



GRANVILLE CHAPEL

Sermon on the Mount

Bible Study Guide

Spring 2024

Introduction

In Matthew 5:33-37, Jesus addresses the issue of oaths and swearing, emphasizing honesty and integrity. Rather than making oaths, Jesus calls us to a higher standard of truthfulness and integrity which reflects His character.

This guide references other Scriptural passages to wrestle with whether oath taking is Biblically sound.

Group Study

1. Read aloud Matthew 5:33-37 in a slow and methodical way, listening carefully to the words of Jesus. What are some initial thoughts after reading this passage? How do Jesus' words align with the culture today on oaths and swearing?
2. In Matthew 5:33-34, Jesus alludes to the Old Testament of not bearing false witness and not taking God's name in vain. Then Jesus says "do not take an oath at all" – is Jesus abolishing the law? What is the purpose of an oath?
3. Read Hebrews 6:13-14, which references Genesis 22:15-18. When God made a promise to Abraham, there was no one greater for Him to swear by. So, God swore by Himself, saying, "I will certainly bless you and give you many descendants." Read 2Corinthians 1:23. How are these passages understood with Matthew 5:33-34? Are His followers not to make oaths at all?
4. Read Matthew 23:16-22. In Jesus' day, there was an elaborate system of oath taking whereby oaths might or might not be binding, depending on how one swore. What are the reasons that His disciples do not swear by these? In Matthew 5:34-36, Jesus mentions 4 examples of oaths: swearing by heaven, by earth, by Jerusalem and by your head. Reading these verses carefully, to whom do these examples ultimately point to?

5. In Matthew 5:37, Jesus says “Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’” – how is Jesus elevating the standard above that of the law? Are oaths necessary for believers?
6. Finally, Jesus says “anything more than this comes from evil” – when are people tempted to add more than simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’? What does this imply if a person must make an oath to be trusted?
7. Read Ephesians 4:15. Imagine if relationships were marked by truthfulness, honesty, integrity and love. How does this make you feel? How would this glorify God?

Personal Reflection

1. Have you ever regretted anything you’ve said? How can you watch your speech to avoid saying things you might later regret?
2. How can you develop a habit of integrity and honesty in your daily interactions?
3. Reflect on whether your speech consistently aligns with your actions. Do your words support or contradict what you commit to? Consider how others perceive your trustworthiness.

Prayer

