

Title: Kingdom Speech

Scripture: Matt 5:33-37

Main Idea: Righteousness that exceeds means our words accurately reflect our

Intro:

- Communication
 - Interesting study – the process and what is said/written vs what is heard/understood
 - Important in writing – the Bible for instance
 - Important in speech – comm in marriage and examples with Keri
- SM
 - Kingdom Citizens
 - Righteousness that exceeds

Keys to Understanding:

- [Hist]
- [Lit] – Jesus' formula continues – You have heard it said but I say
- [Theo]

Transition/Coordinating Thought:

The first is

1) Our speech reflects our devotion

EXPLANATION:

- Vs 33 you have heard that it was said and speech
- this is a crucial connection to make at the beginning / foundational to the rest
- God in his nature is relational and relationship requires communication
- He has communicated with us
 - Through creation
 - Through the Bible
 - Through Jesus
- His communication is a reflection of his character and is as perfect as his character

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- Another of the 10 commandments here – thou shalt not bear false witness/lie
- Laws re witnesses, oaths,

The Mosaic Law

- Jesus is not making a direct quotation of the OT but a pharisaical paraphrase
- Exod 20:7 - Do not misuse the name of the LORD your God [take the name of the Lord your God in vain], because the LORD will not leave anyone unpunished who misuses his name.
- Lev 19:12 - Do not swear falsely by my name, profaning the name of your God; I am the LORD.
- Num 30:2 - 2 When a man makes a vow to the LORD or swears an oath to put himself under an obligation, he must not break his word; he must do whatever he has promised. (plus vs 3-15 about vows made by wives, daughters, etc)
- Deut 23:21-23 - ²¹“If you make a vow to the LORD your God, do not be slow to keep it, because he will require it of you, and it will be counted against you as sin. ²²But if you refrain from making a vow, it will not be counted against you as sin. ²³Be careful to do whatever comes from your lips, because you have freely vowed what you promised to the LORD your God.”
- Zech 8:16-17 - ¹⁶These are the things you must do: Speak truth to one another; make true and sound decisions within your city gates. ¹⁷Do not plot evil in your hearts against your neighbor, and do not love perjury, for I hate all this”—this is the LORD’s declaration.
- Mal 3:5 - “I will come to you in judgment, and I will be ready to witness against sorcerers and adulterers; against those who swear falsely; against those who oppress the hired worker, the widow, and the fatherless; and against those who deny justice to the resident alien. They do not fear me,” says the LORD of Armies.
- God’s people are to be his ambassadors/representatives to a lost world; t/f it stands to reason that God’s people should reflect his honesty and integrity in everything – IOW why should I trust your God if I cannot trust you?
- All of this is implied in the positive, but Jesus states it explicitly in the negative in 37b

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- Satan is the opposite of God in every way – he cannot be trusted in any way – he is called the father of lies and from his very intro in the Bible we see that he is trying to call into question the words of God
- In other words our speech reveals that we are either devoted to God or to someone/something else – here revealed as “the evil one”
- Now most of us would disagree that our speech is supporting the devil, but there is a subtle but significant connection here that we have to make
- If we know that we are to tell the truth then why do we not? Doriani helpfully reminds us of two reasons: one we will get to briefly, but the second is cowardice
 - We are more concerned about what others think about us than we are in telling the truth
 - Like the Jews in our text, we look for any kind of out, any way to get us out of what we said while saving our reputation
 - In other words, when our speech reflects our devotion to ourselves, we are one and the same as Satan

APPLICATION:

- The application here is to make sure we understand the clear connection that Jesus has made between our speech and what it reflects about our loyalties and devotion
- Before we move on to any specifics

2) Our speech should never be deceptive

EXPLANATION:

- Vs 34-6 but I tell you – don't take an oath at all?
- Now, why would Jesus say that?
 - God had given instructions re the taking of oaths
 - God had even sworn oaths to his people
- Jesus continued by prohibiting oath formulas that were intentionally deceptive, that is, that gave others the impression that a binding oath had been taken when the speaker himself did not regard the oath as binding and felt he was under no obligation to speak truthfully.
- Jesus more directly addressed this dishonest practice in 23:16-22, and His teaching there serves as helpful commentary on this text.
- Jesus' rebuke demonstrates that the rabbis had developed a system of oaths in which people could evade the obligation to be honest through

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carefully crafted oath formulas. According to the rabbis oaths were deemed valid and legally binding only when they invoked the name of the Lord. However, in the first century Jewish law allowed only the high priest performing the atoning rituals of the Day of Atonement in the holy of holies or the priests of Jerusalem who pronounced the priestly blessing of Num 6:24-26 to utter the divine name. First-century Jews viewed all other utterances of the divine name as blasphemy. Thus when one took an oath, substitutions for the divine name had to be used. In the complicated rulings of the rabbis, however, only certain substitutions were valid and made the oath binding.

ILLUSTRATION:

- Child with fingers crossed -
- “cross my heart, hope to die, stick a needle in my eye”
-

3) Our speech should always be deliberate

EXPLANATION:

- Vs 34-36 –
- The oath formulas being addressed were sayings that had become a part of the vernacular of the day, and thus would come out without much thought given to them, again because in reality in their minds these phrases rendered their speech non-binding
- What they did not realize was that their system of oaths was in fact blasphemous

ILLUSTRATION:

- Judge 11 and Jephthah’s careless vow

APPLICATION:

- We mentioned x2 reasons we lie: one cowardice, but here the second is carelessness
- We say things without thinking
- Some people are parrots – just repeating what others have said or written – Social media feeds this in people
- Some people have leaky fills valves – ILL of replacing the fill valve on washing machine
- The application here is simple – just be quiet!! Prov 17:²⁸ Even a fool is considered wise when he keeps silent.

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- Discerning, when he seals his lips.
- Don't be careless with your words

4) Our speech should always have absolute integrity

EXPLANATION:

- 37a
- Simple solution -
- Self-authenticating and true
- Say what you intend then take responsibility for what you say – own it

ILLUSTRATION:

- Essenes (brief summary of who they were) - Refused to take any oaths save the one to become an Essene; Josephus, the first century Jewish historian, said of them that you could trust the word of an Essene more than the oath of an ordinary man.

Conclusion:

- Bit
- What loyalties or priorities are revealed by your speech?
- Lord's supper prep -
- Before can clean speech, need a clean heart. Well and the bucket