

# A Call To Radical Truthfulness

Matthew 5:33-37

# Outline

## The Context

1. The Mosaic Law (33a)
2. The Pharisaic Distortion (33b)
3. A Call to Radical Truthfulness (34-37)

# Six Teachings on the New Righteousness (5:21-48)

1. Anger in Personal Relationships (vv. 21 – 26 )
2. Teaching on Adultery (vv. 27 – 30)
3. Teaching on Divorce (vv. 31 – 32 )
4. Radical Truthfulness (vv. 33 – 37 )
5. Don't Retaliate (vv. 38 – 42)
6. Love Your Enemy (vv. 43 – 48)

# Outline

## The Context

1. The Mosaic Law (33a)
2. The Pharisaic Distortion (33b)
3. A Call to Radical Truthfulness (34-37)

# Mosaic Law

## 1. What the Text says

Exodus 20:7:

“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

Leviticus 19:12:

‘You shall not swear falsely by My name, so as to profane the name of your God; I am the Lord.

## Numbers 30:2 :

“If a man makes a vow to the Lord, or takes an oath to bind himself with a binding obligation, he shall not violate his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.

## Deuteronomy 23:21:

“When you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not delay to pay it, for it would be sin in you, and the Lord your God will surely require it of you.

## 2. A Vow and an Oath

**Vow**: A solemn promise to deliberately and freely perform some good work

1. A vow may be either to perform (Gen. 28:20ff.) or abstain from (Ps. 132:2ff)
2. An act in return for God's favor (Nu. 21:1–3) or as an expression of zeal or devotion towards God (Ps. 22:25).
3. It is no sin to vow or not to vow, but, if made—presumably uttered (Dt. 23:23)—a vow is as sacredly binding as an oath (Dt. 23:21–23).
4. A vow is not something that the Israelites made hastily (Pr. 20:25)
5. No virtue in itself (Ps. 51:16)
6. Pious pretence of a treacherous / immoral person (2 Sam. 15:7 / Pr. 7:14)

## 2. A Vow and an Oath

Oath: A solemn promise, often invoking a divine witness, regarding one's future action or behavior

1. Oaths were attributed to God (Num. 14:21) in relation to his covenant with Israel (Dt. 31:7f). Oaths in God's name were sacrosanct (Dt. 10:20), maintaining family honor and tribal loyalty.
2. Applied when making
  1. Covenants (Gen. 26:28)
  2. Promises (Gen. 24:2–4)
  3. Decisions (1 Sa. 25:22)
  4. When emphasizing the veracity of statements (Jdg. 8:19; 1 Sa. 20:3)
  5. The certainty of prophetic predictions (1 Ki. 17:1)
  6. Guaranteeing against perjury (Jdg. 11:10; Je. 42:5)
  7. Reinforcing a command (Gen. 24:41)
  8. In legal proceedings (1 Kin. 8:31; 2 Ch. 6:22f.) and
  9. Concerning property (Lev. 5:1ff.; 6:1ff.).

# Outline

## The Context

1. The Mosaic Law (33a)
2. The Pharisaic Distortion (33b)
3. A Call to Radical Truthfulness (34-37)

# The Pharisaic Distortion

the law was really prohibiting not  
taking the name of the Lord *in vain*,  
but  
taking the *name of the Lord* in vain.

# Outline

## The Context

1. The Mosaic Law (33a)
2. The Pharisaic Distortion (33b)
3. A Call to Radical Truthfulness (34-37)

# A Call to Radical Truthfulness

## A.2 Arguments

1. The formulae for a vow was irrelevant
2. You cannot avoid a reference to God
  - a. Not by heaven – God's throne (34)
  - b. Not by earth – God's footstool (35a)
  - c. Not by Jerusalem – city of the great King (35b)
  - d. Not by your head – you cannot change your hair color (36)

# A Call to Radical Truthfulness

## A.2 Arguments

1. The formulae for a vow was irrelevant
2. You cannot avoid a reference to God

## B.2 Concerns

1. How do we understand God taking an oath? (Gen. 22:16)
2. Is taking an oath completely prohibited (Matt. 26:63)

# Opposite of Radical Truthfulness = Lies

- A. Biblical Definition: *Anytime our word does not agree with God's Word*
  - A. In the OT – Gen. 3:4 and Ex. 20:16
  - B. In the NT – Acts 5; Col. 3:9; 1 Tim. 1:9-11 and Rev. 21:8
- B. Some of the common ways we can lie: Misrepresentation, false info on applications, showing less income, white lies, exaggerating, failing to report, false advertising, breaking copyright laws, plagiarizing etc.

# A Call to Radical Truthfulness

God's Standard for Us (Matt. 5:37)

A. In our Personal lives - (Tit. 1:2; Heb. 6:18; John 14:6;  
Eph. 4:15; Ps. 51:6; Prov. 6:16-17; Jer. 9:3; Rev. 21:8)

B. In our Church Life - 1 Tim. 3:15

# Application

Pursue a life of RADICAL TRUTHFULNESS in your words, deeds and thoughts.