

Proverbs 12; Lord's Day 43

SPEAKING TRUTH CONCERNING OUR NEIGHBOR

- I. The meaning.
 - A. God speaks, i.e., communicates perfectly within Himself and to His creatures, especially to His children.
 1. God is God because He is Truth and Love (I John 4:8).
 2. Truth has a moral-ethical tone and is not just accurate facts (love rejoices in the truth, I Cor. 13:6).
 - B. God created man in His image: able to know and speak the truth and able to communicate.
 1. The power of speech is very great (18; 15:4; 18:21, James 3:4,5).
 2. Truth is not just facts, but also a moral-ethical tone.
 - C. God calls man to use the gift of speech/communication to glorify his Creator and love his neighbor.
- II. Sin ruined communication making all men liars and destroying the ability to use the tongue for good.
 - A. It is lying which makes us most like the devil, the father of the lie and the false accuser (John 8:44).
 - B. Natural man lives the lie.
 - C. Also the regenerated easily lie, so we must always be fighting to speak the truth in love.
 1. The most frequent lie is about ourselves.
 2. Sometimes we lie directly, but more often it is a poisonous half-truth (distort the truth) or with cowardly silence.
 3. All listening to such talk also is to be condemned.
 4. All violations of this commandment are most serious (22; 6:16-19; 19:5,9; 21:28; Psalm 15:-3; Rev. 21:8).
- III. Grace restores the ability to know and speak the truth in love, but we still have the nature to lie.
 - A. The speaking God declares to us the true message of salvation, redeeming us from the lie and the love of it.
 - B. This command sets before the redeemed the duty to express their gratitude by speaking the truth in love (Eph. 4:15,16).
 - C. Because a part of God's glory is that He is truth, the glory of believers is that we live and speak the truth.
 - D. As God's servants, we want to use the gift of speech to glorify His Creator and Master.