  
to truth through our life.

## **Read the Word of God and Narrate**

Jn. 8:31-38.

### **Word of God for our Guidance**

“Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander” (1 Pet 2:1).

### **Let us Do**

Discuss how you can make your friend who has the habit of telling lies aware of it?

### **My Resolution**

I will keep honesty as one of the values of life.

### **Find out the Answer**

1. Why are we bound to be honest?
2. Why is telling lies a sin?
3. What is the seriousness of copying in the exam?
4. What are the evils against truth?
5. How does telling lies become a violation of rights?