

The Sermon on the Mount: Oaths & Truth-telling

Lesson 8: November 3 & 4

Read Matthew 5:33-37



Sermon Reflection Question: What captured your attention from Sunday's sermon?

Jesus believes that the covenant laws given to ancient Israel can reveal part of God's wisdom for relationships, so he quotes from the law before explaining in Matthew 5:33, "Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made."

1. Have you ever made a vow or oath to God? Did you follow through with the oath? Why or why not?
2. Summarize what each of these Old Testament texts teaches about oaths: Leviticus 19:11-12 and Deuteronomy 23:21-23.

On the surface, swearing an oath by God or something else seems like a great way to make a promise sound powerful. But Jesus teaches another way...

3. What does Jesus teach about oaths in v. 34-36?
4. What reason does Jesus give for not swearing by these things? What does this reveal about God's authority over all creation?

So should we never make a promise to anyone? Not quite.

5. From verse 37:
 - a. What standard does Jesus set for speech?

- b. What does your everyday conversation with others look like? In what situations are you most tempted to exaggerate, bend the truth, or justify your words? Why?

- c. Why does “anything beyond this comes from the evil one”? What does this reveal about our motive and root to our hearts?

Jesus teaches that righteousness means speaking honestly. Honesty and faithfulness with our words is important to Jesus because this is what He is like, and what his Father is like (see 5:48). We do not need to wonder if God will try to get out of his commandments; He makes promises and keeps them.

- 6. Jesus advocates a simple truthfulness that doesn't seek to manipulate others. How have you seen Jesus' way of honesty and integrity modeled in your life by others?

- 7. In what ways has the Holy Spirit revealed the importance of your words this week? Spend time to ask the Holy Spirit about the motive of your words and your daily consistency of trustworthiness.

- 8. What is one practical step you can take this week to grow in honesty and integrity in your words?

The Holy Spirit has the power to transform us from the inside out, softening a hardened heart and replacing it with desires that align with God's love, grace, and truth. Out of our mouth, our heart speaks. Let's keep seeking Him for inside, heart-rooted transformation.

- 9. As image-bearers of the Son, how can you praise God this week for who He is and for the freedom He offers as we rely on the Spirit to speak in truth?