

***From the Pastor***

The ninth commandment given by God at Mt. Sinai says, “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.” In Matthew 5:33-37, Jesus said, “Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’ But I say to you do not swear at all...But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes’ and your ‘No’ be ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.”

The first part of what Jesus said is a combining of two passages from the Old Testament. Leviticus 19:11-12 says, “You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another. And you shall not swear by My name falsely, nor shall you profane the name of the Lord your God: I am the Lord.” Deuteronomy 23:23 records, “That which has gone from your lips you shall keep and perform, for you voluntarily vowed to the Lord your God what you have promised with your mouth.” This verse is in the context of making vows (Deuteronomy 23:21-23).

The subject of Matthew 5:33-37 is swearing and performing oaths. This “swearing” is not a reference to “cursing.” The instructions about and against cursing are found elsewhere in scripture. This swearing deals with (as defined by Webster’s Dictionary) “to make a solemn declaration with an appeal to God or to something held sacred for confirmation.” Jesus said don’t swear “by heaven...by the earth...by Jerusalem...nor...by your head.” Therefore, for example, if we are asked to swear to tell the truth, we say simply we affirm to tell the truth.

Jesus finished this subject by saying in verse 37, “For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.” We know to bear false witness or to lie is from Satan. Jesus said in His discussion with the Pharisees in John 8:44 that Satan was a liar and the father of lying.

Further, to swear or perform an oath by something or someone else, we are saying we can enlist the power, authority, aid, etc. of whatever or whomever we are swearing (or performing an oath) by to do what we swear to do or to accomplish our oath. That is very presumptuous. We are taking to ourselves power, authority or whatever that we have not been given. This is what Lucifer did. He tried to take to himself power or authority which had not been given to him.

When we say “Yes” or “No” we are not are not saying we will go beyond what is in the best of our own ability to do. Even if something is in our ability, we need to add “if the Lord wills.” (James 4:13-15).

	<b>Victoria</b>	<b>Corpus Christi</b>	<b>Harlingen</b>
Sunset Today in:	5:50pm	5:54pm	5:59pm
Sunset Friday 1-19	5:55pm	5:59pm	6:03pm



**Victoria**

*Sermon:* Larry Tucker

**Corpus Christi**

*Sermonette:* Arnold Mendez

*Sermon:* Steve Moody

**Harlingen**

*Sermonette:* In Accord DVD

*Sermon:* Michael Watts

“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.”

1 John 5:14-15

## Announcements and Schedule

<b>Sabbath 1/13</b>	Regular times and locations for Corpus Christi, San Antonio, Harlingen, and Victoria.
<b>Sabbath 1/20</b>	Regular times and locations for Corpus Christi, San Antonio, Harlingen, and Victoria. Mr. Moody will speak in San Antonio and Victoria. Mr. Mendez will speak in Corpus Christi and Harlingen.

## Upcoming Activities: Dates to Remember

### Foundation Institute, Center for Biblical Education:

The faculty and administration of Foundation Institute are excited to announce the opening of registration for this summer's FI Continuing Education seminars. These week-long seminars held each summer in the FI classroom have been very successful in providing an additional opportunity for biblical education for those who are able to attend. A number of people plan to return every year for the classes and fellowship. In fact, the demand has grown to the point where our limited classroom space forces us to turn away some who would like to attend.

This has produced another challenge for us. Some people have received the announcement about registering for the classes before others, and the classes have filled before everyone had a fair opportunity to register. Therefore, this year we have announced the dates for the classes over the last few weeks, and we are not accepting any applications until this coming Sunday, Jan. 14. We hope this will make it possible for everyone to have an equal opportunity to apply.

Each session is five days long, beginning on Monday morning and ending on Friday afternoon. The first session this year will be June 18-22, and the second session will be July 9-13. Both sessions of the Continuing Education seminars are essentially the same, so there is no need to register for both weeks. Each session involves 29 one-hour classes taught by a variety of instructors and administrators from the headquarters office. The cost for the classes is \$75 per person or \$125 per couple. As before, we plan to provide a light lunch each day at no additional charge.

Registration will be conducted by email. If you would like to register to attend either of these week-long seminars, you may register this coming

Sunday, Jan. 14, beginning at 10 a.m. CST. To register, send an email to david.johnson@cogwa.org, giving your name and the names of any family members who are registering with you. (Friends and others who are not part of your immediate family will need to register on their own.) To be fair to everyone, we will not accept any emails sent prior to 10 a.m. this coming Sunday.

Experience has shown that the classes tend to fill up very quickly, so be sure to send in your registration in a timely manner. Any requests that arrive after the classes are filled will be put on a waiting list in case there are any cancellations. Whether you are accepted for a session or placed on a waiting list, we will send you a response so you can plan accordingly.

Thank you for your interest and support for Foundation Institute.

**Harlingen Pot Luck:** The Harlingen congregation will have a potluck on the Sabbath of February 3<sup>rd</sup> after services.

**Corpus Christi Bible Study:** The Corpus Christi congregation will have a Bible Study and Brown Bag Social on the Sabbath of February 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Corpus Christi:** Goose Island campout March 16-18.