



Oaths

September 14

INTRODUCTION: To live righteously Jesus' disciples must live the way He commands. More than redressing misinterpretations of the Law there is also a common theme Jesus is teaching His disciples in this section. Anger, lust, easy divorce all have at their heart selfishness. Jesus' followers are to be humble to Him and His ways if we are to shine.

KEY POINT: Truthfulness and integrity

CHALLENGE: In one sitting, read the whole sermon often over the coming months.

FIRST, A.M. SERMON RECAP (Good Samaritan)

- What is the Parable of the Good Samaritan actually about (v. 25)?
- Retell the parable in your own words, what are the key points?
- How does this Parable speak volumes to those who self-justify themselves today? Let alone loving God, can we even love others in this way? What alone is the solution?
- How is this Parable still a great example of the second part of the Great Commandment?

READ: Mt 5:33–37 (c.f. Mt 23:16–22; James 5:12)

QUESTIONS:

1. *An Oath: to invoke God's name, or an appeal to something of great value, to guarantee the truth of one's statement.*
2. *Throughout much of Western history oaths were heavily used from signing a business deal, buying property, joining the army, serving the state, entering a religious order, etc.*
3. **Can you think of where oaths are still used today?**
4. **At their heart, what is the purpose of an oath?**
5. *Oaths were permitted/referenced in the Old Testament: e.g. Gen 9:9–11; Dt 10:20. Paul also called God as His witness (Ro 1:9; 2 Cor 1:23; 1 Thes 2:5, 10; Phil 1:8).*

6. *V.33 is not a direct quote of the OT but an allusion to passages such as Ex 20:7; Lev 19:12; Nu 30:2; Dt 23:21–24 (read).*
7. **The intent or spirit of these law was...?**
8. *By Jesus' day the intent of these laws were lost by the many Rabbinic interpretations that sought to justify when it was permissible to break one's promise and when it was not. For example, if you swore by Jerusalem you weren't bound but if you swore toward Jerusalem you were! This is what Jesus was getting at in vv. 34–36 as He moved from God to earth to Jerusalem to us. Swearing evasively became a justification for lying.*
9. **Do we ever seek to justifying "white lies"?**
10. **In what ways do people show themselves to be untrustworthy today?**
11. **Why do people lie?**
12. **If God is truth why is lying always wicked?**
13. **What will become of those who persist unrepentant as liars? (Rev 21:8). Who do they show that they belong to? (Jn 8:44)**
14. **Thinking back to Jesus' words in Mt 5:29, should Jesus' words in v. 37 be taken as literal or not?**
15. *V. 37- Jesus' followers' character should be such that their words are believable, that their words and intent are one.*
16. **How can we safeguard our integrity and cultivate a spirit of truthfulness in our Christian walk?**

Next Week: Retaliation, Mt 5:38–42