

THE LARGER AND SHORTER CATECHISMS.

HAVING SEEN WHAT THE SCRIPTURES PRINCIPALLY TEACH US CONCERNING GOD, IT
FOLLOWS TO CONSIDER WHAT THEY REQUIRE AS THE DUTY OF MAN

QUESTIONS # 145 & 78.

(*Larger Catechism*)

Q #145. *What are the sins forbidden in the ninth commandment?*

A. The sins forbidden in the ninth commandment are, all prejudicing the truth, and the good name of our neighbours, as well as our own,¹ especially in public judicature;² giving false evidence,³ suborning false witnesses,⁴ wittingly appearing and pleading for an evil cause, out-facing and overbearing the truth;⁵ passing unjust sentence,⁶ calling evil good, and good evil; rewarding the wicked according to the work of the righteous, and the righteous according to the work of the wicked;⁷ forgery,⁸ concealing the truth, undue silence in a just cause,⁹ and holding our peace when iniquity calleth for either a reproof from ourselves,¹⁰ or complaint to others;¹¹ speaking the truth unseasonably,¹² or maliciously to a wrong end,¹³ or perverting it to a wrong meaning,¹⁴ or in doubtful or equivocal expressions, to the prejudice of truth or justice;¹⁵ speaking untruth,¹⁶ lying,¹⁷ slandering,¹⁸ backbiting,¹⁹ detracting,²⁰ talebearing,²¹ whispering,²² scoffing,²³ reviling,²⁴ rash,²⁵ harsh,²⁶ and partial censuring;²⁷ misconstructing intentions, words, and actions,²⁸

¹ 1 Sam. 17:28; 2 Sam. 16:3; 1:9, 10, 15, 16.

² Lev. 19:15; Hab. 1:4.

³ Prov. 19:5; 6:16, 19.

⁴ Acts 6:13.

⁵ Jer. 9:3, 5; Acts 24:2, 5; Ps. 12:3, 4; 52:1-4.

⁶ Prov. 17:15; 1 Kings 21:9-14.

⁷ Isa. 5:23.

⁸ Ps. 119:69; Luke 19:8; 16:5-7.

⁹ Lev. 5:1; Deut. 13:8; Acts 5:3, 8, 9; 2 Tim. 4:16.

¹⁰ 1 Kings 1:6; Lev. 19:17.

¹¹ Isa. 59:4.

¹² Prov. 29:11.

¹³ 1 Sam. 22:9, 10; Ps. 52:1-5 and *title*.

¹⁴ Ps. 56:5; John 2:19 *compared with* Matt. 26:60, 61.

¹⁵ Gen. 3:5; 26:7, 9.

¹⁶ Isa. 59:13.

¹⁷ Lev. 19:11; Col. 3:9.

¹⁸ Ps. 50:20.

¹⁹ Ps. 15:3.

²⁰ Jas. 4:11; Jer. 38:4.

²¹ Lev. 19:16.

²² Rom. 1:29, 30.

²³ Gen. 21:9; Gal. 4:29.

²⁴ 1 Cor. 6:10.

²⁵ Matt. 7:1.

²⁶ Acts 28:4.

flattering,²⁹ vain-glorious boasting;³⁰ thinking or speaking too highly or too meanly of ourselves or others;³¹ denying the gifts and graces of God;³² aggravating smaller faults;³³ hiding, excusing, or extenuating of sins, when called to a free confession;³⁴ unnecessary discovering of infirmities;³⁵ raising false rumors,³⁶ receiving and countenancing evil reports,³⁷ and stopping our ears against just defense;³⁸ evil suspicion;³⁹ envying or grieving at the deserved credit of any,⁴⁰ endeavoring or desiring to impair it,⁴¹ rejoicing in their disgrace and infamy;⁴² scornful contempt,⁴³ fond admiration;⁴⁴ breach of lawful promises;⁴⁵ neglecting such things as are of good report,⁴⁶ and practicing, or not avoiding ourselves, or not hindering what we can in others, such things as procure an ill name.⁴⁷

(Shorter Catechism)

Q #78. *What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?*

A. The ninth commandment forbiddeth whatsoever is prejudicial to truth, or injurious to our own or our neighbour's good name.⁴⁸

Question 1—*How ought we to understand the sins forbidden in this command?*

Answer—This commandment forbids anything prejudicial: 1.) Against the truth itself, 1 Sam. 17:28. 2.) Against our neighbor's good name, 2 Sam. 16:3. 3.) Against our own good name, 2 Sam. 1:9, 10, 15, 16.

Question 2—*Wherein do we show ourselves contrary or prejudicial to the truth?*

Answer—We act in a way prejudicial to the truth when in public judicatories, whether civil or ecclesiastical, we hinder the administration of justice, either:

First, As a judge, 1.) By having respect to persons, especially for monetary considerations, Lev. 19:15. 2.) By failing to render justice whereby injustice is made to appear a common thing, Hab. 1:4. 3.) By the passing of unjust sentences, whereby the

²⁷ Gen. 38:24; Rom. 2:1.

²⁸ Neh. 6:6-8; Rom. 3:8; Ps. 69:10; 1 Sam. 1:13-15; 2 Sam. 10:3.

²⁹ Ps. 12:2, 3.

³⁰ 2 Tim. 3:2.

³¹ Luke 18:9, 11; Rom. 12:16; 1 Cor. 4:6; Acts 12:22; Ex. 4:10-14.

³² Job 27:5, 6; 4:6.

³³ Matt. 7:3-5.

³⁴ Prov. 28:13; 30:20; Gen. 3:12, 13, Jer. 2:35; 2 Kings 5:25; Gen. 4:9.

³⁵ Gen. 9:22; Prov. 25:9, 10.

³⁶ Ex. 23:1.

³⁷ Prov. 29:12.

³⁸ Acts 7:56, 57; Job 31:13, 14.

³⁹ 1 Cor. 13:5; 1 Tim. 6:4.

⁴⁰ Num. 11:29; Matt. 21:15.

⁴¹ Ezra 4:12, 13.

⁴² Jer. 48:27.

⁴³ Ps. 35:15, 16, 21; Matt. 27:28, 29.

⁴⁴ Jude 16; Acts 12:22.

⁴⁵ Rom. 1:31; 2 Tim. 3:3.

⁴⁶ 1 Sam. 2:24.

⁴⁷ 2 Sam. 13:12, 13.

⁴⁸ 1 Sam. 17:28; Lev. 19:16; Ps. 15:3.

righteous are condemned and the wicked justified, Prov. 17:15; especially when it is to the prejudice of more than just his name, 1 Kings 21:9-14. 4.) By rewarding the wicked as if they be righteous or the righteous as if they be wicked, Isa. 5:23; this is to decree unrighteous decrees, Isa. 10:1.

Second, As an accuser, 1.) By the giving of false evidence, Prov. 6:16, 19; which we are assured shall not escape punishment by the Judge Who is never misled by lies, Prov. 19:5. 2.) By suborning, or inducing, false witnesses, Acts 6:13. 3.) By wittingly appearing and pleading for an evil cause, Jer. 9:3, 5; especially when we are out-facing, or defying, the truth, Acts 24:2, 5; or our pleading is overbearing the truth, Ps. 12:3, 4; 52:1-4. 4.) By forging, or deliberately creating false evidence, Ps. 119:69; which is aggravated if it leads to personal gain, Luke 19:8; or, if it deprive another of his right, Luke 16:5-7.

Third, As the defendant, 1.) By denying the justness of a charge when called to a free confession, Prov. 28:13; Jer. 2:35; especially when there are attempts to hide the fact, 2 Kings 5:25; Gen. 4:9; excuse the fact, Prov. 30:20; or otherwise extenuate the sin, Gen. 3:12, 13.

Fourth, As the witnesses, 1.) By concealing some truth, by not making a free and full disclosure, Lev. 5:1; Deut. 13:8. 2.) By maintaining an undue silence in a just cause, Acts 5:3, 8, 9; 2 Tim. 4:16. 3.) By telling anything that is not true, Prov. 19:9.

We also hinder the truth, in common conversation, when we: 1.) Hold our peace when iniquity calls for some reproof from our lips, 1 Kings 1:6; which is a kind of hatred of our brother, Lev. 19:17. 2.) Hold our peace when iniquity calls for us to make a complaint to others, Isa. 59:4.

This command is also violated in our speech itself when we: 1.) Speak the truth unseasonably, or at an inappropriate time, Prov. 29:11. 2.) Speak the truth maliciously to a wrong end, 1 Sam. 22:9, 10; Ps. 52:1-5, *title*. 3.) Speak the truth to pervert it to a wrong meaning, Ps. 56:5; especially when we take true words and twist them uncharitably to the harm of another, John 2:19 *compared with* Matt. 26:60, 61. 4.) Speak using doubtful or equivocal expressions whereby the truth is prejudiced often to the loss of justice, Gen. 3:5; 26:7, 9. 5.) Speak using untruth, Isa. 59:13; or, outright lying, Lev. 19:11; Col. 3:9. 6.) Speak either too highly or too meanly of ourselves or others; Luke 18:9, 11; Rom. 12:16; 1 Cor. 4:6; Acts 12:22; Ex. 4:10-14.

Question 3—Wherein do we show ourselves prejudicial to our neighbor's good name?

Answer—We show ourselves prejudicial when we are not careful to avoid all that is injurious to our neighbor or his good name:

First, When our words are used uncharitably against the seeking of justice, by: 1.) Slandering, wherein false charges are raised to the damage of his reputation, Ps. 50:20. 2.) Backbiting, which is slandering a person absent, Ps. 15:3. 3.) Talebearing, which is gossiping usually with some malicious intent, Lev. 19:16. 4.) Whispering, which is a secret or surreptitious expression of some belief, or rumor, usually of scandal, Rom. 1:29, 30. 5.) Scoffing, which is speaking to someone in a derisive or mocking manner, Gen. 21:9; which is to be accounted a form of persecution, Gal. 4:29. 6.) Reviling, which is criticizing in an abusive or angrily insulting manner, 1 Cor. 6:10.

Second, When through pride or self-conceit of heart we: 1.) Are rash, which consists in an uncharitable judging and condemning of others in our hearts, Matt. 7:1. 2.) Harsh, or possessed of cruel judgments without warrant, Acts 28:4. 3.) Engage in a partial censuring, whereby we allow in ourselves what we condemn in others, Gen. 38:24; Rom.

2:1. 4.) Misconstruct intentions, Neh. 6:6-8; words, Rom. 3:8; or actions, Ps. 69:10; 1 Sam. 1:13-15; 2 Sam. 10:3. 5.) Have unjust suspicions of him, 1 Tim. 6:4; which are contrary to the charity we must have toward one another, 1 Cor. 13:7. 6.) Envy or grieve at the deserved credit, or esteem, of any, Num. 11:29; Matt. 21:15; especially if it is accompanied with an endeavor or desire to impair it, Ezra 4:12, 13. 7.) Rejoice in the disgrace or infamy of others, Jer. 48:27.

Third, When through carelessness or malice we: 1.) Unnecessarily discover the faults and infirmities of others, Gen. 9:22. 2.) Aggravate their lesser faults, whereby we often seek to extenuate our own faults, Matt. 7:3-5. 3.) Revive the memory of our neighbor's crimes which were worn out of mind, especially being repented of, 2 Sam. 16:7, 8. 4.) Betray secrets committed to us, Prov. 17:9; which is traitorous behavior, 2 Tim. 3:4. 5.) Detract, or otherwise endeavor to impair the credit of our neighbor, Jer. 38:4; for those who do so are accounted judges of the law, Jas. 4:11. 6.) Raise false rumors to the prejudice of our neighbor, Ex. 23:1; or, receive and countenance such evil reports, Prov. 29:12. 7.) Stop our ears against a just defense, Acts 7:56, 57; Job 31:13, 14.

There needs to be care taken that we do not sin in defect by holding others in scornful contempt, Ps. 35:15, 16, 21; Matt. 27:28, 29; which is often a pretext for joining sin to sin by our vain-glorious boasting, 2 Tim. 3:2. There also needs to be care that we do not sin in excess by holding men's persons in fond admiration, Jude 16; Acts 12:22; which is often accompanied with another breach of this command, flattery, Ps. 12:2, 3.

Question 4—*Wherein do we show ourselves prejudicial to our own good name?*

Answer—Besides all the ways we prejudice our good name generally in our carelessness for the truth and our neighbor's good name, we especially do so when by our words we: 1.) Bear witness against ourselves unnecessarily, and without a due call, discovering our own secret faults and infirmities, especially to those who have no sense of piety, Prov. 25:9, 10. 2.) Bear false witness against ourselves, by denying the gifts and graces of God in us, Job 27:5, 6; 4:6. 3.) Bear false witness for ourselves, Prov. 28:13.

Likewise, when by our actions we: 1.) Breach any lawful promises, Rom. 1:31; 2 Tim. 3:3. 2.) Neglect such things as are of good report, 1 Sam. 2:24. 3.) Practice, or not avoid ourselves, nor hinder what we can in others, those things which procure an ill name, 2 Sam. 13:12, 13.