



Sermon on the Mount Series: Oaths

Matthew 5:33-37



What is your word worth?

Oaths & the Law

- Matthew 5:33 “Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’
 - ὄρκος horkos; akin to ἔρκος erkos (fence, enclosure); an oath:—
oath(7), oaths(2), vows(1)
 - Not dealing with vulgarity and foul speech

Perform to the Lord your vow

Leviticus 19:12

You shall not swear by my name falsely,
and so profane the name of your God: I
am the LORD.

Numbers 30:2

If a man vows a vow to the LORD, or
swears an oath to bind himself by a
pledge, he shall not break his word. He
shall do according to all that proceeds
out of his mouth.

Deuteronomy 23:21–23

21 “If you make a vow to the LORD
your God, you shall not delay
fulfilling it, for the LORD your God
will surely require it of you, and you
will be guilty of sin.

22 But if you refrain from vowing,
you will not be guilty of sin.

23 You shall be careful to do what
has passed your lips, for you have
voluntarily vowed to the LORD your
God what you have promised with
your mouth.

Exodus 20:7 (ESV)

7 “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

Jeremiah 5:1–2 (ESV)

1 Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, look and take note! Search her squares to see if you can find a man, one who does justice and seeks truth, that I may pardon her.

2 Though they say, “As the LORD lives,” yet they swear falsely.

Hosea 4:1–2 (ESV)

1 Hear the word of the LORD, O children of Israel, for the LORD has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land. There is no faithfulness or steadfast love, and no knowledge of God in the land;

2 there is swearing, lying, murder, stealing, and committing adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed.

Swearing an oath by someone:

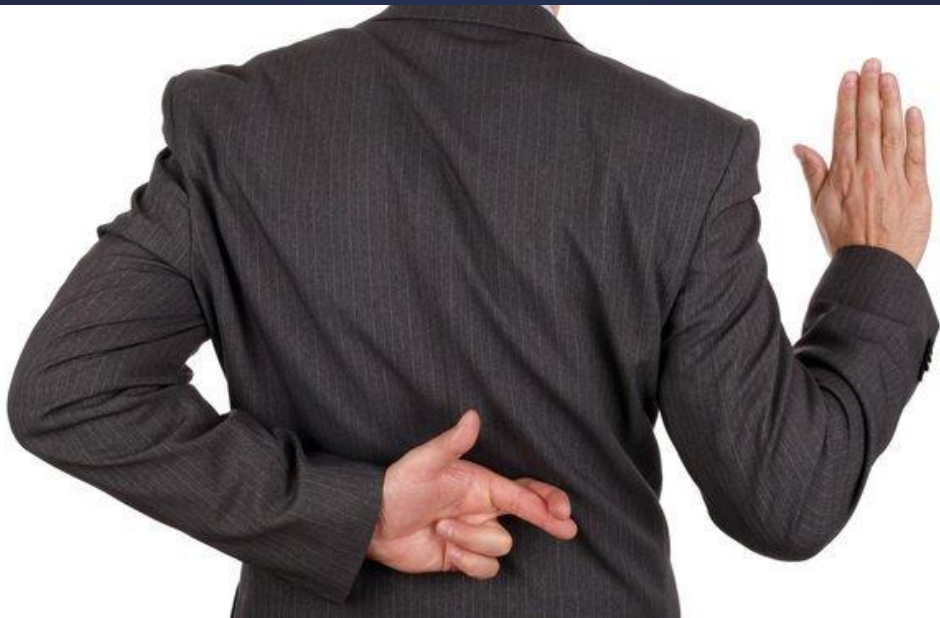
Called one as a **witness** to attest to your words

Called one as a **judge** if your words were found untrue

Hebrews 6:16 (ESV)

16 For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation.

Twisting Oaths: Swearing by everything except the Lord



Matthew 23:16–22 (ESV)

16 “Woe to you, blind guides, who say, **‘If anyone swears by the temple, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’**

17 You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred?

18 And you say, **‘If anyone swears by the altar, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath.’**

19 You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred?

20 So whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it.

21 And whoever swears by the temple swears by it and by him who dwells in it.

22 And whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it.

Jesus Correction: vv. 34-37

Matthew 5:34–36 (ESV)

34 But I say to you, do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God,

35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.

36 And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.

Swearing by Heaven or Earth is by God

Isaiah 66:1-2

Thus says the LORD: “**Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool**; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

Psalms 48:1-2

Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised in the city of our God! His holy mountain, beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth, **Mount Zion, in the far north, the city of the great King.**

Jesus Correction: You have sworn by God!



Matthew 23:16–22 (ESV)

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17 You blind fools! **For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred?**

18 And you say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath.’

19 You blind men! **For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred?**

20 **So whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it.**

21 **And whoever swears by the temple swears by it and by him who dwells in it.**

22 **And whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it.**

Let your yes be yes, and your no be no

Psalm 15:1-2

O LORD, who shall sojourn
in your tent? Who shall
dwell on your holy hill?
He who walks blamelessly
and does what is right
and speaks truth in his
heart;

Psalm 24:3-4

Who shall ascend the hill of
the LORD? And who shall
stand in his holy place? He
who has clean hands and a
pure heart, who does not
lift up his soul to what is
false and does not swear
deceitfully.

Is Jesus forbidding all VOWS?

James 5:12 (ESV)

¹² But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.

Hebrews 6:13–20 (ESV)

¹³ For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, ¹⁴ saying, “Surely I will bless you and multiply you.” ¹⁵ And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise. ¹⁶ For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. ¹⁷ So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, ¹⁸ so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. ¹⁹ We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, ²⁰ where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

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