

Swearing Off Oaths
Sermon Based Discussion (October 7, 2012)
Sermon Series: Sermon on the Mount

WARM UP

1. Is there someone in your life who you do not fully trust to do what they say they'll do? Maybe it's a co-worker, a neighbor, a relative, or a friend. Share about it, but keep it appropriate and you don't have to mention names.

Isn't it frustrating when people fail to keep their word? It can be frustrating when workers arrive late, sales people overpromise, and family members forget to do what they agreed to.

And isn't it refreshing when people do come through? It's so reassuring when someone turns in work on time, or when a delivery arrives as promised.

In this session, Jesus addresses the topic of making and keeping oaths. Specifically, we will see something that may surprise us: Jesus doesn't want us to make promises we can keep. He doesn't want us to make promises at all.

INTO THE BIBLE (Matthew 5:33-37)

2. The Old Testament commanded people to keep any promises made to God. But Jesus teaches the full meaning of those commands. What is Jesus' basic teaching on the topic of taking oaths?
3. Jesus tells us to not make oaths or promises. Jesus gives 4 examples of things we should not swear by. Why should we not swear by those things?

UNDERSTANDING

4. If people need to swear an oath to be believed, what does that imply about the times they don't swear an oath?

DIFFERENCE

5. How much do people take you at your word? (For example, how often do you need to reassure people or make a promise to get people to trust you?)
6. Do you think most people in your field or industry keep their word, or not?

APPLICATION

7. Is there someone in your life who may not fully trust you for your word? Why do they not fully trust you?

What practical steps can you take to rebuild that trust?

8. How do you feel knowing that we can always take Jesus at His word? How does that trust work in our hearts to help us be men and women of our word?

FOR REFLECTION

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. (James 5:12, ESV)