

I. SERMON SLIDES

Slide 1: Title

The Heart of Integrity

Matthew 5:33-37

Slide 2:

Matthew 5:33–37 (ESV)

“Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’ But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.

Slide 3:

I. The Original Statutes

II. The Human Distortion of the Statutes

III. The Corrective Teaching of Christ

IV. The Importance of Keeping Oaths (Integrity)

V. The Example and The Substitute

Slide 4:

The Law as Written (#3 and #9)

Exodus 20:7 (ESV)

“You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.”

Exodus 20:16 (ESV)

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

Slide 5:

Leviticus 19:12 (ESV)

You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD.

Numbers 30:2 (ESV)

proceeds out of his mouth.

Slide 6:

Deuteronomy 23:21–23 (ESV)

“If you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay fulfilling it, for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and you will be guilty of sin. But if you refrain from vowing, you will not be guilty of sin.”

Slide 7:

Purpose:

- a) Bridle humanity's sinfulness
- b) Build trust inside a broken environment

Slide 8:

This isn't about being legal again:
e.g. "You CAN'T make an oath!"

Slide 9:

Human Distortion

The seriousness of the distortion depends on the nature of the vow

Slide 10:

Matthew 23:16–19 (ESV)

“Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’ You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred? And you say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath.’ You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred?”

Slide 11:

"horkos" = fence, enclosure

Slide 12:

The heart of the distortion was to think that we could "fence" God OUT OF

Slide 13:

The Correction

Psalm 16:8 (ESV)

I have set the LORD always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.

Slide 14:

A vow does not and cannot create God's presence, a vow can only recognize His presence!

Slide 15:

Every "yes" and every "no" is an oath before and in God's presence

Slide 16:

There cannot be levels of honesty...only levels of commitment

Slide 17:

"There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, Who is sovereign over all, does not cry, "mine!"

Abraham Kuyper

Slide 18:

Important Outcome of Oath-Keeping (Integrity)

"Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself."

George Bernard Shaw

Slide 19:

Margaret More: "Say the words of the oath, and in your heart think otherwise."

Sir Thomas More: "What is an oath then, but words we say to God? Listen Meg, when a man makes an oath, he's holding his own self in his own hands...like water. And if he opens his fingers then he needn't hope to find himself again."

Slide 20:

An Example and a Substitute

A. Read Matthew 5:33-37. What does it seem to be saying? How would you explain it to someone? What questions do you have of the text?

B. What makes deception a serious offense before God? Have a conversation about the seriousness of consequences, as it relates to serious covenants. Does this mean that honesty is more important in certain circumstances?

(If we believe that then we have a sequestered God who only enters at our demand or allowance)

C. What are some of the other areas of our lives where we may have knowingly (or unknowingly) "fenced" God away from us?

Bed? Finances? Vacations? Work? Hobbies? Entertainment?

D. Explain how "keeping our word" actually makes us into somebody. Who are we without that? If we chase our feelings, what will happen to us?

E. Explain how Christ came to "keep His word." How is His life an inspiration as The Example, and as The Substitute?

F. Prayer and praise!