

Extra Teaching Points

Chapter 7

Matt. 5:33-37

[Matt. 5:33-37](#)

Q: Compare Matt. 23:16-24 with Matt. 5:33-37. What is Jesus saying?

- Jesus was saying that even though oaths had been used as a means of guaranteeing a person's honesty, oaths were really no guarantee at all.
 - [Matt. 23:16-22](#) Jesus demonstrated how they were manipulating oaths.
- He was saying vows had become just as deceptive as not using vows.
 - **Jesus was saying be truthful.**
 - **We should be known as people who will be faithful to do what we say, not people who are looking for ways to deceive and take advantage of others.**
- We need to think of honesty in other terms than whether or not we are bound by an oath.
 - **It is our integrity before God, our respect for His faithfulness, and a desire to be like Him that compels us to keep our word.**
 - We need to be as honest, all the time, as we would if we had taken a vow.

Extra Info on Vows:

Q: What is a vow?

- It is making a solemn affirmation that something you are saying is true by invoking a higher virtue than your own ([Heb. 6:16](#)).

The purpose of an oath was much like the purpose of a contract today.

- A contract anticipates people's natural tendency toward unfaithfulness, and provides a legal recourse for someone if the contract is broken.
- To invoke God's name in a vow was to say, *"even though you may not believe my virtue and honesty enough to trust me, I'll appeal to God's virtue and honesty instead of my own."*
 - In other words it was like saying *"if you can trust God you can trust me."*
 - **To renege on such a vow was to say God couldn't be trusted either.**
 - That would bring the wrath of God down on you, which would be worse than the wrath of a court of law.

There is nothing immoral about taking oaths.

- God swore ([Heb. 6:13,17](#); [Heb. 7:21](#))
- God even instructed the Israelites to swear by His name rather than by Baal's ([Jer. 12:16](#)).
- But we are warned to keep our vows if we make them ([Eccl. 5:4-7](#)).

Use of Vows at the time Jesus taught this:

Today we don't rely on vows the way people in Jesus' day did.

- The only times we seem to invoke vows is in court proceedings and marriage.

The Pharisees and Rabbis had developed an elaborate system of vows declaring some to be binding and others not.

- This allowed people to defraud others by making vows they didn't intend to keep.
 - If swearing by the temple was good enough to convince someone to believe you, then great!

- You could get them to believe your promise and not really have to keep it.
 - Only a trained legal scholar would know which vows were binding and which ones were not.
 - The average man on the street wouldn't really know which vows meant anything.
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Q: Which of the “weightier matters of law” ([Matt. 23:23](#)) is in view here?

- Faithfulness

Q: Can you be loving and not be faithful?

- To be loving is to be like God, because God is love! ([1John 4:8,16](#))
 - [Duet. 32:4](#); [1Cor. 1:9, 10:13](#) God is faithful.
 - [Duet. 32:4](#); [2Thess. 1:6](#) God is Just.
 - [Dan. 9:9](#); [Deut. 4:31](#) God is Merciful
- [Matt. 22:37-40](#) The Law and the Prophets hang on Love
 - “*Weightier matters of law*” ([Matt. 23:23](#)) and something all the Law and Prophets “*hang on*” sound like they might be the same thing.
 - Justice, Mercy, and Faithfulness are three aspects of Love--which is God.
- To be loving is to be like God... just, merciful, and faithful.

Q: Read [Micah 6:8](#). What is the connection between “walking humbly with your God”, and faithfulness?

- You can't be Faithful without humility.
 - Faithfulness requires us to tell the truth and keep our word.
 - Telling the truth and keeping our word will put into question how certain situations will turn out!
 - Humility surrenders pride, and doesn't try to get its way.

Chapter 7 Follow Up Assignment

Q: [Matt. 7:12](#) says to treat others the way you want to be treated. Do you want others to tell you the truth and keep their word in the same way you tell the truth and keep your word?

- If not, why not?

Q: When was the last time you told a lie? Why did you lie?

- What does this tell you about your faithfulness?
- What does this tell you about your humility?
- What does this tell you about your love for God and the person you lied to?

Q: Do you have a habit saying you'll do something, and then not following through?

- Do you pay your debts?
- If you promise to serve someone, do you follow through?
- Do you show up for things at the time you said you would?

Q: What do you need to do to start becoming a more faithful, loving person?

- Is there a lie you need to confess, and/or a truth you need to tell?
- Is there a habit of “not doing what you say” that you need to repent of?