



SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

Morningside Church

If you have a need or a prayer request, contact the church office.

850.878.5503

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Title: The Weight of Your Word

Date: March 20, 2022

Scripture Text: Matthew 5:33-37

Sermon Series: Inside-Out

We are continuing our walk through the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew 5-7. Today's topic is Jesus' teaching on telling the truth. Just as Jesus taught with anger and lust, lying is a matter of the heart. In today's sermon, we'll see how Jesus wants His listeners to understand the *weight of their word*. There should be no need for additional criteria or to invoke any additional vows or oaths to make your word more credible. We, as Christians, should be taken at our word and reflect Christ's trustworthiness.

I. The Declaration of the Law (Matt. 5:33)

Jesus' quote regarding oaths in this verse is derived from such passages as [Leviticus 19:12](#); [Numbers 30:2](#); and [Deuteronomy 5:11; 6:13; 23:21–23](#). It was viewed that an oath was needed only if a person's word alone was unreliable. It is an admission of failure in truthfulness. Jesus therefore corrects the whole structure of legislation on oaths.

- Two types of vows are mentioned in today's sermon, what are they?
- List examples of those in the Bible taking oaths.
- Describe the purpose of vows/oaths back in Bible times. In our time.
- What are examples of oaths that are taken today?

II. The Practices Prohibited (Matt. 5:34-36)

The pharisaical system of oaths was expanded to cover all kinds of promises made to one another. 'Levels of truth' emerged from the varieties of oaths. '*Oaths ... by heaven*' were considered more binding than '*oaths on the earth*'. Like children crossing their fingers behind their backs, the Pharisees devised ways to skirt binding promises through complex technicalities.

- List the various ways Jesus mentions how people were making vows.
- What are examples of ways we do this today?
- What is the problem with defining 'levels of truth'?
- How can 'levels of truth' effect our relationships with others?
- How can living by 'levels of truth' effect our witness for Christ?

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III. The Commandment to All (Matt. 5:37)

Jesus ends this section of His sermon instructing His listeners that there are no 'levels of truth'. Your word should be enough! When we habitually lie, our words lose their weight and eventually we are not taken seriously. We lose credibility and the ability to make an impact for Christ.

- Read [James 3:2-10](#). How is the influence of the tongue described?
- How does [Prov 12:22](#) describe God's view on those who lie? Those who are faithful?
- What does it mean to '*speak the truth in love*' ([Eph. 4:15](#))?
- How can you encourage others by speaking the truth in love?